









THE WORKS  
OF  
GEOFFREY CHAUCER

EDITED BY

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TO  
FREDERICK JAMES FURNIVALL, PH.D.  
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR  
OF THE CHAUCER AND EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETIES  
THIS POPULAR EDITION OF THE POET  
FOR WHOM HE HAS DONE SO MUCH  
IS DEDICATED IN GRATITUDE  
AND ESTEEM



## PREFACE

EXACTLY a third of a century ago, in the year 1864, the publishers of this edition of Chaucer brought out their 'Globe' edition of Shakespeare, and it was their desire from the outset that it should be followed with as little delay as possible by a similar edition of the works of the greatest of his predecessors. The 'Globe' Shakespeare had been made possible by the previous publication of the splendid 'Cambridge' edition, in which everything that industry and scholarship could effect had been done to obtain a trustworthy text. It was naturally, therefore, to Cambridge that Mr. Alexander Macmillan turned for an edition of Chaucer, and in January 1864 he wrote to Henry Bradshaw, from whose *Memoir* by Mr. G. W. Prothero I am quoting, to ask him 'to join Mr. Earle and Mr. Aldis Wright in editing a "Library" edition of Chaucer's works.' It is clear that this 'Library' edition was proposed mainly to settle the text for a 'Globe' edition, and it seems almost immediately to have been arranged that the Clarendon Press, with which Mr. Macmillan had intimate relations, should have the honour of publishing the 'Library' edition, and that the text should afterwards be used for the 'Globe.'<sup>1</sup> In March 1866 Mr. Macmillan could write to Bradshaw of his delight at hearing that 'the great Chaucer' was in 'so prosperous a condition,' and of his willingness to wait for the 'Globe' edition till after its completion; but a year or two later, Mr. Prothero tells us, it became apparent that the prospect of a large edition was becoming very uncertain, and the idea of the independent publication of a 'Globe' Chaucer was revived. 1870 brought a new scheme, Professor Earle retiring from the task and Bradshaw undertaking to edit

<sup>1</sup> *A Memoir of Henry Bradshaw*, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and University Librarian. By G. W. Prothero (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., 1888), page 108.

<sup>2</sup> This seems the most probable explanation of the apparent discrepancy between Mr. Prothero's precise statement already quoted and his subsequent remark (p. 223) that 'the standard edition of Chaucer to range with that of Shakespeare,' was undertaken in 1864 by Professor Earle, with Mr. Aldis Wright and Mr. Bradshaw as collaborators, for the Clarendon Press.

the 'Library' edition for the Clarendon Press, with Mr. Aldis Wright and Professor Skeat as his collaborators, and twenty-four years afterwards this idea bore fruit in the noble 'Oxford Chaucer' edited by Professor Skeat to which it is a pleasure to the present editors to doff their caps. But in the seventies Chaucer had still to stand waiting. The 'Globe' edition, as Mr. Prothero remarks, fared no better than the 'Library' one. 'From time to time Mr. Macmillan and Dr. Furnivall stirred Bradshaw up, but to no purpose. At length, in 1879, it was suggested that Bradshaw and Furnivall should do the edition together, and Bradshaw assented. They got as far as discussing the title-page, on which Bradshaw wanted his partner's name to stand first, some specimen pages were put in type" and there the matter ended. In February 1886 Bradshaw died, having done for Chaucer what he had done for many other subjects—marked out the lines on which alone good work could be done, and communicated to others something of his own enthusiasm. That so much of his learning should have died with him, is a calamity which Chaucer-students have to regret in common with philologists, bibliographers, and antiquaries of every kind. In December 1887, with the light-heartedness of his inextinguishable youth, Dr. Furnivall invited the present writer to become his collaborator, and an agreement with the Messrs. Macmillan was duly signed by us both, embracing both a 'Library' and a 'Globe' edition. But, as I have already written, the part in the partnership had been used for a quarter of a century to do, and, for nothing, all the hard work for other people; and, like Bradshaw, could not spare from his pioneering the time necessary to enter into the heart of his own Chaucer labours. Thus the partner who was not a giant was left to go on pretty much by himself. With the *Canterbury Tales* there was no great difficulty, for the seven manuscripts printed by the Chaucer Society made it possible to produce an adequate text without other help. But for most of the rest of Chaucer's work it was essential for us each to get into touch with the manuscripts themselves, and that was far more impossible. Years previously Bradshaw had written, in view of our future plans to produce a 'Globe' text, 'the fact is that the work would require an amount of *daylight labour* which I can't give, and which no amount of money would enable me to buy,' and this humbler librarian was pulled up by the same difficulty. Only the breadth of the King's Library separated me from all the Chaucer manuscripts of the British Museum, but though the congeniousness that they were there was pleasing, they were a marvellous field for continuous study at those of Oxford or Cambridge. Fortunately, I was able to find, with Dr. Furnivall's aid, first one, and then a second, and then a third helper, who could not only work at the treasures which a librarian may help to guard but must not study for his own ends, but who also possessed the scientific

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the 'Eversley' edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (Macmillan, 1904).

## PREFACE

training in the English language for which Oxford offered far fewer opportunities when I was an undergraduate than it does now. It is pleasant to me to know that two of my collaborators have completed their training at the feet of those distinguished foreign scholars, Ten Brink and Zupitza; Dr. Heath and myself, like Chaucer, are Londoners; Professor McCormick is a successor of the Scottish poets and students who in the fifteenth century did so much for Chaucer's honour; and Professor Liddell is an American just called to the Chair of English Literature in the University of Texas. Thus in this popular edition of Chaucer, which, mainly through the steady persistence of the publishers, now sees the light a third of a century after its first proposal, the final workers may at least claim that they represent, however inadequately, all the different countries in which their favourite poet has been especially loved and studied.

In the division of labour which has thus been effected I have myself remained responsible for the *Canterbury Tales*, the *Legende of Good Women*, the Glossary, and the General Introduction; Professor Liddell has taken the *Berce*, the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, and the *Romaunt of the Rose*; Professor McCormick, *Doctour and Criseyde*; Dr. Heath, the *House of Fame*, *Parlement of Foules*, and all the shorter pieces. Each editor is responsible for his own work and for that only, and in some minor matters, as will be explained, we have each gone our own way. In the main essential, however, we have been from the first in entire agreement, for we all believe that in the present state of our knowledge the most conservative treatment, consistent with the necessities of common sense and the known rules of Chaucerian usage, is also the best. We have endeavoured, therefore, as far as may be, to produce texts which shall offer an accurate reflection of that MS. or group of MSS. which critical investigation has shown to be the best, with only such emendation upon the evidence of other manuscripts as appeared absolutely necessary, and with the utmost parsimony of 'conjecture.' Our notes of variant readings have been greatly curtailed by consideration of space, but we have endeavoured to record most of those which have any literary or metrical importance, and I think I may say that in some cases, notably in the *Berce*, *Treatise*, and *House of Fame*, a real step forward has been taken towards a thoroughly critical text. As regards spelling, we are acted in our dislike to any attempt at a uniform orthography determined by philological considerations. In the present state of our knowledge any such attempt must come perilously near that 'putting our own crotchets in place of the old scribes' habits' which Mr. Bradshaw once deprecated in editions of mediæval Latin, and which is as little to be desired as it is difficult to carry out. At the same time, every manuscript has its percentage of clerical errors or unusually repellent forms, and to reproduce these in a popular edition would be in the former case absurd, in the latter more or less undesirable. Thus, while we



have all adopted the modern usage of *u* and *v*, *i* and *j*, in other matters each editor has used his own judgment as to the extent of alteration necessary, and has explained what he has done in his introductory remarks. With our common belief that the difficulties raised by variations of spelling have been absurdly exaggerated, and our knowledge of how the balance of advantage shifts with every change of manuscripts, we see no reason to regret that while in some cases a few uncouth forms have been left in order that it might be understood that the text is taken, with only specified alterations, from a given manuscript, in other instances it has seemed advisable to do more to conciliate the eye of a modern reader. Where such alterations have been made, forms found in the Ellesmere MS. of the *Canterbury Tales* have been adopted.

Our refusal to reduce the spelling of the manuscripts to a dead level of philological correctness—were this attainable—has compelled us to use an unobtrusive dot to indicate when the letter *c* is to be fully sounded. This is the less to be regretted as Chaucer's usage in this respect is not quite so rigidly uniform as it is sometimes represented, and few readers will be inclined to grumble at this help which we have endeavoured to offer as modestly as possible.

As regards the order in which Chaucer's works are printed in this edition, the *Canterbury Tales* have been placed first, a precedence which was assigned them in all the old editions, and which is now further justified by our knowledge that they include some of the poet's earliest work, as well as much of his latest. The other pieces are arranged, to the best of my ability, in their chronological order, the Minor Poems being roughly grouped together as Earlier and Later.

There is one last word which I should like to add. The appearance of this 'Globe' edition, so soon after the *Oxford Chaucer* and the *Student's Chaucer*, which we owe to Professor Skeat, may perhaps seem superfluous, and even intrusive. Against such a criticism the fact that the publishers have contemplated this edition since 1864, while the present writer began it in 1887, these being personal matters, would be no good defence. But I think the case for the present book can be put on higher ground than this. I am so good a Chaucer lover as to hope that in the near future the student may have not merely two texts from which to choose, but half a dozen. So long as each editor does his work afresh, each new attempt must add something to the common stock. Where independent examination of the materials gathered by the Chaucer Society, or still unprinted has led to different results, the best text will in the end survive; where the results are the same, every fresh witness adds to the authority of the last. In some cases the texts formed by my colleagues appear to me to take the more adventurous course; but, for myself, the results I have to show for my own collations must set me quoting:—

---

For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforne  
Of makyngȝ roþen and lad away the corne,  
And I come after gleyngȝ here and there,  
And am ful glad if I may finde an ere  
Of any goodly word that ye han left.

I hope that, more especially in the *Legende*, some three or four of such 'goodly words' may be found, but in editing both this poem and the *Canterbury Tales*, and even more in the tedious task of compiling a glossary, my admiration for the thoroughness and precision of my predecessor has been continually increased. But if some future editor can find new manuscripts or overlooked readings helpful to a better text, I am sure that Dr. Skeat will join me in congratulating him on his good luck.

ALFRED W. POLLARD.



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# INTRODUCTION

## LIFE OF CHAUCER

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

GEOFFREY CHAUCER was the son of John Chaucer, a citizen and vintner of London. His grandfather, Robert le Chaucer, the first member of the family of whom we hear, was in 1310 appointed one of the collectors in the Port of London of the new customs upon wine granted by the merchants of Aquitaine. At the time of his death Robert held a small property in Ipswich of the annual value of twenty shillings or thereabouts, *i.e.* some £15 of our present money. The ultimate remainder of other lands in Suffolk was settled on his son John (the poet's father), and apparently for the sake of this property the lad was kidnapped on 3rd December 1324, when he was between twelve and fourteen years of age, with the object of forcibly marrying him to a certain Joan de Westhale, who had also an interest in it. John's stepfather<sup>1</sup> took up his cause; his kidnappers were fined £250 (a crushing amount in those days), and from a subsequent plea to Parliament for the mitigation of this penalty we learn that in 1328 John Chaucer was still unmarried. On the 12th June 1338 a protection against being sued in his absence was granted to him with some forty-five others who were crossing the sea with the King, and ten years later he acted as deputy to the King's Butler in the port of Southampton. At the time of his death, in 1360, he owned a house in Thames Street, London, and was married to Agnes, niece of Hamo de Compton,<sup>2</sup> whom we first hear of as his wife in 1340, and who, soon after his death, married again another vintner, Bartholomew atte Chapel, in May 1307. Thus we know that the poet was born after 1328, that (if his father was only married once) his mother was this Agnes, niece of Hamo de Compton, and that he may have been born in the house in Thames Street, which he subsequently inherited and sold. In October 1386, when he was called upon to give evidence in the suit between Richard, Lord Scrope, and Sir Robert Grosvenor, his age was entered as 'forty years or more,' a statement the value of which is diminished, but not destroyed, by the proved carelessness of entries as to one or two other witnesses. We shall find that the date of about 1340, which this entry suggests as that of Chaucer's birth, fits in very fairly

<sup>1</sup> The biographical sections of this Introduction are mainly taken, with some revision and alteration, from my *Chaucer Primer* (Macmillan, 1893.)

<sup>2</sup> John's mother Mary married three times; first one Hextoun, secondly Robert le Chaucer, and thirdly his kinsman or namesake, Richard Chaucer, who at one time was supposed to have been the poet's grandfather. John's kidnapper was Thomas Stace of Ipswich, who may have been a kinsman on his mother's side.

well with everything we know of his career, and until more precise evidence is forthcoming it may be accepted as approximately correct.

The first certain information we have about Chaucer himself is of his service in the household of Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster, and wife of Lionel, third son of Edward III. The fragments of her Household Accounts, which contain the name Galfridus Chaucer, were found, appropriately enough, in the covers of a manuscript at the British Museum, containing Lydgate's *Storn of Thebes* and Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes*. The accounts show that in April 1357 the Countess was in London, and that an entire suit of clothes, consisting of a paltock, or short cloak, a pair of red and black breeches, and shoes, was then provided for Geoffrey Chaucer, at a cost of seven shillings (i.e. about five guineas present value), and another purchase of clothing for him was recorded the next month. In the following December, when the Countess was at her seat at Hatfield, in Yorkshire, there is an entry of two shillings and sixpence paid to Geoffrey Chaucer 'for necessities at Christmas.' The entries of similar payments made to other members of the Countess of Ulster's household are for much larger amounts, and we must therefore conclude that, on account either of his position or of his not being of noble birth, Chaucer's position among her retainers was not a high one. It was probably, however, sufficiently good to enable him to be present at several great festivities at Court in which we know that the Countess took part, and it may have been during the visit which John of Gaunt paid to Hatfield towards the close of 1357 that the poet first attracted his notice.

In 1359, according to his entry in the Scropes suit, Chaucer took part in the unhappy campaign in France, serving before the town of 'Rutiers' (probably Rethel, not far from Reims), until he was taken prisoner. His imprisonment did not last long, as on 1st March 1360 the King contributed £160 (240 present value) to his ransom, as is sufficiently large to show that both by his captors and his ransomers he was regarded as a person of some little importance. This may have arisen from his going to the war in the suite of either of Prince Lionel or of the King himself. In any case, he must have been taken into the King's household about this time, as on 20th July 1367, in consideration of his past and future services, Edward III. granted him a pension or gratuity salary, of twenty marks (£13.6.8 for life, under the title *diuturnum tenore*). Chaucer was thus one of the younger of the King's chamber, and by Christmas 1368 had been promoted to be an esquire of less degree.

On 12th September 1369 Philippa Chaucer, one of the damoiselles of the Queen's chamber (*une damoiseelle de la chambre de la Reine*), was granted a pension of ten marks yearly for life. We know that this Philippa Chaucer in 1374, and occasionally in subsequent years, received part of her pension by the hands of Geoffrey Chaucer, her husband, and there seems to be no good reason to doubt that they were married early as 1366. It is probable, though far from certain, that the damoiselle of the Queen's chamber may be identified with Philippa Roet, daughter of Sir Payne Roet of Hamanh, and sister of Katherine Roet, who, after the death of her husband, Sir Hugh Swynford, became the third wife of John of Gaunt, in whose family she has been supposed to have been governess. Such a roundabout connection with John of Gaunt would help to explain the many marks of favour which he bestowed on both Chaucer and his wife, but the evidence for this is at present rather slender. If we believe it, we must also hold it probable that Geoffrey and Philippa Chaucer were the parents of a Thomas Chaucer, a man of wealth and note in the next reign, who, towards the close of his life, exchanged the Chaucer arms for those of Roet; also, perhaps, of the Elizabeth Chaucer for whose novitiate at the Abbey of Barking John of Gaunt paid a considerable sum in 1381. But the only child of the poet about whom we have certain

knowledge is the little Lewis, for whom he compiled a treatise on the Astrolabe, calculated for the year 1391, when the boy was ten years old.<sup>1</sup>

In 1369, the year after his promotion to be an esquire, Chaucer took part in the war in France. We know this from the record of a loan of £10 advanced to him by a certain Henry de Wakefield, but the record tells us nothing else. In 1370 Chaucer was abroad on the King's service, and obtained letters of protection from creditors till Michaelmas, when he returned and received his pension on 8th October. He received his pension with his own hands in 1371 and 1372, but we know nothing of his doings until 12th November of the latter year, when he was joined in a commission with two citizens of Genoa to treat with the Duke, citizens, and merchants of that place for the choice of some port in England where Genoese merchants might settle and trade. For his expenses he was allowed an advance of a hundred marks, and a further sum of thirty-eight marks was paid after his return, which took place before 22nd November 1373, when he received his pension in person.

After his return from Genoa Chaucer's affairs prospered greatly. On St. George's Day 1374 the King, then at Windsor, granted him a picher of wine daily. He received money in lieu of this in 1377, and the next year it was commuted for a second pension of twenty marks. In May 1374 he leased from the Corporation of London the dwelling-house over the gate of Aldgate. In June he was appointed Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidy of Wools, Skins, and tanned Hides in the Port of London, with the obligation to keep the records of his office with his own hand, and to be continually present. On the 13th of the same month John of Gaunt granted a pension of £10 to Chaucer and his wife for good services rendered by them 'to the said Duke, his Consort, and his mother the Queen.'<sup>2</sup> In 1375 two wardships were granted Chaucer, one of which, that of Edward Staplegate of Kent, subsequently brought him in £104. In 1376 the King made him a grant of £71 : 4 : 6, the price of some wool forfeited at the Customs for non-payment of duty; and just before Christmas he received ten marks as his wages, as one of the retinue of Sir John Burley, on some secret service. In 1377 he went to Flanders with Sir Thomas Percy on another secret mission, and later in the same year was engaged in France, probably with the King's ambassadors, who were then negotiating a peace.

Edward III.'s death on 21st June 1377 caused no interruption in Chaucer's prosperity. Early in the next year he probably took part in a second embassy to France, to negotiate a marriage between Richard II. (then twelve years old) and a daughter of the French king. In May 1378, again, we find him preparing to accompany Sir Edward Berkeley on a mission to Lombardy, there to treat on military matters with Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, and with the English free-lance, Sir John Hawkwood. He obtained the usual letters of protection, and appointed two friends, Richard Forrester and the poet Gower, his agents during his absence. The arrears of his pension (£20), with an advance of two marks on the current quarter, were paid him, and on 28th May he received one hundred marks for his wages and expenses during his mission. Of the mission itself we know nothing, but we find Chaucer at home again on 3rd February 1379, when he drew his arrears of pension for the time he had been absent.

As far as we know, with this journey to Lombardy Chaucer's career as a diplomatist came to an end, and for the next five years or so we must picture him as attending to his duties as Comptroller of the Customs and Subsidies, receiving his

<sup>1</sup> For new (1911) evidence as to Thomas Chaucer see note to p. xix.

<sup>2</sup> A pension of the same amount had been granted by the Duke to Philippa Chaucer on 30th August 1372, and possibly the 1374 pension was only a re-grant of this to the husband and wife jointly.



own and his wife's pensions at irregular intervals, and probably dunning the Treasury for £22 due to him for his last French mission, until in March 1381 it was finally paid.<sup>1</sup> On three successive New Year's Days (1380-82) his wife was presented with a silver gilt cup and cover by the Duke of Lancaster, and in May 1382 Chaucer himself was appointed to an additional Comptrollership, that of the Petty Customs of the Port of London, with leave to exercise his office by deputy. In February 1385 the same privilege was allowed him in regard to his old Comptrollership, after he had been granted a month's leave of absence at the end of the previous year. In October 1386 he sat in the Parliament at Westminster as one of the Knights of the Shire for Kent, and on the 15th of the same month gave evidence in favour of Lord Scrope in the suit between him and Sir Robert Grosvenor as to the right to a certain coat of arms, which he swore that he had constantly seen Henry le Scrope bearing in the campaign before 'Retters' seven-and-twenty years previously. That campaign had ended for Chaucer himself in a short imprisonment, but since his ransom by Edward III. he had enjoyed, as far as we can tell, an uninterrupted career of prosperity, with a considerable income from his pension and other employments, and with his various diplomatic missions to increase his knowledge of the world.

To no small extent Chaucer's good fortune was due to the favour of his patron John of Gaunt, and now the latter had left England in the spring of 1386 to prosecute his claims to the throne of Castile. The Parliament in which Chaucer had sat had demanded a change in the royal advisers, and though the King at first resisted, the Duke of Gloucester was too strong for him. A Board of eleven was appointed to overlook the royal household and treasury, and Chaucer, who belonged to the King's party, lost both his Comptrollerships, his successors in them being nominated in December. Shortly before this he must have given up his house in Aldgate, for in October of this year it was let to another tenant, and we have no knowledge where the poet lived during the next thirteen years. Some time in the second half of 1387 it is probable that he lost his wife, for there is no record of any payment of her pension after midsummer in that year. By May 1388 he must have been in serious financial straits, for we find him assigning both his pensions (*i.e.* the original pension of twenty marks and the twenty marks allowed him instead of his picher of wine) to a certain John Scully, who presumably gave him a lump sum in exchange for them. Exactly a year later (May 1389) the King dismissed Gloucester and the other Lords Appellant from his counsels, and declared his determination no longer to live under governance, and with the return of John of Gaunt to England Chaucer, no doubt, hoped for better times. A brief spell of prosperity came to him by his appointment on the 12th July 1389 to be Clerk of the King's Works at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower of London, and various royal manors, at a salary of two shillings a day, with power to employ a deputy. A year later he was ordered to procure workmen and materials for the repair of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and was paid the costs of putting up scaffolds in Smithfield for the King and Queen to

<sup>1</sup> These years, otherwise apparently uneventful, were broken by one unpleasant incident, for on May 1377 a certain Cecilia de Chaumpaigne executed an absolute release to Chaucer from liability *de novo captis*. Quite recently Mr. Reginald R. Sharpe has printed in the *Itinerary* (14th August 1277) extract from the *Rolls of Pleas and Memoranda* at the Guildhall, which shows on 26th June in the same year 1370 Cecilia Chaumpaigne executed a general release 'facti cuiuscunque cause a principio' mouth, to Richard Goodchild 'seller' and John Grove 'armurer', that on the same day Goodchild and Grove executed a similar release to Chaucer. On the 2nd of next month Grove gave Cecilia Chaumpaigne a recognisance for £20 to be paid at Michaelmas, as duly done. Mr. Sharpe suggests that the £20 may have been paid to the lady by Grove on Chaucer's account, but I do not agree as to this. Unfortunately the interpretation most favourable to the points to his having been accessory to some such attempt on Cecilia de Chaumpaigne as the St. had practised against his own father.

the jousts in May. In the intervening March he had been named, with five others, as a commissioner for the repair of the roadways on the banks of the river between Greenwich and Woolwich, but by the summer of 1391 he had lost both his lucrative clerkships, though he received various payments in connection with them as late as 1393.

Even these short two years of renewed prosperity were marked by at least one unpleasant incident, for on 6th September 1390 Chaucer, by a strange misfortune, was robbed twice on the same day by members of the same gang of highwaymen—the first time at Westminster of £10, the second at Hatcham, near the ‘foul oak,’ of £9:3:8. The money was not his own, but the King’s, and was forgiven him by writ on 6th January 1391. One of the gang turned ‘approver’ or informer against the rest: but being challenged to a wager by battle and defeated, was himself hanged, a fate which seems eventually to have befallen most of his comrades.

After the loss of his clerkships Chaucer’s means of subsistence, so far as we have certain knowledge of them,<sup>1</sup> were reduced to the proceeds of his commissionership of the roadway between Greenwich and Woolwich. From one of these places, probably in 1393, he wrote to his friend Seogan, as one ‘at the stremé’s hede Of grace, of alle honour and of worthynesse’ (i.e. the Court at Windsor), a humorous poem which ended with the serious request ‘mynde thy frend ther it may fructifye,’ and it was possibly at Seogan’s request that Richard II. came to Chaucer’s relief with a grant of a new pension of £20 a year for life. During the next few years we find the poet frequently obtaining loans from the Treasury in advance of his pension, and on two occasions these loans are as small as 6s. 8d. (£5 modern value). In May 1398 he obtained from the King letters of protection against enemies suing him, and the protection was needed, for we know that just at this time he was being sued for a debt of a little over £14, nearly three-quarters of a year’s pension. In October of this year Richard granted him a tun of wine yearly in answer to a petition which seems to have begged it somewhat pitifully ‘for the sake of God and as a work of charity.’ A few months later the King himself was deposed. To Chaucer, however, as a follower of John of Gaunt, the change was only that from a good friend to a better, for a poem entitled a *Complaint to his Purse*, addressed to Henry IV., elicited in October 1399 a fresh pension of forty marks in addition to the £20 granted by Richard II. Thus assisted, Chaucer, on 24th December, took a lease of a tenement in the garden of St. Mary’s Chapel, Westminster, for no less than fifty-three years. He drew an instalment of one pension on 21st February 1400, and £5 on account of another on 5th June, by the hands of a friend. On 25th October, just ten months after he had taken his long lease, he died, and was buried in St. Benet’s Chapel, in Westminster Abbey, where his grave has since been surrounded by those of many later poets.

The fact that Chaucer was a servant of the Crown, and the care with which the public records of this period have been preserved, enable us to trace the poet’s external or business life with a certainty and particularity in strong contrast with the little we know of the lives of most of the men of letters of the next two centuries. The additional information which we can glean from his poems is for the most part

<sup>1</sup> Between June 1300 and June 1311 Geoffrey Chaucer was appointed Forester of North Petherton Park, in Somersetshire. The poet was in the gift of the descendants of Chaucer’s first patroness, the Countess of Ulster, but even with this to help us, it is hardly safe to assume the identity of the forester and the poet. It is made more probable, however, by the fact that in 1416-17 a Thomas Chaucer was appointed to the same post. Since the discovery, in 1928, that a Thomas Chaucer also succeeded the poet in his tenement at Westminster, the tradition that Thomas was Geoffrey’s son is much strengthened, and the occurrence of both names at North Petherton is a further link.

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vague and uncertain. The first of his works which we can date, the *Boke of the Duchesse* (an allegorical lament for the death of John of Gaunt's first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, who died in 1369), contains an allusion to an eight years' sickness which has caused much conjecture. Nature, he writes, will not suffer a man to live without sleep and in sorrow.

And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,  
Slepe; and this melancolye  
And drede I have for to dye,  
Defaute of slepe and hevynesse,  
Hath sleyn my spirit of quyknesse  
That I have lost al lustihede.  
Suche fantasyes been in myn hede  
So I noot what is best to do.  
But men myghte axé me why so  
I may not slepe, and what me is?  
But natheless, who aské this  
Leseth his asking trewely.  
My selven can not tellé why  
The sothe; but trewely, as I gesse,  
I holdé hit ben a siknesse  
That I have suffred this eight yere,  
And yet my booté is never the ncre;  
For ther is phisicien but oon  
That may me hele; but that is doon.  
Passe we over until eft;  
That wil not be, moot nede be left.

It is usual to join with this passage *The Complaynte unto Pite*, or, as it is otherwise called, *The Exclamacion of the Deth of Pite*, a fine but rather artificial poem, in which Chaucer tells us how, when he ran to beg pity to avenge him on cruelty, 'I fond hir deed and buried in an herte.' If, however, we are to search for autobiography in Chaucer's love-poems, *A Complaynte to his Lady* (pp. 334-336), which is even more artificial than the *Pite*, contains some far more explicit phrases as to a hopeless love, and its ill effects in melancholy and loss of sleep. Part of this poem is in *terza rima*, and for this and other reasons it seems impossible to assign it to so early a date as 1369. If we separate these two poems from the passage in the *Boke of the Duchesse*, we are left without any clue to the meaning of the allusion to the eight years' 'sickness' and the one 'physician' who could heal it. It is possible that the 'sickness,' which seems to have been mysterious to Chaucer himself ('my-selven can not telle why'), may have been nothing more definite than the vague melancholy and unrest apt to beset young poets when they do not see their way clear, and in that case the physician may be the 'great physician,' God. It is possible also that the allusion is to a love unrequited, and perhaps unrequitable. It is idle to speculate. All we know is that any passion which Chaucer may have felt left but little trace on his verse, except possibly in the beauty and purity of the fine passage on the relations of lover and mistress in the *Boke of the Duchesse* itself. Save in this one piece Chaucer's contributions to English love-poetry may almost be called insignificant.

If we should be cautious in accepting any theory of an unrequited love upon too slender evidence, we should be no less careful to avoid the exaggeration which interprets the conventional satire which Chaucer in his later poems directs against

women as a proof that the poet's relations with his wife Philippa were unhappy. If read as the work of any other fourteenth century writer would be read, there is nothing in Chaucer's poetry on which to rest such a theory, and it is even possible to contend that if we compare the poems written during his wife's lifetime with those generally assigned to the period after its close, we have some ground for believing that her death removed a moral influence which had previously made itself felt. On the other hand, we are tempted to conjecture that it was the influence of the ex-damoiselle of the bed-chamber which kept Chaucer so long occupied with the fashionable artificial poetry of the day, and that this may have been one of the causes of his abnormally late poetic development.

To pass to matters of more certainty, we find in the *Boke of the Duchesse* an illustration from the side of his poetry of Chaucer's relation with John of Gaunt, while in the two prologues to the *Legende of Good Women* we see him intending to present his book to the Queen, to whose patronage of him we have no external allusions. Lastly, we may note the well-known passages in the *House of Fame* (ii. 139-152) and *Legende of Good Women* (29-50), in which the poet alludes to his studious habits and love of flowers, and the remarks of the Host in the *Canterbury Tales* (B. 1884-1894) when he calls upon him for his story. These give us a picture of Chaucer as he imagined that other men would see him, and we have a notable additional help towards realising his appearance in the well-known portrait which his follower, Thomas Hoccleve, caused to be painted on one of the leaves of his own *Regement of Princes*, now Harleian MS. 4866 in the British Museum. Dr. Furnivall's description and comments on this portrait bring out its qualities so well that we cannot do better than quote them. 'The face,' he says, 'is wise and tender, full of a sweet and kindly sadness at first sight, but with much bonhomie in it on a further look, and with deep-set, far-looking grey eyes. Not the face of a very old man, a totterer, but of one with work in him yet, looking kindly, though seriously, out on the world before him. Unluckily the parted grey moustache and the vermilion above and below the lips render it difficult to catch the expression of the mouth; but the lips seem parted, as if to speak. Two tufts of white beard are on the chin; and a fringe of white hair shows from under the black hood. One feels one would like to go to such a man when one was in trouble, and hear his wise and tender speech.' Other portraits exist, but they are less carefully drawn. They serve, however, by their general resemblance to show us that the one which we owe to the piety of Hoccleve is no mere fancy sketch.

The foregoing account of Chaucer's career has been based entirely on authentic records, without any turning aside to notice the many fanciful statements about him, now known to be false. A full account of these will be found in the interesting chapter entitled 'the Chaucer Legend' in Professor T. R. Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer*,<sup>1</sup> to another chapter in which<sup>2</sup> students may be referred for an account of the books which we know, from his use of them in his works, that Chaucer must have read. That from our biographical sketch all mention of the poet's works has been so rigorously excluded is mainly due to the fact that, although the sequence of most of these is now well established, by evidence which I have epitomised in my *Chaucer Primer* (pp. 36-60), only in a few cases can we be absolutely sure of the year in which any given poem was begun or ended. In the case, indeed, of many of the poems we cannot even fix the date within five years, and it therefore

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I, pp. 129-224.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II, pp. 126-126. A brief sketch of the same subject will be found in my *Chaucer Primer*, pp. 52-56. Professor Lounsbury seems to me a little unduly hard on Chaucer's inaccuracy as a scholar.

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seemed impossible to introduce references to his poetry into an account of the poet's external life, of which most of the details we have are so singularly precise. The generalisation which has been accepted of recent years that Chaucer in the earliest stage of his career as a poet was subject only to the influences of French models; that he subsequently transferred his allegiance from Machault and Guillaume de Lorris to Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, and finally became his own master and developed an 'English' style all his own,—such a generalisation as this may pass muster well enough, but when we attempt to define the years within which these stages were accomplished difficulties spring up on every side.

The date 1369 as that of the composition of the *Boke of the Duchesse* is, if not really a landmark, at least solid ground, but one of the few questions of sequence still undecided is as to on which side of the *Boke of the Duchesse* we should place the translation of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, the *A B C*, and the *Pite*.

Again, it is usual to date Chaucer's 'Italian period' from his Genoan mission of 1372-1373, but if we except a few lines in the invocation before the legend of St. Cecilia, which have the appearance of being translated from Dante (they may be a later addition or derived from a common original), we have no real proof that Chaucer was possessed of any Italian books until his Milan mission of 1378-1379, or indeed that he could read Italian until this date.<sup>1</sup>

Once more, though we have good reason for believing that the plan of the *Canterbury Tales* took shape about the years 1386-1388, we have no clue whatever to the number of years during which Chaucer continued writing them. The authenticity of the *Retraction* at the end of the *Tales* has been doubted, but with the distinct forecast of it given in the conclusion of the *Troilus*, the doubts seem themselves indefensible. It is possible that the unfinished treatise on the Astrolabe, compiled in 1391, practically marks the end of the *Tales*. It is possible, on the other hand, that the poet continued writing them almost to the last, though in this case, as he would hardly have abstained from publication during so many years, it is probable that we should have had a distinct group of manuscripts, containing only a portion of the extant series, put into circulation before the rest were written. But questions of this kind are never likely to be settled, and they are alluded to here chiefly to show how impossible it is to bring the two sides of Chaucer's life into as close connection as we could wish.

When we turn from the attempt to fix the precise date of the beginning or completion of any given poem to trace the development of Chaucer's genius our task becomes much easier. At first sight, indeed, it may seem that here we are merely arguing in a circle, deducing results from an arrangement especially contrived to produce them. But the sequence of Chaucer's poems, though in the early days of the Chaucer Society it was mapped out largely by this very test of development, has since been confirmed by a variety of other tests, and is strongly supported by every approximation to a precise date which we have attained. Thus Chaucer's gradual growth in poetic freedom and power is a real fact, and, as a fact, is worth studying. And at the outset we may note the strong probability that he started as a poet comparatively late in life. He himself went to school before the fashion of construing Latin into French and not into English had been abandoned, and it is probable that in the early years of his service at Court poetry in English would still

<sup>1</sup> The story of Griselda, which is generally and rightly regarded as written soon after the first Italian mission, was translated, not from the vernacular version of Boccaccio, but from the Latin of Petrarch. The sections, again, of the *Monk's Tale*, which are usually regarded as early, are taken from a Latin, not an Italian, work, the *De Casibus Virorum et Mulierum Illustrum* of Boccaccio.

have been rather looked down on, as a little vulgar or, at least, unfashionable. Certainly when Chaucer did begin to write, whether it was with his translation of the *Roman de la Rose*, or with the lost *Boke of the Leoun* (almost certainly a translation of Guillaume Machault's *Dit du Lion*),<sup>1</sup> or with the *A B C* translated from Guillaume de Deguilleville, or with the *Boke of the Duchesse*, in which, in addition to some (not very important) direct borrowings from Machault and the *Roman de la Rose*, the form of the whole poem is French,—whichever of these works we may choose to regard as the earliest, there can be no doubt that Chaucer was at starting wholly under the French influences which we may presume to have been predominant at Court, and which indeed were the only ones then open to him. From the three (or should we say the *two*!) extant works we see that even in these days of his apprenticeship Chaucer's verse is full of music, but that he will condescend to very poor padding when he is translating and has to fill out his stanza. In the *Boke of the Duchesse* he is throughout conventional, even his often praised portrait of the knight's lady lacking the individuality which in later years he would have given it with far fewer touches and less piling up of pretty adjectives. Yet with all its conventions the *Boke of the Duchesse* has a certain charm in it, quite different from anything in Chaucer's later work. He writes as the timid lover, who dreams of women afar off; and it is noticeable how in the three next poems which we may attribute to him, the *Lyf of Seint Cecyle*, the story of Griselde and the story of the Emperor's daughter Constance (see below, Introduction to *Canterbury Tales*), he, in each case, takes as his heroines personified virtues whom he certainly never realised to himself as living women. All these poems, it should be noted again, are more or less didactic and religious, though the religious feeling in them is eminently artificial. All three in their present form (more especially the story of Constance, now the *Man of Lawes Tale*) show marks of revision at a later date. But the adoption of the decasyllabic seven-line stanza instead of the octosyllabic couplet, and the breaking away from French influences to a more straightforward method of narration, must have marked them from the beginning.

It was impossible for Chaucer to remain long content with these graceful and tender, but very unreal, personifications of religious zeal, patience, and constancy. Between 1369 and 1379 was, if not the busiest, certainly the most adventurous decade of his life, the period when he was moving about and seeing much of men and things, and also becoming acquainted with a new world of literature. The second and third of the three poems we have mentioned show that he had already learnt his art, was no longer a servile translator, unhappy how to fill out a verse when his original failed him. By this time he was ready to improve on the author he followed, introducing touches of his own, some of which show the first traces of his sly humour,

<sup>1</sup> This lost work is mentioned in the *Retraction*, already alluded to, found in many manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*. Other lost works are *Origenes upon the Maudelays*, i.e. a translation of the homily on St. Mary Magdalene, falsely attributed to Origen, and the *Wretched Engendering of Mankynde*, a translation of Innocent III.'s treatise *De Miseria Conditionis humane*. Both these are mentioned in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women*, though the latter only in the earlier draft. This list (*Legende*, ll. 424-430), with that in the *Retraction*, and a passage in the Prologue to the *Man of Lawes Tale* (B, 57-89), mentions all Chaucer's more important works. Others are vouched for by Lydgate, or have been preserved in the writing of Chaucer's younger contemporary John Shirley (1366?-1456), or are ascribed to the poet in good manuscripts. A severely tabular statement of the evidence for the authenticity of each poem will be found in my *Chaucer Primer* (chapter iii.), where also I have epitomised (appendix, § 85) the evidence in which various poems at one time commonly attributed to Chaucer are now known not to be by him. For a fuller discussion of these supposititious pieces, see Loane's *Studies in Chaucer* (vol. I.) and more especially Professor Skeat's valuable supplement to his six-volume edition of Chaucer, entitled *Chaucerian and other Pieces* (Clarendon Press, 1897).

and strengthening the web of his poetry with thoughts and reflections culled wherever he could find them. His prose translation of Boethius and his study of Dante now came to help this reflective vein, and on the other hand he had made acquaintance with two of Boccaccio's masterpieces, not the *Decamerone*, which it is probable he never knew, but the *Teseide* and the *Filostrato*. The story of Palamon and Arcite, which, after at least one recasting, has come down to us as the *Knights Tale*, represents his work on the *Teseide*, and *Troilus and Criseyde* that on the *Filostrato*, and these two splendid poems, full of all the colour of mediæval chivalry and love and thought, relieved ever and anon with subtle touches of humour, are the striking achievements of his middle period. In the *Parlement of Foules*, written in 1382, he returns, to please the Court, to the French models of his earlier days, only to show how far he had progressed since the *Boke of the Duchesse* of thirteen years earlier. In the *House of Fame* he is much less happy. I think there can be no doubt that Dr. Heath is right in his conjecture (see his Introduction to the poem) that Books i. and ii. were separated from Book iii. by some interval, but the poem raises many difficulties, some of which we are not likely ever to solve. Perhaps it is not amiss to remark here that Chaucer, though one of the world's great story-tellers, is not remarkable for inventiveness. Probably all, or nearly all, of his plots are borrowed, and in the fourteenth century books from which he could borrow were not easily come at. He had brought back the *Teseide* and *Filostrato* from one of his visits to Italy, and perhaps had strained his purse to do it; but when he had used them he was thrown back on the rather jejune material he could find in the books around him. At an earlier period he had probably been driven by some such straits to compile the dreary tragedies of misfortune which we know as the *Monkes Tale*. In the first two Books of the *House of Fame* we find him narrating or alluding to almost all the tragedies of hapless love which he soon set himself to tell, till he wearied of them, in the *Legende of Good Women*. The third Book of the *Fame* is in quite a different style, cast in Chaucer's happy discursive vein, and only failing for lack of a climax. In the *Legende* it is the Prologue, in its two drafts, which gives him his opportunity. Of the nine stories of loving women which he had patience to complete, only the first three (those of Cleopatra, Thisbe, and Dido) are in any way worthy of him.

The *Legende of Good Women* was no doubt abandoned from sheer weariness with its monotonous theme, and it was perhaps Chaucer's sense that this monotony must be avoided at all costs that caused him to conceive the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, of which diversity, the exchange of stories between gentle and simple, bookmen and the bookless, the religious and the irreligious, is the very essence. Once more the scheme was left unfinished, but in this case there is little to regret. If indeed Chaucer had been in the mood, he might have described the adventures of the pilgrims at Canterbury, and the final supper at the Taberd on their return to Southwark, with all the richness of humour which marks the General Prologue or that of the Wife of Bath. But there is some gain in being left with the picture of the pilgrims as still journeying along the Kentish roads, and as for the *Tales*, they run the whole length of the gamut, and seem to leave no note wanting. As is generally agreed, some of the tales of the gentle folk had probably been written at earlier dates, and had now only to be revised and fitted into their places, but his scheme gave Chaucer an excuse for displaying the same mastery in the broad humours of narration as he had shown in his *Troilus* and *Knights Tale* in the fields of romance. It is too true that several of these tales must be reckoned among those which, as the *Retraction* phrases it, 'sounen into sin,' but it is as unfair to take them too seriously as it would be to expose the essential immorality of most fairy-tales, and there can be no question as to the extraordinary

skill, with which the tales of the Miller, Reeve, and Summoner, no less than the gentler humours of that of the Nun's Priest, are set forth.

Along with their many masterpieces of humour and romance, the *Canterbury Tales* contain some poorer stories, the very feeble version of the death of Virginia, for instance, and the Manciple's tale of Phoebus and the Crow, and it is not easy to tell whether these represent earlier work foisted into the cycle, or whether we have here the fruits of Chaucer's failing powers. It needs some acquaintance with the workings of the mediæval mind to imagine how, at any period of his career, he could have cared to set forth the weariful prose discourses of Dame Prudence. The Parson's sermon, long as it is, is much more endurable, and though nobody is likely, except for professional reasons, to read it through, as I have done, at least six times, the task is not so repellent as might be imagined. The prose treatise on the Astrolabe, written for little Lewis Chaucer in 1391, though only a tenth of its length, is much more formidable. But in all his prose work Chaucer is merely as any other fourteenth century writer, without a touch of the grace and humour with which his poems are filled. As a poet he needs to-day no one to praise him. He has been praised already, wisely and well, by many clever writers. All that is now needed is that the praise shall no longer be taken contentedly on trust, but that his poems, which in their freshness and restfulness must in this century have more power of pleasure-giving than ever before, should be allowed to speak for themselves to ears no longer deaf.

## THE CANTERBURY TALES

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

The *Canterbury Tales* are given the place of honour in this edition partly out of deference to a time-honoured precedent, which might fairly claim some weight even against the chronological arrangement which commends itself to modern scholarship, but partly also because their assignment to any other position would be misleading. In addition to two long treatises in prose they contain some 18,000 lines of verse, and it is quite certain that not all of these 18,000 lines sprang from Chaucer's brain after he had conceived the plan which was to link together this wonderful medley. That one, at least, of the tales was written at an earlier period of his career we have clear evidence. In the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Womȝn* we find the *Second Nun's Tale* already alluded to as the *Lyf of Saint Cecylye*, and in its introduction the narrator is made to speak as an 'unworthy sone of Eve' (l. 60) instead of as a woman, and to address those 'that reden that I write' (l. 78) instead of the listeners to a tale told along the highway to Canterbury. Again, with our suspicions thus aroused, we note Chaucer's distinct statement that he learnt the story of Grisilde at Padua of 'Fraunceys Petrak,' who died in 1374, and whom the English poet may have met on his Genoæ mission of 1373, when Petrarch was living at Arquæ, near Padua. Chaucer was not so well off for subjects for it to be probable that if he learnt this story from Petrarch in 1373 he would have left it unused for a dozen years or more, and there is a general agreement in the belief that he wrote his English version of Petrarch's Latin shortly after his return to England. In the *Monk's Tale*, again, the wearisome tragedies fall into two distinct groups, one of twelve stories of old time, derived from the Bible, Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum et Fœstinarum Illustrium* and *De Claris Mulieribus*, and the *Roman de la Rose*; the



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other, of five modern instances, mostly very briefly treated, and one of them recording the death of Bernabo Visconti, Lord of Milan, which occurred as late as 1385. One of the modern stories, that of Ugolino of Pisa, is partly taken from Dante, and is strikingly better than all the rest. In the early stories, though the verse is good enough, the treatment is often careless and unsympathetic, and Chaucer was clearly not interested in them. It cannot be said dogmatically that they show early work, but it seems probable that at some time towards the close of the decade 1369-1379 (to which, it must be remembered, there is strikingly little of his poetry which can be positively assigned) Chaucer began a poem on the same plan as that afterwards adopted by his follower Lydgate in his *Falls of Princes*, and then abandoned it till the need came to suit the Monk with an unexpected but appropriate theme, when it was revised and enlarged. The *Man of Lawes Tale*, once more a curiously inappropriate one, is cast in the same seven-line stanza as the *Saint Cecylye* and the *Grisilde*, and from its subject, style, and tone appears to have been written towards the close of the same period. On the other hand, the *Prioress's Tale* of the little chorister, though it goes back in feeling to this earlier period, is clearly written after the conception of the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*, as is proved by the 'quoth he' with which the narration is interrupted (B 1644), while its ripe and mature beauty fully agrees with this evidence.

Whether any of the other *Tales*—all of which, except the Sir Thopas parody and the General Prologue, is a point much more difficult to determine. Outside the *Canterbury Tales* the only extant poem in which Chaucer used the heroic couplet is the *Legende of Good Women*, and as this certainly preceded the *Canterbury Tales* as a whole, there is a general inclination to regard this as Chaucer's first essay in the couplet, rather than to give any individual Tale precedence over it. On the other hand, there is an allusion in the already oft-quoted list of Chaucer's works in the *Legende* to a poem enshrining

Al the love of Palamon and Arcyte  
Of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte.

It is difficult to believe that the reference here is to the fragment of *Queen Anelida and Fals Arcyte* which has come down to us, as it ought to point to a poem which kept much more closely to the loves of the two knights as narrated in the *Teseide*. Our natural inclination would therefore be to identify this poem with the *Knights Tale*, as we now have it, but the ingenuity of Chaucer's commentators has discovered that there are ten seven-line stanzas translated from the *Teseide* in *Anelida and Arcyte*, sixteen in the *Parlement of Foules*, and three in *Troilus and Criseyde*. Hence has arisen a theory that in addition to the *Anelida* and the *Knights Tale* Chaucer composed a more literal translation of the *Teseide* in seven-line stanzas, subsequently withdrew it from circulation, and used some of his old material in his poems. Ingenious as this theory is, the supposition of the writing and suppression of a poem, necessarily of considerable length, is no light matter, and if Chaucer wrote such a poem and subsequently used fragments of it in other works it is extraordinary that he should have called attention to a tale thus cruelly treated in an entirely gratuitous reference in the *Legende*. As for the fragments of the *Teseide* found in the three seven-line poems, there is a parallel instance, of the nearly simultaneous use of the same material in two different metres, in the story of Dido and Aeneas, which we find first in the octosyllabic couplets of the *Hous of Fame*, and again in the decasyllabic couplets of the *Legende of Good Women*. On the wh

and with all deference to the great authority of the scholars who have held the opposite view, it seems best to regard the theory of a lost seven-line version of *Palamides and Arcyte* as a needless hypothesis. If this be so, the reference in the *Legend* must be almost certainly to the *Knights Tale*, and this fine poem is thus brought back nearer to the period of the *Troilus*, with which it is so closely allied in style and temper.

If the *Knights Tale* is thus brought back, other Tales, notably those of the Franklin (one of Chaucer's great successes) and the Squire, may perhaps come with it, and we need not hesitate, on the score of their metre, to relegate such poor work as the story of Appius and Virginia as told by the Doctor of Phisik, and the Manciple's tale of Apollo and the Crow, to a less happy period of Chaucer's career than that in which he was writing the Prologue and others of his finest works. Without wishing to press this point too far, it seems fair to point out that there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that when Chaucer conceived his immensely ambitious scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* he had a really considerable amount of material already at his disposal. It is sufficient, however, here to emphasise the fact that inclusion in the Canterbury series of itself tells us absolutely nothing as to the date at which any given poem was written, and that we must therefore place the *Tales* as a whole entirely outside the chronological sequence of the poet's other works.

As regards the date at which the idea took shape of a Canterbury Pilgrimage as a framework by which to connect a number of otherwise distinct stories, we have only two or three years from which to choose, and we must not attempt to pin it down too precisely to any one of them. We have various good reasons for believing that the six years which succeeded 1379 produced the *Boece*, *Troilus*, *Parlement of Foules*, *Hous of Fame* and *Legende of Good Women*, and it is therefore inconceivable that Chaucer should have planned the *Canterbury Tales* earlier than the end of 1385 or beginning of 1386. Again, no one who has read the talks by the way can doubt that the poet himself had travelled over the ground, while we know that until on 17th February 1385 he was permitted to appoint a deputy in his Comptrollership he was closely tied to his official work, a bondage of which he complains bitterly in the *Hous of Fame*. Chaucer's own pilgrimage, then, may have been made in 1385 or in any subsequent year, but hardly before this. On the other hand, the short poems written towards the close of his life show that the not very advanced age to which he attained pressed heavily on him, and it would be unreasonable to assign the plan of the *Tales* to his last decade. If, as is highly probable, the *Legende* was begun in 1385 and soon afterwards left unfinished in despair, everything points to the scheme of the *Canterbury Tales* as taking form during the next two or three years, 1386-1388. Nearer than this it is not easy to go with safety, for in drawing conclusions from the indications of date which we find in the talks by the road we must remember that Chaucer may have fitted them in either to the year in which he was writing, or back to the year in which he himself took his holiday. In the latter case the dates would be more likely to be real dates, while if we prefer to believe that they are taken from the year in which he was writing, we can hardly imagine that Chaucer was likely to trouble himself to consider too curiously whether this or that week would be a convenient one for some of his imaginary characters to make their pilgrimage. Thus, in drawing conclusions from the mention of 18th April in the talk which precedes the *Man of Law's Tale* (B 5), I do not think we can absolutely rule out of court the year 1386, on the ground that in that year 18th April fell in Holy Week, 'when the Parson and others would be much in

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best for the duties which the season imposed on them,<sup>1</sup> or reject 1388 because April then fell on a Sunday, and 'if Sunday travelling had been intended, something would have been said about the hearing of mass.'<sup>1</sup> With this contention, however, I am quite prepared to accept Professor Skeat's assurance that in 1387 'everything comes right,' since the pilgrims could assemble at the Tabard on Tuesday, 16th April, with four clear days before them, and the journey ending conveniently on a Saturday. Whether we should assign this year to that of Chaucer's own pilgrimage, or to that of his imaginary pilgrims, must remain undetermined. In any case we cannot be wrong in believing that in or about 1387 is the most probable date for the *Canterbury Tales* to have been begun. As to whence the idea of this particular framework for story-telling came to the poet, 'out of his own head' seems in every way the best answer. Certainly there is no shred of evidence to prove that he copied it from the very inferior scheme of Boccaccio's *Decamerone*.

The fame of Becket's shrine, the popularity of the pilgrimage to it, and the mediæval habit of turning a pilgrimage into a kind of religious holiday, are all matters of such common knowledge that they do not need illustrating here. Nor need we stop to prove the futility of the idea once current, that the pilgrims were in so great a hurry to bring their holiday to an end as to have accomplished the then well-nigh impossible feat of travelling fifty-six miles over heavy roads in a single day. In 1358 the queen-mother Isabella, on her own pilgrimage, left London 7th June, slept that night at Dartford, slept at Rochester on the 8th, and at Ospringe on the 9th, and reached Canterbury the next day. Two years later John of France slept at Dartford 1st July, dined there next day, slept at Rochester on the 2nd, dined at Sittingbourne and slept at Ospringe on the 3rd, and reached Canterbury 4th July. The records of other fourteenth century journeys confirm the presumption that Dartford, Rochester, and Ospringe (where some traces of the old Pilgrim's House still exists) were the regular sleeping-places on the road, and there can be no doubt that Chaucer intended his pilgrims to make the journey by these stages, and to take four days over it.

As to the exact route they followed some little uncertainty prevails, owing to the line of the modern road not coinciding everywhere with that of the old 'pilgrim's way,' but we have references to Deptford and Greenwich in the talk before the *Reeve's Tale* (A 3906, 3907), to Rochester in the Host's address to the Monk (B 3116), to Sittingbourne in the quarrel between the Friar and the Summoner (D 847), and to Boughton-under-Blee in the *Canon's Yeoman's Prologue* (G 556), and to the still mysterious Bobbe-up-and-down, 'under the Blee,' in the *Manciple's* (H 2). Rochester could not possibly be reached after Sittingbourne, and guided by this fact Henry Bradshaw and Dr. Furnivall were able to correct a mistake in arrangement, found even in the best MSS., by which the five Tales of the Shipman, Prioress, Chaucer, the Monk, and the Nun's Priest (all linked together by the talks on the road) were placed immediately before that of the Second Nun, instead of between that of the Man of Bath (with which the tales of the second day were begun) and that of the Wife of Bath, in which Sittingbourne is mentioned. By a less necessary alteration the position of the Tales of the Doctor and Pardoner, which in the best manuscripts come before the Shipman's group, were brought back along with it, but placed after instead of before. There are no references to place or time in these two tales, so that the alteration matters little either way, and we now have the twenty-four extant tales and fragments in a reasonable and probable order. Some of these tales (as has been mentioned in the case of the Shipman's group) are linked together by references, backwards or forwards, in the talks on the road; in other cases there is no link of any kind between

<sup>1</sup> Skeat's *Chaucer*, vol. III. p. 273.

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the next, Chaucer having left the intermediate talk to be filled in when written more of the sixty (or a hundred and twenty) stories which he at once contemplated. In this and other editions, since the Chaucer Society issued its Six-Text edition of the best manuscripts, each group of tales is now marked by the letter of the alphabet (A-I), the line-numeration being consecutive throughout the group.

The mention of the Six-Text edition, which has been the foundation of all subsequent Chaucer work, must lead to a brief statement as to the manuscripts followed, and the method of quoting them, in this text. The extant manuscripts of the *Tales* are very numerous, but there have here been used only the seven printed by the Chaucer Society, the Ellesmere (E), Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27 (Cam.), the Hengwrt MS. (Heng.), the Corpus Christi College, Oxford MS. (Corp.), the Petworth (Pet.), and the Lansdowne MS. 851 (Lansd.), being the Society's Six-Texts, and the very important Harleian MS. 7334 (H), which it subsequently printed. As regards the Harleian MS., there is an interesting footnote in Prothero's *Life of Henry Bradshaw* (p. 225) stating, on the authority of Mr. Aldis Wright, that one of Bradshaw's reasons for stopping short in his project of editing Chaucer 'was his inability to account for the wide divergences which distinguish the Harleian MS. of the *Canterbury Tales* from all the other manuscripts.' Thus the Harleian has much to answer for, and there can be no doubt, also, that its readings are often extraordinarily careless, and even absurd. On the other hand, it has a number of readings (cp. A 74, 257, 363, 415, 559, 727, 782, 791, 799, 803, *smyteth off myn heed for I wol yeve you myn heed* in l. 782 being a notable instance) as good or better than those found in any other manuscript, and many of them of a kind which it is very improbable that a copyist would have introduced in transcription. The most probable explanation seems to be that many of these readings represent Chaucer's own 'second thoughts,' introduced into a manuscript which passed through his hand after the *Tales* were already in circulation, and that the Harleian MS. is a careless copy of this manuscript.

At the extreme opposite pole to the Harleian stands the Ellesmere, a most carefully written MS., well spelt and observant of grammatical forms, with readings always straightforward and intelligible. Its discovery by the workers of the Chaucer Society was, perhaps, their greatest achievement.

Between the Ellesmere and the Harleian stand the other five manuscripts, of which the Cambridge and the Hengwrt are both very closely akin to the Ellesmere, while the Lansdowne, Corpus, and Petworth approach, more and more nearly, to the Harleian in their general characteristics, though they seldom agree with it in its most important variants. In all these five manuscripts the process of 'contamination,' i.e. the correction or completion of a manuscript of one group by one of another, has been at work, e.g. in the *Doctor's Tale* the Cambridge MS. deserts the Ellesmere and Hengwrt to join the Harleian and the other three in a number of readings, a few of which are possible, while many are absurd. But on the whole the relations of manuscript and manuscript are fairly constant. The text of the present edition is based on E, mere clerical errors avoided by the other MSS. being silently corrected, while variants of literary or metrical interest are recorded in the notes, or very sparingly introduced into the text. In recording variants E and H are regarded as mutually exclusive, so that if the reading in the note is assigned to H, that in the text is from E, and *vice versa*. To show further the amount of support accorded to any rejected reading of E or H, an index number is added to the letter. Thus a reading followed by the letter E denotes that the text follows the other six manuscripts, and the variation is supported by the Ellesmere only. E<sup>2</sup> shows that it is supported by the Ellesmere and one other,

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certainly the Cambridge; E<sup>3</sup> that it is supported by Ellesmere and Hengwrt. The numbers 4-6 show the support of one, two, or three of the inferior manuscripts, Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne. Similarly, a variant followed by the letter H denotes that the support of the Ellesmere and other five manuscripts. H<sup>2</sup> indicates the agreement of one other manuscript, probably the Petworth, with H; H<sup>3</sup>, H<sup>4</sup> the support of two or three more, almost certainly Corpus and Lansdowne; H<sup>5</sup> that these are again reinforced, probably by Hengwrt; H<sup>6</sup> that even the Cambridge deserts the Ellesmere. I do not claim for this system of abridged collation that it is entirely satisfactory, but it gives a rough view of the authorities on either side at a glance, and makes it possible to record variants which otherwise would have to be omitted.

As regards spelling, the modern usage as regards *i* and *j*, *u* and *v*, has been followed throughout. I have also to confess that a personal dislike to the forms *his*, *ever*, and *never* has led me to alter them throughout to *his*, *ever*, and *never*. Professor McCormick has since convinced me that Chaucer probably pronounced the two latter words as *eu're* and *neu're*. A few accidental misspellings have been altered here and there; otherwise the excellent spelling of the Ellesmere manuscript has been carefully followed.

For full information as to the sources from which Chaucer drew his stories, students interested in such questions will naturally refer to the *Originals and Analogues* printed by the Chaucer Society, or to the treatment of the subject by Professor Skeat in vol. iii. of the *Oxford Chaucer*, where all the information gleaned by the Chaucer Society, together with the results of the Editor's own researches, will be found set forth. In this edition, to save referring back, the briefest possible indication of the sources, where known, of each Tale has been prefixed to it by way of a preliminary note, and not much need here be added. As we have remarked before, inventiveness in the matter of plots was not a striking feature in Chaucer's equipment as a poet, but given the barest outline of a story he could develop it in his own inimitable manner, and his power in this respect seems to have steadily increased. Thus his indebtedness takes every form from the almost servile translation in the *Lyt of Seint Cecyle* to the re-telling in his own fashion of a tale like that of the *Canon's Yeoman* which he may have heard in the streets. For about one-third of the *Tales* no 'original' properly so called is known to exist, but from the far East or from France, Italy or Germany stories with similar plots have been unearthed which show that the idea was already in existence and only waited for Chaucer to develop it. This is the case with the tales of *The Miller*, *The Reeve*, *The Shipman*, *The Prioress*, *The Nun's Priest*, *The Pardoner*, *The Wife of Bath*, *The Friar*, *The Summoner* and *the Merchant*. The fable, or apologue or fabliau which can now be produced may be more or less close to the story as Chaucer tells it, but the literary setting is entirely his own, and in no case is there any need to suppose that he had a written original before him as he wrote. If he had once been told the story (as Tennyson, to take a modern instance, was told that of *Enoch Arden*) he would have obtained all the help he needed. In the case of the dull tale of the *Manciple* Chaucer doubtless followed the version of Ovid (*Metamorphoses* ii. 534-632), in that of the Doctor he professes to take Livy's account of the death of Virginia, but really borrowed from the *Roman de la Rose* (ll. 5613-5682). For the story of Dorigen, which he assigns to the *Franklin*, he distinctly mentions his obligation to a Breton 'lay' (F 709-715) and adduces as his authority for the length of Arviragus's absence the fact that 'the book telleth thus' (l. 813). Unluckily no such 'lay' can now be found, though Mr. Clouston has discovered several Eastern analogues, from which not only Chaucer's

...similar ones (with quite different incidents) told by Boccaccio (*Decamerone*) sprung. The loss of the original in this case is regrettable, as it has been curious to have noted how much of a story so well told was. Unfortunately there can be no doubt that the one blot in the telling, the long recital of the martyrs of chastity drawn from S. Jerome 'contra Iovinianum' is of Chaucer's own introduction. The original of *The Squire's Tale* is in any way denied detection, though its sources are plainly Eastern. Even the attempt to prove direct indebtedness to the *Travels of Marco Polo* is something less than convincing. From the fact that the tale is unfinished it seems not unreasonable to believe that Chaucer borrowed only the materials of this story and then drew for himself a plot ready furnished to him. Of the poet's own *Tale of Sir Yvain* is so sadly interrupted by the Host, the 'original' is to be looked for in the numerous medieval romances which he here parodied so delightfully, and many of the incidents which he selected to satirise have been duly pointed out by Dr. E. Kölbing (*Englische Studien*, xi.).

There remain seven tales derived wholly or in part from literary originals still extant. Chaucer's prose story of Prudence and Melibee is derived from Jean de Meung's adaptation of the *Liber Consolationis et Consilii* of Albertano of Brescia, a jurist who flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century. The *Parson's Tale* is similarly derived, but with alterations and additions, from the *Somme des Vices et des Vertus* of Frère Lourens, who died in 1279, a recent German theory that it was tampered with, after Chaucer's death, or with his consent, by some orthodox priest, being quite unnecessary. I cannot, however, agree with Professor Skeat that this *Tale* 'was once an independent Treatise, which people could either "herkne or rede," and was probably written before 1380, at much the same time as the *Tale of Melibee*, which it somewhat resembles in style.' The words 'herkne or rede' occur, not in the *Tale* itself, but in *Envoy* or *Retraction*, and I see no reason to doubt that this was really the work of Chaucer's old age. When the *Melibee* was translated is nearly as difficult to imagine as why it was ever translated at all.

At the outset of this introduction to the *Canterbury Tales* the sources of the *Tales of the Second Nun* (*Lyf of Seint Cecyle*), Clerk and Monk have already been indicated. The Man of Lawes story of Constance is derived from the Anglo-French chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican of the first half of the fourteenth century; the Knight's *Tale* from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and in the *Eversley Edition* of the *Tales* I have already pointed out with some minuteness how the four *Tales* of the Nun, Clerk, Lawyer, and Knight illustrate the increasing freedom with which Chaucer handled his material as he felt his mastery in his art increase. In the Second Nun's *Tale* he is at first servile, but at last begins to condense from sheer weariness and even adds a touch here and there. In the Clerk's, with a better original, he translates with much greater ease, and shows some healthy symptoms of rebellion at the severity alike of Grisilde's trials and her patience. In the story of Constance he is no longer a translator but an adapter, introducing as poetic ornament moral reflections from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, astrological lore from a variety of authors, and, best of all, some very fine speeches and descriptions out of his own head. Lastly in the Knight's *Tale* we find him improving on the *Teseide* at every turn. It is he who allows Palamon to see Emily first and so have the better claim to her; it is to him we owe the fierce quarrel in prison, the vision of Mercury that sends Arcyte back to Athens, the overheard soliloquy in the wood, and the outburst of anger when Theseus discovers the prison-breakers. When he wrote this story of *Palamon and Arcyte* Chaucer had no longer anything to learn from others, and

forth he might take his plots where he could find them with as good success as of Shakespeare to such treasure trove.

## MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

A text of Chaucer's Minor Poems which shall be even fairly good is no easy achievement. There is scarcely one of his shorter works which has not presented serious difficulties to the editor. In some cases the poem is found in only one MSS. (e.g. *To Rosemounde*); in some, though there may be two or three authorities, they are copied one from the other (e.g. *A Complaynt to his Lady*); in others there may be many MSS. extant, they show so much mutual contamination that it is impossible to construct a complete genealogy, and sometimes very difficult to assign some of these authorities to any one group (e.g. the *Parlement of Foules*). In all cases the MSS. are much later in date than an editor would desire, and are far removed from the original or originals. A critical study leads one to feel sure that Chaucer was often responsible for more than one draft of the same poem, and took little or no pains to maintain verbal identity. There is also little doubt that he not infrequently made corrections in later copies of his works which may have fallen in his way. Neither of these practices lightens the labours of a conscientious editor. One example must suffice here. There can be no reasonable doubt that the group of MSS. which read 'lyke' (l. 5), 'amonge us' (l. 10), 'man' (l. 17), and 'wed' (l. 28) in the Balade *Lak of Steadfastnesse* must be traced to a different original from the group to which MS. Harl. 7333 belongs, and which I have followed in this edition.

It is impossible within the limits of this volume to give all the apparatus necessary for a full critical edition, but the text here printed is the result of a careful collation and critical investigation of all the MSS. printed in the Chaucer Society's publications, and of the MSS. in the British Museum, in all cases where it was advisable or necessary to consult them.

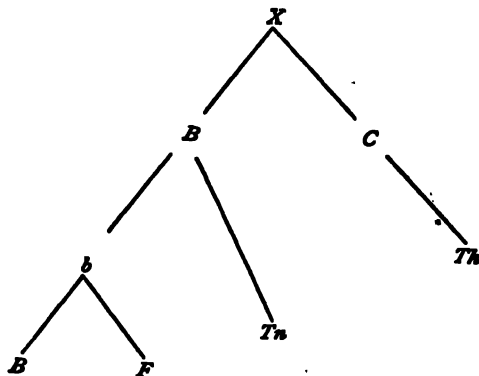
As regards the spelling here adopted, in addition to abandoning the mediæval use of *u* for *v*, and *i* (or *j*) for *j*, and the casual use of capitals in the MSS., I have adopted the modern spelling of the pronouns *thou*, *you*, *your*, *our*, etc. With these concessions to modern practice, the spelling of the text has been assimilated so far as possible to that of the Ellesmere MS. I have been rather more consistent, perhaps, than the fifteenth century scribe of the Ellesmere, particularly where grammatical forms were in question (e.g. in the distinction of the preterite and past participle, *hadda*, *had*; *broughte*, *brought*, etc.); but Chaucer must also have been more particular in these matters, and, be that as it may, the distinction certainly has the advantage of making the construction of the sentence and frequently the run of the verse clearer to the modern reader.

## THE DETHE OF THE DUCHESS

This poem was written soon after 1369, in which year John of Gaunt's first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, died at the age of twenty-nine, her husband being then of the same age. The poem is clearly the work of a young poet, for, though it strikes

true and pathos at the close, it is unduly long in approaching the climax, and it has none of the characteristic humour and irony which so constantly relieve Chaucer's later work, even when the theme is a romantic one. Nor is the form spoiled by any originality. It is a dream-poem of the typical discursive order, for which the *Roman de la Rose* was responsible throughout European literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with the usual furniture and scenery of twittering birds and flowers, and the May morning. It has indeed been claimed altogether for Fairfax, 16, who heartily despised English literature prior to Shakespeare as 'insupportable confusion'. But the *Death of the Duchesse*, though it has recollections in it of both the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Ramède de Fortune*, is not a translation of either of them. The incident of 'Seys' with which it opens is taken from the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, in which the story of Alcione's appearance to his faithful Seys and Machault (possibly to Chaucer's knowledge) imitated the same in the *Fontaine Amoureuse*, but beyond this the matter of the poem is original.

Of the three MSS. Fairfax 16 is certainly the best, and closely related to it the Bodley MS. My own independent investigation of the MSS. gave the same result as those of Koch<sup>1</sup> and Max Lange,<sup>2</sup> and I therefore reproduce the following genealogy with the more confidence:—



B = Bodley MS. 638 (Bodleian Library).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 " "

Tn. = Tanner MS. 346 " "

Th. = Thynne's Edition (1532).

The conservative treatment of the authorities in this edition will lead readers to the conclusion, I hope, that Chaucer allowed himself licences in the handling of the four-beat line at the beginning of his life which he refused afterwards in the *House of Fame*, and certainly would never have allowed in the five-beat line. In other words, they will, I trust, be willing to assume for Chaucer a development in technique similar to that of Shakespeare and some other poets. They will also, if they agree

<sup>1</sup> In *Anglia*, vol. iv. Anz. p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Untersuchungen über Chaucer's *Death of the Duchesse**, Halle, 1883.

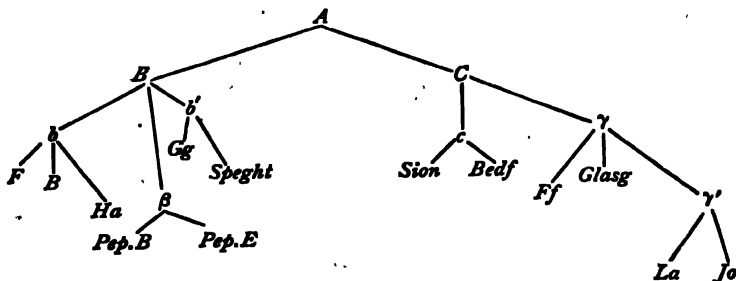


with the present editor, resist the temptation of setting down these 'faulty' constructed lines either to the poet's bad ear or (when all the MS. authorities agree) to the copyist's careless hand, but will look for an explanation in the survival of that rhythmic but non-syllabic system of verse which still lived on in England down to Chaucer's day, though much corrupted from its original purity. These native measures must have echoed in the young poet's ear when he first began to write in the foreign manner, and hence most of the so-called 'lame' lines in the *Duchesse*.

### THE A B C

About the same time as the *Boke of the Duchesse*, perhaps a little later, Chaucer wrote this poetical prayer to the Virgin. It is based upon a similar poem contained in Guillaume de Deguillville's *Pelerinage de la vie humaine*, a French Pilgrim's Progress of the fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Chaucer simplified the measure by increasing the number of rhymes from two to three, and reducing the length of the stanzas from twelve to eight; but the result is little more than an exercise. He would fain be a literal translator, but is forced by the exigences of the verse away from his model, only rising here and there, notably in the opening and the nineteenth strophes, above mechanical excellence.

There are thirteen MSS. and one printed edition (that of Speght 1602) available as authorities for this poem. I agree with Koch in the following classification:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Oxford).

Ha = Harleian 7578 (British Museum), incomplete.

Pep. B } = Pepys 2006, Magdalene College, Cambridge (two copies), both incomplete.

Pep. E }

Gg = Cambridge University Library, Gg 4. 27.

Sion = Sion College MS. (Shirley's).

Bedf. = Bedford MS. (Bedford Library).

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 in Cambridge University Library.

Glas. = Glasgow, Hunterian Museum, Q 2. 25.

La = Laud 740 (Bodleian Library).

John = St. John's College, Cambridge, G. 21.

Speght = Speght's Edition, 1602.

<sup>1</sup> Ten Brink places it as late as 1374.

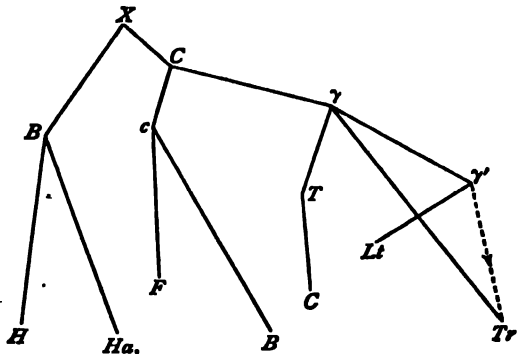
<sup>2</sup> It was commenced in 1330.

The thirteenth MS. Harl. 2257 cannot with certainty be assigned its place in the above scheme. It has general similarity with group B, but it is of little or no value. The best group is C, which is used as the basis of the text.

### THE COMPLEYNT UNTO PITE

This is a better poem than the preceding one, and the mark of sincerity and deep feeling is upon it, though the metaphor is carried too far here and there for clearness. It is usual to place this poem before 1369, and to make it Chaucer's first original work extant; but both the style and the verse lead me to agree with Ten Brink (whose critical edition of the poem should be a pattern for all editors) in assigning a later date than that, somewhere in the two years subsequent to the writing of the *Debat of the Duchesse*. Whatever the date, this poem is the earliest example of the famous Chaucer stanza, or 'rhyme royal,' as it was subsequently called. Professor Skeat has pointed out recollections of a phrase or two from the *Thebais* (Book xi.), and Mr. Pollard suggests a parallel between the adversaries of Pity and the first part of the *Roman de la Rose*. But the poem, French in style as it is, is yet original, and is generally interpreted, together with a passage of similar feeling in the *Boke of the Duchesse* (l. 30 ff.), as referring to an incident of unrequited love in the poet's life.

There are nine extant MSS., eight of which (in agreement with Ten Brink and Koch) I would arrange in the following scheme :—



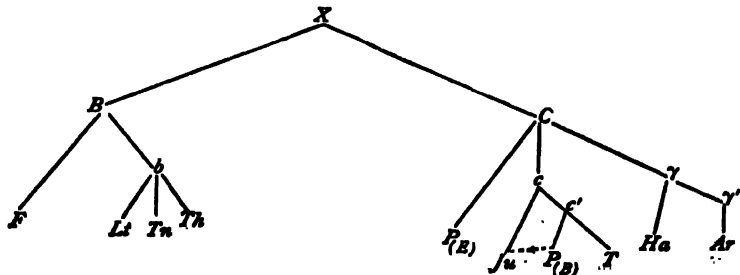
- T = Tanner MS. 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 F = Fairfax MS. 16 " "  
 B = Bodley MS. 638 " "  
 Ha. = Harleian 7578 (British Museum).  
 H = Harleian 78 " "  
 C = Cambridge University Library, Ff 1. 6.  
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tr. = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 19.

The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

MS. Harleian 7578 clearly belongs to the same group as H, but is a much better authority, and more frequently agrees with the derivatives from C. In several cases it supports emendations made by Ten Brink without consulting it (e.g. ll. 15, 19, and 101). I am in some doubt whether H and Ha. should be traced from the same original as the other MSS., or whether we should not rather in this case as in others look on H and Ha. as derivatives from an earlier draft of the poem made by Chaucer himself. MS. Phillipps 9053 I have not yet collated. The best group of MSS. is that marked C in the diagram, and of these MS. F has been used as the basis for the text.

### THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS

This poem falls well within the second period of Chaucer's work, and was probably written after the poet's second mission to Italy in 1378-79, while the *A B C* and the *Compleynt unto Pite* came in all probability soon after the date of the first mission in 1372-73. The story is founded on one told in the *Metamorphoses* iv. 170-189 of the love of Mars for Venus and its discovery by Apollo. With this story Chaucer combines the popular astronomy of the day in accordance with which the planet Mars is in conjunction with the planet Venus in the sign of Taurus. Taurus is one of the two astrological houses of Venus, and into this the Sun (Phoebus Apollo) enters on April 12th each year. On the basis of two notes made by Shirley in the Trinity College MS. this astrological mythical story is also an allegory written 'at the comandement of the renowned and excellent Prynce my lord the Duc John of Lancastre,' and 'made by (i.e. about) my lady of York, daughter to the kyng of Spayne and my lord huntingdon, some tyme Duc of Excestre.' The 'lady of York' was John of Gaunt's sister-in-law, through his second wife Constance of Castile. 'My lord huntingdon' was John Holande, half-brother to Richard II., who married Elizabeth, daughter of Blanche, first Duchess of Lancaster. There are eight extant MSS. and one edition (that of Julian Notary 1499-1502) available as authorities. Of these the Fairfax, Tanner, and Longleat MSS., which belong to one group, are the best on the whole. The remaining authorities are difficult to arrange with certainty, but the following scheme expresses my view of their general interconnection. There is some room for doubt as to whether groups B and C should be traced to a single original rather than two drafts made by the poet at different times.



## INTRODUCTION

- F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tn. = Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 P(ε) = Pepys 2006 Hand E (Magdalene College, Cambridge).  
 P(β) = Pepys 2006 Hand B  
 T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.  
 Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).  
 Ar. = Arch. Selden B 24 (Bodleian Library).  
 Ju. = Julian Notary's Edition, 1499-1502.  
 Th. = William Thynne's Edition, London 1532.

The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

The MSS. belonging to group B are certainly better on the whole than any single MS. in group C, but were a satisfactory example of this latter tradition available it would undoubtedly be the one to form the basis of a text. In ll. 1, 3, 4, 11, and many others the right reading is clearly furnished by one or more of this group, which has possibly been neglected because it has been seen to include such MSS. as the Harleian 7333 and Arch. Selden. These two authorities are of little or no independent value, more particularly the latter, which gives a text that has been purposely edited, yet they sometimes support good readings in MSS. of the B group in opposition to other MSS. of their own group, and such testimony is valuable. Examples are—l. 20, *to dure for to endure*; l. 75, *is for was*; l. 120, *this for the*, and *smoking for smoketh or smoked*; l. 143, *Venus weeping for weping Venus*, etc. Had P(ε) been complete, it would have been the best basis for this text; as it is, some approach to a satisfactory result has, it is hoped, been obtained by a combination of P(ε) as far as it goes (viz. to l. 84) and P(β), with aid here and there from Ju. and T, and the adoption where called for of readings from the B group, such as e.g. l. 66, where the C group read *that thilke*, l. 80, where they read *he fil* (= fell), and some others, among them ll. 20, 75, 120, and 143 referred to above.

### A COMPLEYNT TO HIS LADY

This interesting *pot pourri* of verse-forms is found in only two MSS. and one edition, that of Stowe 1561. The two MSS. are Harleian 78 (by Shirley), and MS. Phillippa 9053 at Cheltenham, which last I have not been able to consult except indirectly through the critical notes in Professor Skeat's six-volume edition of Chaucer. He there says that Ph. is copied from Harleian 78, and this seems to be the case. All three authorities tack this fragment on to the *Compleynt unto Pite*, which is, however, complete without it. The poem is clearly intended as a metrical experiment, or series of experiments, and should not be taken too seriously. The similarity of a phrase here and there to the *Anelida and Arcyte*, and of the opening of the third section with the *Parlement of Foules* (ll. 90, 91), which are both serious poems, may just as well point to this work preceding them as following them in date. Some time shortly after 1373-74 seems, therefore, still to be most probable.

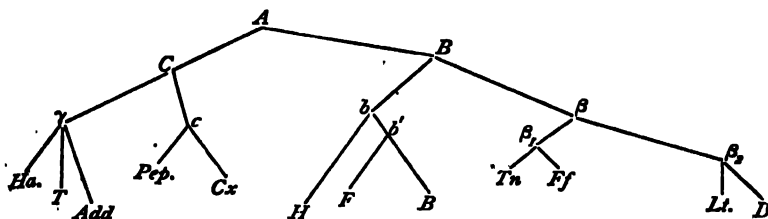
### ANELIDA AND ARCYTE

This poem, like the preceding one, is chiefly interesting for the elaborate metrical experiments for which Chaucer made it the excuse. It opens with three

stanzas from the *Tesside*, which Chaucer recast later into heroic couplets for his *Knights Tale*. These are followed by four based partly on Statius, and these in turn by three more from the *Tesside*. It is possible that at least the first six stanzas and a half formed part of an earlier translation of the *Tesside*, now lost, and that the poet refers to this earlier work in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* when he says 'he made . . . al the love of Palamon and Arcyte of Thebes, thogh the story is knowen lyte.' At l. 47 commences the story of 'quene Anelida and fals Arcite,' and this continues down to l. 210. What the source of this tale may be we do not know. At l. 211 begins the elaborate 'Compleynt of feire Anelida upon fals Arcite,' a more ambitious poem of the same kind as the *Compleynt to his Lady*. The fourteen stanzas of which it consists are arranged in a poem or introduction, two movements of six stanzas each, and a conclusion. With the exception of the last two stanzas in each of the movements of six, the stanzas are of nine decasyllabic lines rhyming *aab, aab, bab*. The fifth stanzas in the two movements or Strophes of six are divided into two parts, each of eight lines of octosyllabics, except the fourth and eighth which are decasyllabic. In the first part the rhymes run *aaab, aaab*, in the second the same rhymes are used in the reverse order *bbba, bbba*. The sixth stanza in each of the movements is of nine decasyllabics, rhymed as in the main body of the poem, but with the additional ornament of an internal rhyme on the fourth and eighth syllable of each line.

At the conclusion of the Compleynt the story is resumed, but breaks off after a single stanza which is only found in five of the eleven MSS. Chaucer doubtless intended to reintroduce Theseus, with whom the poem opens, as the avenger of Anelida.

There are eleven MSS. and one edition (Caxton's) of this poem, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).

T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

Add. = Shirley's Additional 16, 165 (British Museum).

Pep. = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

H = Harleian 372 (British Museum).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638

Tn. = Tanner 346

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 (Cambridge University Library).

Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).

D = Digby 181 (Bodleian Library).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition, c. 1477-78.

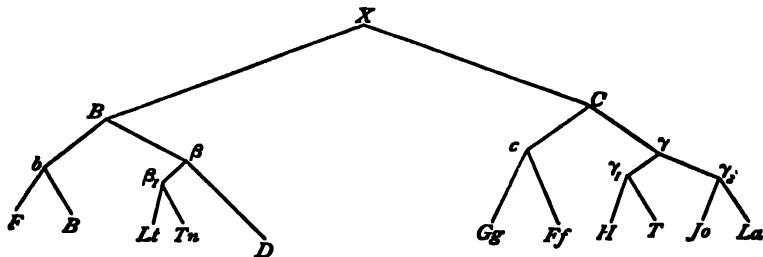
The best group of MSS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

## THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

This charming fancy is the only poem of any length written during the years that Chaucer was engaged upon his great masterpiece, the *Troilus and Cressida*. As Dr. Koch has shown, the poet must have been commissioned in the summer of 1382 to celebrate the wooing and winning of Anne of Bohemia by Richard II. The marriage had taken place on January 14th of that year, after the successful mission of the English ambassadors to Bohemia in the previous January. Anne is represented in the poem by the formel (*i.e.* female) eagle and Richard by the royal eagle, while the two *tercels* (*i.e.* males), 'of lower kind,' who plead for her love, are the Prince of Bavaria and the Margrave of Misnia, to each of whom Anne had been in turn contracted.

The material supplied him was too slight in itself for a poem of sufficient length and dignity, so the poet elaborated and ornamented his theme by a summary of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, a description of the Garden of Love taken from the *Treide* of Boccaccio and a description of Nature and her birds based upon a passage in the *Planctus Naturæ* of Alain de l'Isle, though the Cistercian bishop had represented them in mediæval manner as embroidered on the garment of the Goddess, not, as Chaucer does, full of life and wit. His use of other men's work is seen to be much freer than it once was, and the poem is in all real senses an original one.

There are fourteen MSS. and one printed edition (Caxton's) which serve as authority for this poem, but some of them are so corrupt and show so much evidence of contamination that it is very difficult to discover their relation to the rest. These doubtful MSS. are printed below the remainder, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



- F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 B = Bodley 638 " "  
 Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tn. = Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 D = Digby 181 " "  
 Gg = Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27.  
 Ff = Cambridge University MS. Ff 1. 6.  
 H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 T = Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 Jo. = St. John's College, Oxford, MS. lvii.  
 La. = Laud MS. 416 (Bodleian Library).

## INTRODUCTION

Seld. = Archibald Selden B 24.

Hh = Cambridge University MS. Hh 4. 12.

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best group of MS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

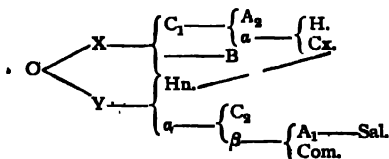
## BOECE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The *Consolation of Philosophy* was one of the most popular books of the fourteenth century, and it is not to be wondered that Chaucer should have undertaken a translation of it. How great an interest this classic had over him can be seen from the numerous quotations from it he makes all through his work. His Latin scholarship, however, was by no means adequate to the task, a deficiency which he probably felt himself, for he makes very free use of an existing French version now commonly ascribed to Jehan de Meung. He used also the paraphrase which was common in early texts of the *Consolation*, as well as the commentary ascribed by tradition to Thomas Aquinas, and printed in fifteenth century editions of Boethius.

Despite these props and stays, however, Chaucer makes blunders which cannot be charged to the incompetent scholarship of the time, but must be laid directly to his own insufficient knowledge of Latin idiom, a fault doubtless due to the fact that the *Boece* is one of the earliest of his longer works.

This edition contains a critical text made from all the known MSS. in which the translation has been preserved to us (including two newly-discovered ones). It follows MS. II. i. 38 (C<sub>1</sub>) Cambridge University Library, with such departures as are justified by critical examination of the other known MSS. These are:—MS. Additional 16,165 (A<sub>2</sub>); MS. Harleian 2421 (H); MS. Bodley 797 (B); MS. Hengwrt 393 (Hn), at Peniarth; MS. II. 3. 21 (C<sub>2</sub>) of the Cambridge University Library; MS. Additional 10,340 (A<sub>1</sub>); MS. Salisbury 13 (Sal.), in Salisbury Cathedral; MS. Auct. 3. 5 (Com.), in the Bodleian Library. Caxton's edition, made from a with frequent readings from Hn., is denoted by Cx.; Jehan de Meung's French translation is quoted from MS. Fr. 1079 (Fr.) unless otherwise noted. The text is based upon the following arrangement of the MSS., each of which, except Sal., which is a copy of A<sub>1</sub>, has been collated all through the work.



The orthography is that of C<sub>1</sub>, except where the few northern forms peculiar to the MS. have been changed to Chaucer's spelling. Several nonsensical sentences are set right for the first time by the critical method followed, but there still remain some passages which evidently got wrong in the original; it is very fortunate for us that the French version makes almost all of these clear.

## TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

(W. S. McCORMICK)

*Troilus and Criseyde* is based upon Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, from which nearly a third is translated or adapted. The characters of the hero and heroine are, however, considerably modified, and Pandarus, who is transformed from the cousin to the uncle of Cressida, is practically Chaucer's own creation. For the development of the story in Book v., Chaucer evidently consulted the *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-More, possibly also the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne; and for the incidents in Cassandra's exposition of Troilus' dream Chaucer is indebted to Ovid and Statius.

Chaucer's further borrowings are few. Petrarch's eighty-eighth sonnet forms Troilus' love-song in Book i. 400-420. There are three considerable passages from Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, which Chaucer was probably translating about the time of the composition of *Troilus*. The first (iii. 813-833) on 'fals felicité' is put into the mouth of Cressida; in the second (iii. 1744-1768) Boethius' celebration of divine love serves Troilus for another love-song; while the third (iv. 953-1085), Troilus' dreary moralising in the temple, is a fairly close rendering of Boethius' chapter on Free Will and Predestination. In Book v. two passages (ll. 1-14, and ll. 1807-1837) are taken from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and the first three lines of the last stanza from Dante's *Paradiso*.

It is worth remarking that three of the above passages from Boethius and the *Teseide*, viz. iii. 1744-1768, iv. 953-1085, v. 1807-1827, are omitted in some MSS.

The relations of the MSS. of *Troilus and Criseyde* to each other are so complicated and variable, that a detailed statement is here impossible. In many cases portions of the same manuscript have been taken from different sources; and few manuscripts are without traces of contamination. They fall, however, for the most part, into three families (designated here  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$ ), which seem to represent three distinct editions or revisions; although in a number of passages, more especially in Book v., the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  manuscripts frequently alter their relations to each other, and throughout the poem the variations among the  $\beta$  manuscripts are considerable. It appears probable, from a comparison of the readings of the three types with the originals from which Chaucer was translating, that in  $\alpha$  type we have the first draft of the poem, copied in parts during its composition; that manuscripts of the  $\beta$  type give more than one partial revision by Chaucer of copies of his work before or after its completion; and that the  $\gamma$  type represents a later copy, either carelessly corrected by the author, or collated by some hand after Chaucer's death.

The following list of authorities may serve to indicate in a general way the relations of the MSS., or portions of MSS., to each type, at least for the first four Books.

## MANUSCRIPTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| { | I. R.—MS. Phillipps 8252.   |
|   | $\alpha$ throughout.  |
|   | II. H <sub>2</sub> —MS. Harl. 3943.   |
|   | $\alpha$ (close to P) till iv. 196; $\beta$ (close to H <sub>1</sub> ) later.               |
| { | III. H <sub>3</sub> —MS. Harl. 2392.  |
|   | $\alpha$ (with $\beta$ readings) till III. 231 (?); $\beta$ (with $\alpha$ readings) later. |



- IV. G—MS. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (first and last leaves of all the Books cut out).  
 $\beta$  till II. III.;  $\alpha$  later.  
 V. H<sub>2</sub>—MS. Harl. 4912—(ends at IV. 686).  
 $\beta$  till II. III.;  $\alpha$  later. Throughout close to G.  
 VI. J—MS. LI. St. John's College, Cambridge.  
 $\beta$  (with  $\alpha$  readings) till IV. 400 (?);  $\alpha$  later.  
 VII. R—MS. Rawlinson Poet 163. Bodleian.  
 $\beta$  throughout; omits Prologues to Books II. III. and IV.  
 VIII. H<sub>3</sub>—MS. Harl. 1239.  
 $\beta$  till II. 1033;  $\gamma$  from II. 1034 till III. 231; later, collated from various sources, but keeping close to  $\alpha$  through Book IV.  
 IX. S—MS. Arch. Selden B 24. Bodleian.  
 collated throughout from  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ , and following many of the errors of  $\gamma$  till II. 516.  
 X. A—MS. Addit. 12,044, British Museum. (Ends at v. 1820.)  
 $\gamma$  throughout (with occasional  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  reading).  
 XI. D—MS. v. ii. 13. Durham.  
 close to A.  
 XII. S<sub>2</sub>—MS. Arch. Selden *supra* 56. Bodleian.  
 $\gamma$  throughout (with occasional  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  reading).  
 XIII. Dg—MS. Digby 181. Bodleian. (Ends at III. 532.)  
 close to S<sub>2</sub>.  
 XIV. Cp—MS. 61 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.  
 $\gamma$  throughout.  
 XV. H<sub>1</sub>—MS. Harl. 2280.  
 close to Cp.  
 XVI. Cl—MS. Campsall.  
 close to Cp. and H<sub>1</sub>.

[To these may be added two MS. fragments printed in *Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems* (Chaucer Society, 1880); and one MS. fragment of Book v. 1443-1498 in Cambridge University Library.]

#### EDITIONS

- XVII. Cx.—Caxton's Edition (1484).  
 $\beta$  throughout (with  $\gamma$  readings).  
 XVIII. Th.—Thynne's Edition (1532).  
 $\gamma$  throughout (with Cx. and  $\alpha$  readings, more especially in Books I. and II.)

[The Editions of Wynkyn de Worde (1517) and of Pynson (1526) are reprints of Caxton's text. In Sir Francis Kinaston's Latin Translation of the first two Books (1635), the English text is a reprint of Thynne's.]

MSS. J, Cp., H<sub>1</sub>, and Cl. are the most accurate as to grammatical forms; but none can be depended upon.

The present text is based upon J (MS. LI. St. John's College), and has been corrected throughout from readings of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  types alone. But all the authorities have been examined, and all the important variations of  $\gamma$  type are given. In order to curtail the critical notes as much as possible, the mistakes occurring in J *alone* are corrected, and the spelling (including the insertion or deletion of final *e*) is normalised, in most cases, without special mention; also, where possible,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$  have been employed to represent the MSS., or the majority of the MSS., belonging to these types respectively.

In printing the text for this edition, some assistance has been offered to the general reader by the indication of stressed syllables, by the use of the dotted *˘* to

## INTRODUCTION

note a separate syllable in the middle of the line, and by marking elision in such words as *n'as*, *n'il*, *n'olde*, *n'ot*, *th'ilke*, *th'effect*, *m'asteris*, *this* (for *this is*), etc. The modern use of *i* and *j*, and of *u* and *v*, has been adopted, as well as the modern spelling of *thou*, *you*, *our*, etc. In *her* (= *her*), and *hir* (= *their*), *o* (interjection), and *ge* (= *one*), *on* and *oon* (= *one*), *of* and *off*, *the*, *thou*, and *thi* (= *thrive*), the spelling has been differentiated to indicate the meaning; and in French words ending in *e*, the accent has been retained. The final *e* of *evere*, *nevere*, *levere*, etc., has been retained, as Chaucer's pronunciation was evidently *ev're*, *nev're*, *lev're*, etc.

### CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO ADAM HIS OWNE SCRIVEYN

This keen *joue d'esprit* is only found in one manuscript (Trin. Coll. Camb. MS. R 3. 20) and in Shirley's edition of 1561. There can be no doubt as to its authenticity. Its probable date is 1385. (H. F. H.)

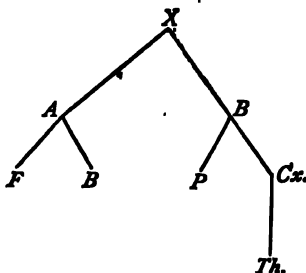
## THE HOUS OF FAME

(H. FRANK HEATH)

With the *Hous of Fame* we leave the period of the poet's finished work. From this time on his plans were far more ambitious, but they were doomed to remain unfinished. The *Hous of Fame*, the *Legende of Good Women*, and, greatest of all, the *Canterbury Tales*, were none of them completed. At the close of the *Troilus* Chaucer had uttered the hope that God would 'Sende (him) might to make in som comedie,' and most critics are agreed that the *Hous of Fame* was meant to be the fulfilment of this intention. There is some reason for thinking, I believe, that the *Hous of Fame* had been commenced some years before 1383, and then laid aside. When the *Troilus* was complete, this unfinished 'comedy' came to Chaucer's mind, and hence the prayer. It is difficult, on any other assumption, to understand the use of the short couplet, an unsatisfactory measure at best, particularly for such a theme as the story of Æneas, which takes up the major part of the first book. Having finished the second book—in which the story advances rapidly enough, and with a light humorous touch throughout—the work was laid aside. When it was again taken in hand on the completion of the *Troilus* a new tone is noticeable, and a new invocation to Apollo, 'god of science and of light,' marks the fresh start. This is followed by an apology for the 'light and lewd' verse. It is not 'craft' but 'sentence' which is his aim, and throughout the humour is no longer playful but deeply ironical, for the poet has learnt to see his art and life in the light of common day. The close of the fragment describing the hall of Fame and the petitioners to the goddess is the purest piece of satire Chaucer ever wrote. But all this destroyed the original playful plan and rendered some striking close necessary. Failing this, no wonder the poet's golden eagle, having borne him up to the realm of Fame, finds it hard, as has been remarked, to get down again. No wonder 'the workmanship of the separate parts of the poem is much more masterly,' as the same critic adds, 'than the general plan.' The fragment we possess of the third book is longer than the first two put together. Chaucer had put new wine into an old

bottle.<sup>1</sup> The care bestowed on the poem is evident from the number of sources from which the poet drew: The mediæval machinery of a dream with a description of the temple of Venus offers the opportunity for giving an outline of the story of the *Æneid*. \* Then follows the appearance of the eagle and the journey to the house of Fame, the description of which is taken from the *Metamorphoses* xii. 33-63. Professor Ten Brink was the first to point out that in general plan and in a number of individual passages the influence of the *Divina Commedia* can be traced. Both poems are visions, in both there is a heaven-sent guide who may but accompany the poet in parts of his journey; both are divided into three books. Very probably the importance of Vergil in Dante's poem suggested the story of the *Æneid*. Certainly the idea of the golden eagle is taken from him (*Purgat.* ix.). The apostrophe to 'Thought,' at the opening of the second book, was suggested by the *Inferno* (ii. 7-9), the invocation in the third book by that at the beginning of the *Paradiso* (i. 13-27). The philosophy, however, is not Dante's, but rather—as the poet himself suggests—that of Boethius (ii. 464 ff.); yet the poem as a whole is Chaucer's, and none but his.

The *House of Fame* was not likely to be popular, and there are unfortunately only three MSS. and two editions to serve as authorities. I arrange them as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638

P = Pepps 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge), incomplete.

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Th. = W. Thynne's Edition (1532).

The better group is B, and MS. P has been used as the basis of the text so far as it is available. From that point on Cx. and Th. were used with the aid of F and B. Th., it should be remarked, is not merely a reprint of Cx., for Thynne certainly had access to and made use of other authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Some support appears to be lent to this theory by the Fairfax MS., which commences the third book on f. 169, after a wide space, with a large illuminated capital, similar to that used at the opening of the poem; whilst the second book, which commences on f. 161, runs straight on after the close of the first without any space, and with a capital, which, though similar in design to that used for the other two books, is not quite so large.

## THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

*The Legende of Good Women*, as Chaucer planned it, was intended to consist of a Prologue, the stories of nineteen women who have been true to love, and lastly, the legend of the crown of womanhood, Queen Alcestis, who gave up her own life to save her husband's. Such a series of poems had plainly been for some time in Chaucer's mind. The goodness of Alceste is the subject of two stanzas in the *Troilus*, and in the *House of Fame* (Bk. i. ll. 388-426), after telling the story of Dido out of Virgil's *Aeneid*, he gives quite a list of other faithful women, to whom, doubtless, he meant to apply the phrase he uses of Dido, that if it were not too long to endite he would have liked to write her love in full. Chaucer was certainly occupied with the *House of Fame* in 1383-1384, and the *Legende*—in which it is mentioned first in the poet's list of his own writings—must have immediately succeeded it. We know that on 17th February 1385 he obtained permission to exercise his Comptroller-ship by deputy, and it has been conjectured that the intention he expresses of sending this new poem to the Queen (ll. 496, 497), and the probability that she was meant to be identified with the good Alceste, are marks of gratitude for this particular favour, which may have been obtained through her intervention. Lydgate, in the Prologue to his *Fall of Princes*, even says that the *Legende* was written 'at the request of the queene,' but if so it would surely have been duly completed. Everything, however, points to 1385 as the year of its composition.

Of the nineteen (or twenty) legends planned, only nine were written. These celebrate (1) Cleopatra, who is represented (not quite in accordance, as Chaucer imagines, with 'storial sooth') as a martyr to her love for Antony; (2) Thisbe, who refused to survive her lover Pyramus (see Bottom's play in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*; (3) Dido; (4) the two victims of Jason's treachery, Hypsipyle and Medea; (5) Lucretia; (6) Ariadne; (7) Philomela, the victim of Tereus; (8) Phyllis, who slew herself for love of Demophon; (9) Hypermnestra, who accepted death at her father's hands rather than treacherously kill her husband. By the aid of some hints in the Prologue, and of a curious mention of these 'seintes legendes of Cupide' in the talk which precedes the Man of Law's story in the *Canterbury Tales*, it is possible to make a fair guess as to the names of the other ten women, in addition to Alcestis, whose praises Chaucer was too tired to sing. They belong to the same class of heroines as the nine he wrote of, and we need not trouble about them here. For the nine legends Chaucer had recourse chiefly to the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* of Ovid, but he used also two Latin works by Boccaccio, viz. his *De Claris Mulieribus* and *De Genealogia Deorum*, while the story of Dido is taken mainly from Virgil, and that of Hypsipyle and Medea from the *Historia Trojana* of Guido delle Colonne. The only other point that need be mentioned is that the Prologue (much the most interesting part of the poem) exists in two different versions. The one which appears to be the earlier has 545 lines, of which 90—including one long passage on love tales, and a reference to Chaucer's own library of 'sixty bookes olde and newe' all full of stories—do not reappear in the revised text. In this many lines are altered, the position of others transposed, and the 90 omitted lines replaced by 124 new ones, bringing the number in the second version to 579. Some of the alterations seem intended to make the poem more

## INTRODUCTION

acceptable to the Queen, the rest are poetical improvements which may easily be studied in the parallel columns in which they are printed in this edition.

Nine MSS., besides Thynne's Edition (Th.), have been collated, as printed by the Chaucer Society, for the text of this poem, viz. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (quoted as Gg); Fairfax (F); Tanner (Tan.); R 3. 19, Trinity College, Cambridge (Trin.); Arch. Seld. B 24, Bodleian Library (Arch. Seld.); Bodley MS. 638 (B); British Museum Additional MS. 9832 (Add.), and 12,524 (Add.); and Pepys MS. 2006 (Pepys).

Of these MSS. F and B must be derived immediately from the same original, and Tan., which shares most of their glaring faults, from the original of that. The text of Thynne's edition belongs to the same group, but Thynne must have collated it with other MSS., as he has supplied lines and words which F, B, and Tan. omit. In my notes F<sup>3</sup> stands for F and B; F<sup>3</sup> for F, B, and Tan.; F<sup>4</sup> for F, B, Tan., and Thynne.

The leading MS. in a second group is Trin., with which must be reckoned Add., which, however, stops at l. 1986. These two MSS. are almost as nearly identical as F and B, and contain a number of good readings. The other Museum fragment Add., which only begins at l. 1640, belongs to the same group, as also does Arch. Seld. The latter, however, is a dangerous MS. to use, as its scribe, who may have worked from the same original used for Trin. and Add., has plainly introduced many emendations of his own to smooth away difficulties of sense or metre. I have occasionally denoted the agreement of Trin. and Add. by Trin.<sup>2</sup>; of Trin. Add. and Arch. Seld. by Trin.<sup>3</sup>; and of Trin. Add. Arch. Seld. and Add., by Trin.<sup>4</sup>

The Cambridge MS. Gg stands by itself, in virtue of its possession of the first draft of the Prologue. Its readings are throughout of great importance, but its spelling is bad, and it lacks ll. 1836-1907. The Pepys fragment, which stops at l. 1367, though it has the second draft of the Prologue, is linked to Gg by possessing ll. 960, 961, which the other MSS. omit; but it sometimes agrees with the Trin. group against Gg. Its independent readings (with the possible exception of *yiftes* in l. 1126) are of no value.

In making my text I am sorry now that I did not take the Trinity MS. as my starting-point, but I for a long time suspected it of being overmuch edited. Thus the completeness and comparatively good spelling of Fairfax gave it the preference, but in my final revision I have systematically substituted the readings of the Trinity group, or of Gg, for those of the Fairfax where there was any possibility of doubt. In the matter of spelling I have cleared away a good many of the double vowels (especially *oo*) which are the chief disfigurement of F, and have removed a few eccentricities, though with a very sparing hand.

## LATER MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

### TO ROSEMOUNDE

To the *Troilus* period belongs this playful ballade, which, like the preceding poem, is only found in one MS. (Rawl. Poet. 163, leaf 114) in the Bodleian Library, where it was discovered some years since by Dr. Furnivall, and afterwards rediscovered and first published by Professor Skeat. The metaphor with which the third stanza opens, and the ironical humour of its combination with the story of *Isolde*, unmistakably declare the authorship.

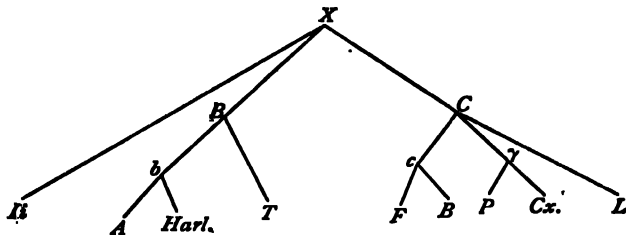
## THE FORMER AGE

This pleasant rhapsody upon the good old times is based upon Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophia* (ii. met. v.), with echoes here and there from the *Roman de la Rose*. It is only found in two MSS., both in the University Library at Cambridge. Their press marks are Ii 3. 21 and Hh 4. 12. The former is the better of the two, and has been used as the basis of the text. This and the next four poems cannot be exactly dated. They were written after 1382, and probably before 1390.

## FORTUNE

*Balades de visage sans peinture*, as this poem is called in the MSS., are a series of ballades, or rather a triple balladé, with a single envoy of seven, and possibly only six lines, in praise of the friend of the 'unpainted face,' who is faithful in adversity. It was possibly written after Chaucer's loss of office in 1386.

There are eight MSS. and one edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows :—



Ii = Cambridge University Library MS. Ii 3. 21.

A = Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Bodleian Library).

Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20 (sheet 7 lacking).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Bodleian Library).

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

L = Lansdowne MS. 699 (British Museum).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Ii is decidedly the best authority, and this has been made the basis of the text.

## TRUTH

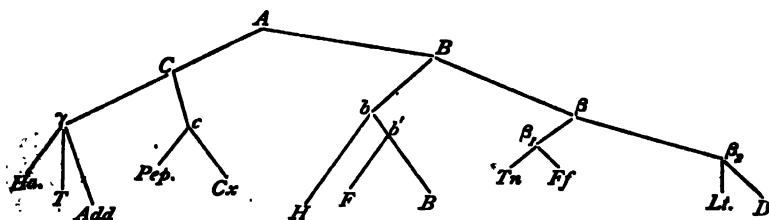
This ballade and the next, called *Gentillesse*, show Chaucer in his gravest mood, and reveal the finely-tempered spirit which underlay his ironical and sometimes cynical humour. Both poems, like the *Lak of Steadfastnesse*, owe their suggestion, no doubt, to Boethius, but *Truth* (which is the finest) less so than the others, while they all strike an intensely personal note.

## INTRODUCTION

stanzas from the *Tesside*, which Chaucer recast later into heroic couplets for his *Knights Tale*. These are followed by four based partly on Statius, and these in turn by three more from the *Tesside*. It is possible that at least the first six stanzas and a half formed part of an earlier translation of the *Tesside*, now lost, and that the poet refers to this earlier work in the Prologue to the *Legende of Good Women* when he says 'he made . . . al the love of Palamon and Arcyte of Thebes, though the story is knowen fyte.' At l. 47 commences the story of 'queene Anelida and fals Arcite,' and this continues down to l. 210. What the source of this tale may be we do not know. At l. 211 begins the elaborate 'Compleynt of feire Anelida upon fals Arcite,' a more ambitious poem of the same kind as the *Compleynt to his Lady*. The fourteen stanzas of which it consists are arranged in a poem or introduction, two movements of six stanzas each, and a conclusion. With the exception of the last two stanzas in each of the movements of six, the stanzas are of nine decasyllabic lines rhyming *aab, aab, bab*. The fifth stanzas in the two movements or Strophes of six are divided into two parts, each of eight lines of octosyllabics, except the fourth and eighth which are decasyllabic. In the first part the rhymes run *aaab, aaab*, in the second the same rhymes are used in the reverse order *bbba, bbba*. The sixth stanza in each of the movements is of nine decasyllabics, rhymed as in the main body of the poem, but with the additional ornament of an internal rhyme on the fourth and eighth syllable of each line.

At the conclusion of the *Compleynt* the story is resumed, but breaks off after a single stanza which is only found in five of the eleven MSS. Chaucer doubtless intended to reintroduce Theseus, with whom the poem opens, as the avenger of Anelida.

There are eleven MSS. and one edition (Caxton's) of this poem, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



Ha. = Harleian 7333 (British Museum).

T = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

Add. = Shirley's Additional 16, 165 (British Museum).

Pep. = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

H = Harleian 372 (British Museum).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638

Tn. = Tanner 346

Ff = MS. Ff 5. 30 (Cambridge University Library).

Lt. = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).

D = Digby 181 (Bodleian Library).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition, c. 1477-78.

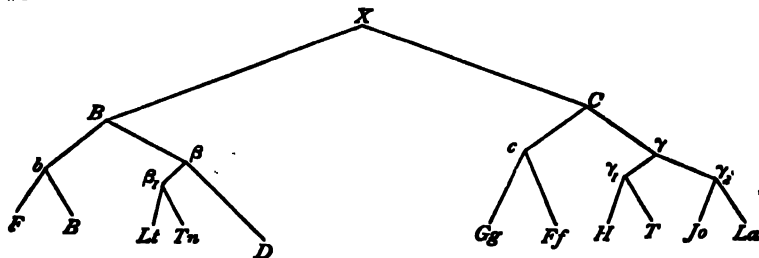
The best group of MSS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

## THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

This charming fancy is the only poem of any length written during the years that Chaucer was engaged upon his great masterpiece, the *Troilus and Criseida*. As Dr. Koch has shown, the poet must have been commissioned in the summer of 1382 to celebrate the wooing and winning of Anne of Bohemia by Richard II. The marriage had taken place on January 14th of that year, after the successful mission of the English ambassadors to Bohemia in the previous January. Anne is represented in the poem by the formel (*i.e.* female) eagle and Richard by the royal eagle, while the two 'tercels' (*i.e.* males), 'of lower kind,' who plead for her love, are the Prince of Bavaria and the Margrave of Misnia, to each of whom Anne had been in turn contracted.

The material supplied him was too slight in itself for a poem of sufficient length and dignity, so the poet elaborated and ornamented his theme by a summary of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, a description of the Garden of Love taken from the *Tesside* of Boccaccio and a description of Nature and her birds based upon a passage in the *Planctus Nature* of Alain de l'Isle, though the Cistercian bishop had represented them in mediæval manner as embroidered on the garment of the Goddess, not, as Chaucer does, full of life and wit. His use of other men's work is seen to be much freer than it once was, and the poem is in all real senses an original one.

There are fourteen MSS. and one printed edition (Caxton's) which serve as authority for this poem, but some of them are so corrupt and show so much evidence of contamination that it is very difficult to discover their relation to the rest. These doubtful MSS. are printed below the remainder, which I agree with Koch in arranging as follows:—



- F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 B = Bodley 638 " "  
 Lt = Longleat MS. 258 (Marquis of Bath).  
 Tn = Tanner 346 (Bodleian Library).  
 D = Digby 181 " "  
 Gg = Cambridge University MS. Gg 4. 27.  
 Ff = Cambridge University MS. Ff 1. 6.  
 H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 T = Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 Jo = St. John's College, Oxford, MS. lvi.  
 La = Laud MS. 416 (Bodleian Library).



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Seld. = Archibald Selden B 24.

Hh = Cambridge University MS. Hh 4. 12.

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best group of MS. is C, and this is the one used as the basis of the text.

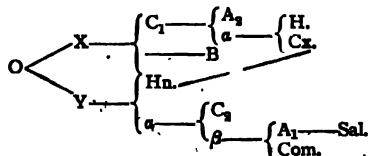
## BOECE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The *Consolation of Philosophy* was one of the most popular books of the fourteenth century, and it is not to be wondered that Chaucer should have undertaken a translation of it. How great an interest this classic had over him can be seen from the numerous quotations from it he makes all through his work. His Latin scholarship, however, was by no means adequate to the task, a deficiency which he probably felt himself, for he makes very free use of an existing French version now commonly ascribed to Jehan de Meung. He used also the paraphrase which was common in early texts of the *Consolation*, as well as the commentary ascribed by tradition to Thomas Aquinas, and printed in fifteenth century editions of Boethius.

Despite these props and stays, however, Chaucer makes blunders which cannot be charged to the incompetent scholarship of the time, but must be laid directly to his own insufficient knowledge of Latin idiom, a fault doubtless due to the fact that the *Boece* is one of the earliest of his longer works.

This edition contains a critical text made from all the known MSS. in which the translation has been preserved to us (including two newly-discovered ones). It follows MS. II. i. 38 (C<sub>1</sub>) Cambridge University Library, with such departures as are justified by critical examination of the other known MSS. These are:—MS. Additional 16,165 (A<sub>2</sub>); MS. Harleian 2421 (H); MS. Bodley 797 (B); MS. Hengwrt 393 (Hn), at Peniarth; MS. II. 3. 21 (C<sub>2</sub>) of the Cambridge University Library; MS. Additional 10,340 (A<sub>1</sub>); MS. Salisbury 13 (Sal.), in Salisbury Cathedral; MS. Auct. 3. 5 (Com.), in the Bodleian Library. Caxton's edition, made from a with frequent readings from Hn., is denoted by Cx.; Jehan de Meung's French translation is quoted from MS. Fr. 1079 (Fr.) unless otherwise noted. The text is based upon the following arrangement of the MSS., each of which, except Sal., which is a copy of A<sub>1</sub>, has been collated all through the work.



The orthography is that of C<sub>1</sub>, except where the few northern forms peculiar to the MS. have been changed to Chaucer's spelling. Several nonsensical sentences are set right for the first time by the critical method followed, but there still remain some passages which evidently got wrong in the original; it is very fortunate for us that the French version makes almost all of these clear.

## TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

(W. S. McCORMICK)

*Troilus and Criseyde* is based upon Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, from which nearly a third is translated or adapted. The characters of the hero and heroine are, however, considerably modified, and Pandarus, who is transformed from the cousin to the uncle of Cressida, is practically Chaucer's own creation. For the development of the story in Book v., Chaucer evidently consulted the *Roman de Troie* of Benoit de Sainte-More, possibly also the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne; and for the incidents in Cassandra's exposition of Troilus' dream Chaucer is indebted to Ovid and Statius.

Chaucer's further borrowings are few. Petrarch's eighty-eighth sonnet forms Troilus' love-song in Book i. 400-420. There are three considerable passages from Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, which Chaucer was probably translating about the time of the composition of *Troilus*. The first (iii. 813-833) on 'fals felicité' is put into the mouth of Cressida; in the second (iii. 1744-1768) Boethius' celebration of divine love serves Troilus for another love-song; while the third (iv. 953-1085), Troilus' dreary moralising in the temple, is a fairly close rendering of Boethius' chapter on Free Will and Predestination. In Book v. two passages (ll. 1-14, and ll. 1807-1837) are taken from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and the first three lines of the last stanza from Dante's *Paradiso*.

It is worth remarking that three of the above passages from *Boethius* and the *Teseide*, viz. iii. 1744-1768, iv. 953-1085, v. 1807-1827, are omitted in some MSS.

The relations of the MSS. of *Troilus and Criseyde* to each other are so complicated and variable, that a detailed statement is here impossible. In many cases portions of the same manuscript have been taken from different sources; and few manuscripts are without traces of contamination. They fall, however, for the most part, into three families (designated here  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$ ), which seem to represent three distinct editions or revisions; although in a number of passages, more especially in Book v., the  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  manuscripts frequently alter their relations to each other, and throughout the poem the variations among the  $\beta$  manuscripts are considerable. It appears probable, from a comparison of the readings of the three types with the originals from which Chaucer was translating, that in a type we have the first draft of the poem, copied in parts during its composition; that manuscripts of the  $\beta$  type give more than one partial revision by Chaucer of copies of his work before or after its completion; and that the  $\gamma$  type represents a later copy, either carelessly corrected by the author, or collated by some hand after Chaucer's death.

The following list of authorities may serve to indicate in a general way the relations of the MSS., or portions of MSS., to each type, at least for the first four Books.

## MANUSCRIPTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| { | I. R <sub>1</sub> —MS. Philipps 825a.<br>$\alpha$ throughout.   |
|   | II. H <sub>1</sub> —MS. Harl. 3943.<br>$\alpha$ (close to P) till iv. 196; $\beta$ (close to H <sub>1</sub> ) later.                |
|   | III. H <sub>2</sub> —MS. Harl. 2392.<br>$\alpha$ (with $\beta$ readings) till III. 231 (?); $\beta$ (with $\alpha$ readings) later. |

- IV. G—MS. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (first and last leaves of all the Books cut out).  
 $\beta$  till II. III.;  $\alpha$  later.
- V. H<sub>1</sub>—MS. Harl. 4912—(ends at IV. 686).  
 $\beta$  till II. III.;  $\alpha$  later. Throughout close to G.
- VI. J—MS. LI. St. John's College, Cambridge.  
 $\beta$  (with  $\alpha$  readings) till IV. 400 (?);  $\alpha$  later.
- VII. R—MS. Rawlinson Poet 163. Bodleian.  
 $\beta$  throughout; omits Prologues to Books II. III. and IV.
- VIII. H<sub>2</sub>—MS. Harl. 1239.  
 $\beta$  till II. 1033;  $\gamma$  from II. 1034 till III. 231; later, collated from various sources, but keeping close to  $\alpha$  through Book IV.
- IX. S—MS. Arch. Selden B 24. Bodleian.  
 collated throughout from  $\gamma$  and  $\beta$ , and following many of the errors of  $\gamma$  till II. 516.
- X. A—MS. Addit. 12,044, British Museum. (Ends at V. 1820.)  
 $\gamma$  throughout (with occasional  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  reading).
- XI. D—MS. v. II. 13. Durham.  
 close to A.
- XII. S<sub>2</sub>—MS. Arch. Selden *supra* 56. Bodleian.  
 $\gamma$  throughout (with occasional  $\alpha$  or  $\beta$  reading).
- XIII. Dg—MS. Digby 181. Bodleian. (Ends at III. 532.)  
 close to S<sub>2</sub>.
- XIV. Cp.—MS. 61 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.  
 $\gamma$  throughout.
- XV. H<sub>3</sub>—MS. Harl. 2280.  
 close to Cp.
- XVI. Cl.—MS. Campsall.  
 close to Cp. and H<sub>3</sub>.

[To these may be added two MS. fragments printed in *Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems* (Chaucer Society, 1880); and one MS. fragment of Book v. 1443-1498 in Cambridge University Library.]

#### EDITIONS

- XVII. Cx.—Caxton's Edition (1484).  
 $\beta$  throughout (with  $\gamma$  readings).
- XVIII. Th.—Thynne's Edition (1532).  
 $\gamma$  throughout (with Cx. and  $\alpha$  readings, more especially in Books I. and II.)

[The Editions of Wynkyn de Worde (1517) and of Pynson (1526) are reprints of Caxton's text. In Sir Francis Kinaston's Latin Translation of the first two Books (1635), the English text is a reprint of Thynne's.]

MSS. J, Cp., H<sub>1</sub>, and Cl. are the most accurate as to grammatical forms; but none can be depended upon.

The present text is based upon J (MS. LI. St. John's College), and has been corrected throughout from readings of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  types alone. But all the authorities have been examined, and all the important variations of  $\gamma$  type are given. In order to curtail the critical notes as much as possible, the mistakes occurring in J *alone* are corrected, and the spelling (including the insertion or deletion of final *e*) is normalised, in most cases, without special mention; also, where possible,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$  have been employed to represent the MSS., or the majority of the MSS., belonging to these types respectively.

In printing the text for this edition, some assistance has been offered to the general reader by the indication of stressed syllables, by the use of the dotted *˙* to

demonstrate a separate syllable in the middle of the line, and by marking elision in such words as *n'as*, *n'll*, *n'olde*, *n'ot*, *th'ilke*, *th'effect*, *m'asteris*, *this'* (for *this is*), etc. The modern use of *i* and *j*, and of *u* and *v*, has been adopted, as well as the modern spelling of *thou*, *you*, *our*, etc. In *her* (= *her*), and *hir* (= *their*), *o'* (interjection), and *oe* (= *one*), *on* and *oon* (= *one*), *of* and *off*, *the*, *thoe*, and *thé* (= *thrive*), the spelling has been differentiated to indicate the meaning; and in French words ending in *i*, the accent has been retained. The final *s* of *euere*, *nevere*, *levere*, etc., has been retained, as Chaucer's pronunciation was evidently *eu're*, *nevr'e*, *levr'e*, etc.

### CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO ADAM HIS OWNE SCRIVEYN

This keen *jeu d'esprit* is only found in one manuscript (Trin. Coll. Camb. MS. R 3. 20) and in Shirley's edition of 1561. There can be no doubt as to its authenticity. Its probable date is 1385. (H. F. H.)

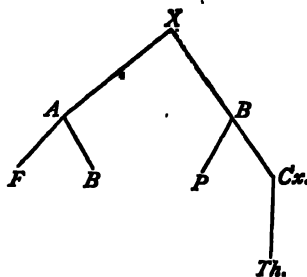
## THE HOUS OF FAME

(H. FRANK HEATH)

With the *Hous of Fame* we leave the period of the poet's finished work. From this time on his plans were far more ambitious, but they were doomed to remain unfinished. The *Hous of Fame*, the *Legende of Good Women*, and, greatest of all, the *Canterbury Tales*, were none of them completed. At the close of the *Troilus* Chaucer had uttered the hope that God would 'Sende (him) might to make in som comedie,' and most critics are agreed that the *Hous of Fame* was meant to be the fulfilment of this intention. There is some reason for thinking, I believe, that the *Hous of Fame* had been commenced some years before 1383, and then laid aside. When the *Troilus* was complete, this unfinished 'comedy' came to Chaucer's mind, and hence the prayer. It is difficult, on any other assumption, to understand the use of the short couplet, an unsatisfactory measure at best, particularly for such a theme as the story of Æneas, which takes up the major part of the first book. Having finished the second book—in which the story advances rapidly enough, and with a light humorous touch throughout—the work was laid aside. When it was again taken in hand on the completion of the *Troilus* a new tone is noticeable, and a new invocation to Apollo, 'god of science and of light,' marks the fresh start. This is followed by an apology for the 'light and lewd' verse. It is not 'craft' but 'sentence' which is his aim, and throughout the humour is no longer playful but deeply ironical, for the poet has learnt to see his art and life in the light of common day. The close of the fragment describing the hall of Fame and the petitioners to the goddess is the purest piece of satire Chaucer ever wrote. But all this destroyed the original playful plan and rendered some striking close necessary. Failing this, no wonder the poet's golden eagle, having borne him up to the realm of Fame, finds it hard, as has been remarked, to get down again. No wonder 'the workmanship of the separate parts of the poem is much more masterly,' as the same critic adds, 'than the general plan.' The fragment we possess of the third book is longer than the first two put together. Chaucer had put new wine into an old

1 The care bestowed on the poem is evident from the number of sources from which the poet drew. The mediæval machinery of a dream with a description of the temple of Venus offers the opportunity for giving an outline of the story in the *Æneid*.<sup>1</sup> Then follows the appearance of the eagle and the journey to the house of Fame, the description of which is taken from the *Metamorphoses* xii. 23-63. Professor Ten Brink was the first to point out that in general plan and in a number of individual passages the influence of the *Divina Commedia* can be traced. Both poems are visions, in both there is a heaven-sent guide who may but accompany the poet in parts of his journey; both are divided into three books. Very probably the importance of Vergil in Dante's poem suggested the story of the *Æneid*. Certainly the idea of the golden eagle is taken from him (*Purgat.* ix.). The apostrophe to 'Thought,' at the opening of the second book, was suggested by the *Inferno* (ii. 7-9), the invocation in the third book by that at the beginning of the *Paradiso* (i. 13-27). The philosophy, however, is not Dante's, but rather—as the poet himself suggests—that of Boethius (ii. 464 ff.); yet the poem as a whole is Chaucer's, and none but his.

The *House of Fame* was not likely to be popular, and there are unfortunately only three MSS. and two editions to serve as authorities. I arrange them as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 " "

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge), incomplete.

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Th. = W. Thynne's Edition (1532).

The better group is B, and MS. P has been used as the basis of the text so far as it is available. From that point on Cx. and Th. were used with the aid of F and B. Th., it should be remarked, is not merely a reprint of Cx., for Thynne certainly had access to and made use of other authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Some support appears to be lent to this theory by the Fairfax MS., which commences the third book on f. 169, after a wide space, with a large illuminated capital, similar to that used at the opening of the poem; whilst the second book, which commences on f. 161, runs straight on after the close of the first without any space, and with a capital, which, though similar in design to that used for the other two books, is not quite so large.

## THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN

(ALFRED W. POLLARD)

*The Legende of Good Women*, as Chaucer planned it, was intended to consist of a Prologue, the stories of nineteen women who have been true to love, and lastly, the legend of the crown of womanhood, Queen Alceste, who gave up her own life to save her husband's. Such a series of poems had plainly been for some time in Chaucer's mind. The goodness of Alceste is the subject of two stanzas in the *Troilus*, and in the *House of Fame* (Bk. i. ll. 388-426), after telling the story of Dido out of Virgil's *Aeneid*, he gives quite a list of other faithful women, to whom, doubtless, he meant to apply the phrase he uses of Dido, that if it were not too long to endite he would have liked to write her love in full. Chaucer was certainly occupied with the *House of Fame* in 1383-1384, and the *Legende*—in which it is mentioned first in the poet's list of his own writings—must have immediately succeeded it. We know that on 17th February 1385 he obtained permission to exercise his Comptroller-ship by deputy, and it has been conjectured that the intention he expresses of sending this new poem to the Queen (ll. 496, 497), and the probability that she was meant to be identified with the good Alceste, are marks of gratitude for this particular favour, which may have been obtained through her intervention. Lydgate, in the Prologue to his *Fall of Princes*, even says that the *Legende* was written 'at the request of the queene,' but if so it would surely have been duly completed. Everything, however, points to 1385 as the year of its composition.

Of the nineteen (or twenty) legends planned, only nine were written. These celebrate (1) Cleopatra, who is represented (not quite in accordance, as Chaucer imagines, with 'storial sooth') as a martyr to her love for Antony; (2) Thisbe, who refused to survive her lover Pyramus (see Bottom's play in the *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; (3) Dido; (4) the two victims of Jason's treachery, Hypsipyle and Medea; (5) Lucretia; (6) Ariadne; (7) Philomela, the victim of Tereus; (8) Phyllis, who slew herself for love of Demophon; (9) Hypermnestra, who accepted death at her father's hands rather than treacherously kill her husband. By the aid of some hints in the Prologue, and of a curious mention of these 'seintes legendes of Cupide' in the talk which precedes the Man of Law's story in the *Canterbury Tales*, it is possible to make a fair guess as to the names of the other ten women, in addition to Alceste, whose praises Chaucer was too tired to sing. They belong to the same class of heroines as the nine he wrote of, and we need not trouble about them here. For the nine legends Chaucer had recourse chiefly to the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* of Ovid, but he used also two Latin works by Boccaccio, viz. his *De Claris Mulieribus* and *De Genealogia Deorum*, while the story of Dido is taken mainly from Virgil, and that of Hypsipyle and Medea from the *Historia Trojana* of Guido delle Colonne. The only other point that need be mentioned is that the Prologue (much the most interesting part of the poem) exists in two different versions. The one which appears to be the earlier has 545 lines, of which 90—including one long passage on love tales, and a reference to Chaucer's own library of 'sixty bookes olde and newe' all full of stories—do not reappear in the revised text. In this many lines are altered, the position of others transposed, and the 90 omitted lines replaced by 124 new ones, bringing the number in the second version to 579. Some of the alterations seem intended to make the poem more

## INTRODUCTION

acceptable to the Queen, the rest are poetical improvements which may easily be studied in the parallel columns in which they are printed in this edition.

Nine MSS., besides Thynne's Edition (Th.), have been collated, as printed by the Chaucer Society, for the text of this poem, viz. Gg 4. 27, Cambridge (quoted as Gg); Fairfax (F); Tanner (Tan.); R 3. 19, Trinity College, Cambridge (Trin.); Arch. Seld. B 24, Bodleian Library (Arch. Seld.); Bodley MS. 638 (B); British Museum Additional MS. 9832 (Add.), and 12,524 (Add.); and Pepys MS. 2006 (Pepys).

Of these MSS. F and B must be derived immediately from the same original, and Tan., which shares most of their glaring faults, from the original of that. The text of Thynne's edition belongs to the same group, but Thynne must have collated it with other MSS., as he has supplied lines and words which F, B, and Tan. omit. In my notes F<sup>2</sup> stands for F and B; F<sup>3</sup> for F, B, and Tan.; F<sup>4</sup> for F, B, Tan., and Thynne.

The leading MS. in a second group is Trin., with which must be reckoned Add., which, however, stops at l. 1986. These two MSS. are almost as nearly identical as F and B, and contain a number of good readings. The other Museum fragment Add., which only begins at l. 1640, belongs to the same group, as also does Arch. Seld. The latter, however, is a dangerous MS. to use, as its scribe, who may have worked from the same original used for Trin. and Add., has plainly introduced many emendations of his own to smooth away difficulties of sense or metre. I have occasionally denoted the agreement of Trin. and Add. by Trin.<sup>2</sup>; of Trin. Add. and Arch. Seld. by Trin.<sup>3</sup>; and of Trin. Add. Arch. Seld. and Add., by Trin.<sup>4</sup>

The Cambridge MS. Gg stands by itself, in virtue of its possession of the first draft of the Prologue. Its readings are throughout of great importance, but its spelling is bad, and it lacks ll. 1836-1907. The Pepys fragment, which stops at l. 1367, though it has the second draft of the Prologue, is linked to Gg by possessing ll. 960, 961, which the other MSS. omit; but it sometimes agrees with the Trin. group against Gg. Its independent readings (with the possible exception of *yiftes* in l. 1126) are of no value.

In making my text I am sorry now that I did not take the Trinity MS. as my starting-point, but I for a long time suspected it of being overmuch edited. Thus the completeness and comparatively good spelling of Fairfax gave it the preference, but in my final revision I have systematically substituted the readings of the Trinity group, or of Gg, for those of the Fairfax where there was any possibility of doubt. In the matter of spelling I have cleared away a good many of the double vowels (especially *oo*) which are the chief disfigurement of F, and have removed a few eccentricities, though with a very sparing hand.

## LATER MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH)

### TO ROSEMOUNDE

To the *Troilus* period belongs this playful ballade, which, like the preceding poem, is only found in one MS. (Rawl. Poet. 163, leaf 114) in the Bodleian Library, where it was discovered some years since by Dr. Furnivall, and afterwards rediscovered and first published by Professor Skeat. The metaphor with which the third stanza opens, and the ironical humour of its combination with the story of Isolde, unmistakably declare the authorship.

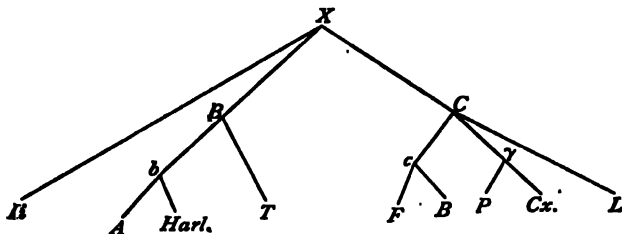
## THE FORMER AGE

This pleasant rhapsody upon the good old times is based upon Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (ii. met. v.), with echoes here and there from the *Roman de la Rose*. It is only found in two MSS., both in the University Library at Cambridge. Their press marks are Ii 3. 21 and Hh 4. 12. The former is the better of the two, and has been used as the basis of the text. This and the next four poems cannot be exactly dated. They were written after 1382, and probably before 1390.

## FORTUNE

*Balades de visage sans peinture*, as this poem is called in the MSS., are a series of ballades, or rather a triple balladé, with a single envoy of seven, and possibly only six lines, in praise of the friend of the 'unpainted face,' who is faithful in adversity. It was possibly written after Chaucer's loss of office in 1386.

There are eight MSS. and one edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows :—



Ii = Cambridge University Library MS. Ii 3. 21.

A = Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Bodleian Library).

Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20 (sheet 7 lacking).

F = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

B = Bodley 638 (Bodleian Library).

P = Pepys 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

L = Lansdowne MS. 699 (British Museum).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

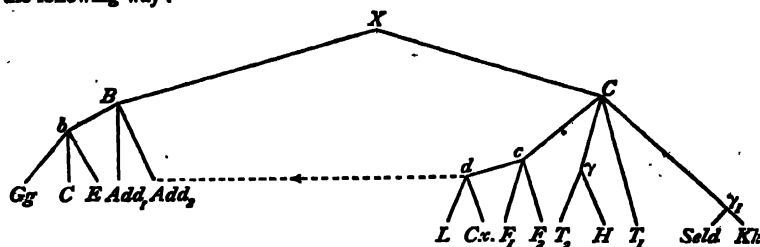
Ii is decidedly the best authority, and this has been made the basis of the text.

## TRUTH

This ballade and the next, called *Gentillesse*, show Chaucer in his gravest mood, and reveal the finely-tempered spirit which underlay his ironical and sometimes cynical humour. Both poems, like the *Lak of Stedfastnesse*, owe their suggestion, no doubt, to Boethius, but *Truth* (which is the finest) less so than the others, while they all strike an intensely personal note.



There are thirteen MSS. and one printed edition of *Truth*, which I arrange in the following way :—



The dotted line is intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

Gg = Cambridge University Library Gg 4. 27.

C = Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).

E = Ellesmere MS.

Add.<sup>1</sup> = Additional MS. 10,340 (British Museum).

Add.<sup>2</sup> = Additional MS. 22,139 " "

L = Lansdowne MS. 699 " "

F<sub>1</sub> = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library).

F<sub>2</sub> = Fairfax MS. 16 (Bodleian Library), second copy of the poem.

T<sub>1</sub> = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.

T<sub>2</sub> = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20, second copy of the poem.

H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).

Seld. = Arch. Selden B 24 (Bodleian Library).

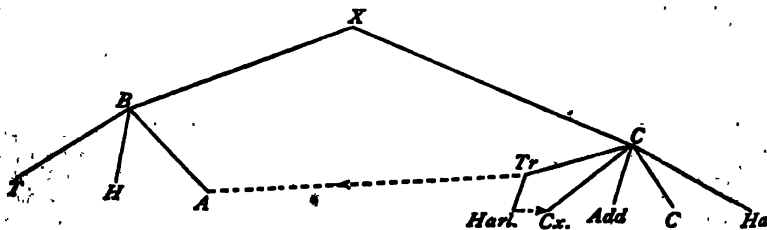
Kk = Cambridge University Library Kk 1. 5.

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

Group B is the better of the two main groups into which the authorities fall, and of this group sub-group *b* is the better. I have used Gg as the basis of the text.

## GENTILESSE

This fine ballade on the qualities that make a gentleman reminds one of the speech in which the Wife of Bath discourses upon 'gentilesse' (*Wife of Bath's Tale*, D 1109-1176). There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows :—



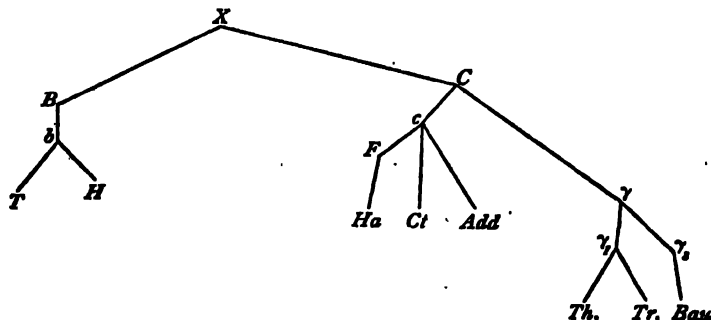
- T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 A = Shirley's Ashmole MS. 59 (Oxford).  
 Tr. = Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 14. 51.  
 Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).  
 Add. = Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).  
 C = Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).  
 Ha. = Harleian MS. 2257 (British Museum).  
 Cx. = Carleton's Edition (1477-78).

The dotted lines are intended to show that there is evidence of contamination.

Group C is the better of the two main groups, and has been used as the basis of the text.

### LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

This ballade, which is chiefly notable for its envoy to King Richard, Shirley and others have placed between 1293 and 1299. But it is difficult to account for Chaucer's sudden accession of reformatory zeal towards the man who could alone fill his quickly-emptying purse. The poet, if we except this poem, had none of Langland's spirit, and was always of the Court party. Mr. Pollard has suggested, and with great show of reason, that this address to the King and reference to the instability of the times probably dates from the time when the young Richard was taking the government into his own hands, and throwing over the tutelage of his guardian uncles with the support of all his people's hopes. This would place the composition in or about 1289, and when read with this in mind the whole poem gains an added force. There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I agree with Koeh in arranging as follows:—



- T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. R 3. 20.  
 H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).  
 F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 Ha. = Harleian MS. 7578 (British Museum).  
 Cl. = Cotton MS. Cleopatra D vii. (British Museum).  
 Add. = Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).  
 Tr. = Trinity College, Cambridge, R 14. 51.

## INTRODUCTION

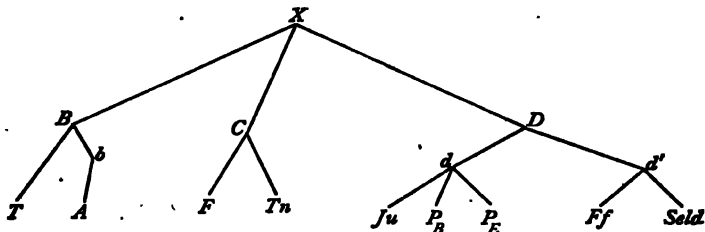
Ban. = Bannatyne MS. 1568 (Hunterian Museum, Glasgow).

Th. = Thynne's Edition (1532).

Group B is the better of the two main groups of authorities, and MS. H has been used as the basis of the text (cp. *supra*, p. xxxii).

### THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

These three ballades, to which Shirley gave the above title, are translations, more or less free, from the famous Savoyard poet, Sir Otes de Granson,<sup>1</sup> made probably to please Isabella, Duchess of York, the doubtful heroine of the *Complaynt of Mars*. The envoy, which is the best part of the poem, is wholly original. The date is hard to assign, but it is probably somewhere near 1393. There are eight MSS. and one printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



T = Shirley's Trinity College, Cambridge, R 3. 20.

A = Shirley's Ashmole 59 (Oxford).

F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

Tn. = Tanner 346

P(B) = Pepys 2006 Hand B (Magdalene College, Cambridge), ll. 65-72 are wanting.

P(E) = Pepys 2006 Hand E " " contains only ll. 45-82.

Ff = Cambridge University Library MS. Ff 1. 6.

Seld. = Arch. Selden MS. B 24 (Bodleian Library).

Ju. = Julian Nötary's Edition (1499-1502).

The best group of MSS. is B, and I have used this as the basis of the text.

### ENVOY TO SCOGAN

About the same time as *The Complaynt of Venus*, Chaucer wrote this playful reproach to his friend Henry Scogan for having given up his lady at 'Michelmesse,' when he found her careless of his distress. But some year or two earlier, in 1391, the poet had lost his post as Clerk of the King's Works, and he makes this an opportunity of begging for his friend's influence on behalf of the needy road-com-

<sup>1</sup> For more concerning Granson, cp. Plaget, 'Oton de Granson and ses Poésies,' *Romania*, vol. xix. 1890.

## INTRODUCTION

missioner exiled in the 'solitarie wilderness' of Greenwich. The prayer may have borne fruit in the pension granted him next year.

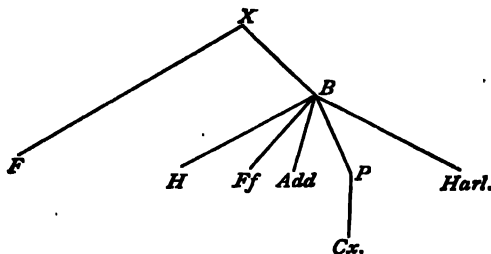
There are three MSS. (MS. Gg 4. 27, Univ. Libr. Camb.; MS. Fairfax 16, Bodleian Libr.; and MS. Pepys 2006, Magd. Coll. Camb.) and one edition (that of Thynne 1532) which serve as authorities for this poem. They all seem to belong to one group; there is certainly no sufficient evidence for dividing them, though MS. Fairfax is, on the whole, the best, and has been used as the basis for this text.

### ENVOY TO BUKTON

This bitter-sweet ballade, in stanzas of eight lines, touches marriage, and is quite characteristic of the poet. It was written in 1396, as we know by the reference to the English prisoners taken in the expedition against Friesland of that year. There is only one MS. (Fairfax 16) besides two early printed editions of this poem, that of Julian Notary (1499-1502), and that of Thynne (1532). The text is based upon the Fairfax MS.

### COMPLEYNT TO HIS PURSE

This sadly humorous poem must be one of the last, if not quite the last, we have from the poet's pen. It was addressed to Henry of Bolingbroke, 'the Conqueror of Brutes Albion,' and it won from him an additional pension of forty marks, which ensured Chaucer against penury in the closing months of his life. Professor Skeat thinks it probable that all the poem except the envoy was written at an earlier date, but without, it seems to me, sufficient ground. There are six MSS. and one early printed edition of this poem, which I arrange as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).

H = Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (British Museum).

Ff = Cambridge University Library MS. Ff 1. 6.

Add. = Additional MS. 22,139 (British Museum).

P = Pepys MS. 2006 (Magdalene College, Cambridge).

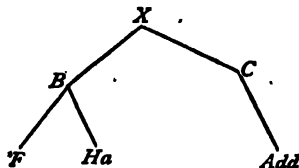
Harl. = Harleian MS. 2251 (British Museum).

Cx. = Caxton's Edition (1477-78).

The best MS. is the Fairfax, which has been used as the basis of the text.

## PROVERBS

These two proverbs, if indeed they are Chaucer's, add nothing to his reputation. There are three MSS. of these trifles, two of which, the Fairfax and the Harleian 7578, ascribe the authorship to the poet. I arrange the authorities as follows:—



F = Fairfax 16 (Bodleian Library).  
 Ha. = Harleian MS. 7578 (British Museum).  
 Add. = Additional MS. 16,165 (British Museum).

B is the better of the two groups of MSS., and MS. F has been made the basis of the text.

## DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS

(H. FRANK HEATH).

### MERCILES BEAUTE

This triple roundel immediately follows several of Chaucer's genuine poems in the only MS. (Pepys 2006) in which it is found. Its manner is quite that of the poet, and it seems to have been well known, for its first line is quoted in Lydgate's 'Ballade in commemoration of our Ladie,' St. 22.

The poems that follow have no direct evidence as to their authorship, but they are sufficiently in Chaucer's manner, though they do not show him at his best, if they are his. They are all of an erotic turn.

### AGAINST WOMEN UNCONSTANT

The Ballade 'Against Women Unconstant' is found in three MSS. (viz. Cotton Cleopatra D vii.; Harleian 7578; Fairfax 16), and in Stowe's edition of the works published in 1561. These authorities fall into two main groups, one of which consists of the Fairfax MS., the authority nearest to the original on the whole, and therefore made the basis of this text. The remaining authorities constitute the second group, within which the Cotton MS. and Stowe's edition form a subdivision traceable to a copy of the MS., of which Harleian 7578 was a copy.

The subheading of this poem is from the edition of 1561 which reads:— 'A Ballade whiche Chaucer made agaynst women unconstant.'

## COMPLEYNT DAMOURS

The *Compleynt Damours*, much the poorest of these doubtful poems, is also found in three MSS. (Fairfax 16; Bodley 638; and Harleian 7333). They fall into two groups, of which the Harleian MS. forms one, and the remaining MSS. the other. The common source of these two groups was almost certainly a MS. itself one or more removes from the original. None of the existing MSS. are good, but A on the whole forms the best basis for a text, and has been so used in this edition.

The reference to and quotation from the *Parlement of Foules* in the last stanza seems to be no evidence of its genuineness, whilst the subheading given in the Harleian MS. is cryptic and apparently nonsense.<sup>1</sup>

## BALADE OF COMPLEYNT, ETC.

The *Balade of Compleynt* is found in only one MS. (Addit. 16,165, fol. 256b in the British Museum); and the same is true of the *Balade that Chaucier made* (Addit. MS. 34,360, f. 21b), which was first printed in the *Athenaum*.

## TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The *Astrolabe* gives us evidence of Chaucer's interest in exact science, as the *Boscs* shows his leaning to philosophy. The *Astrolabe*, however, as a translation is far superior. Ripeness of scholarship, certainty of style, clearness of judgment; all these come out clearly in this later work.

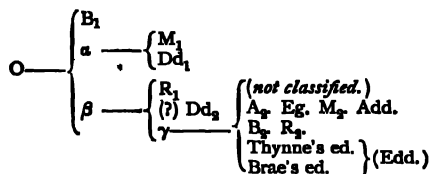
For the evidence of the introduction and the dates given in the body of the tract point to a late period of Chaucer's life. There is little of that uncertainty which characterises the *Boscs*, and no infelicities of idiom or mistakes in construing the Latin. It is interesting to note in this connection that the testimony of the Colophon in the St. John's (Cambridge) MS. to the effect that Chaucer wrote the tract for his son Lewis, then under the tutelage of (? Ralph) Strode at Merton College, is borne out by the fact that the problems are adapted to the latitude of Oxford, and that MS. Bodley 619, the best of those that have come down to us, bears evidence of having been written by an Astronomer of Merton College. Chaucer's plan was an ambitious one, and comprehended a complete treatise on the subject (cp. his *First Partie*). He either did not live to complete it or tired of his work and abandoned it. The sources of the tract are Messahala's treatise for most of the 'conclusions,' and John de Sacrobosco's *de Sphæra* for the definitions and descriptive astronomy. The few conclusions not traceable to Messahala may be accounted for by assuming an edition in which there were extra conclusions inserted like those in

<sup>1</sup> It runs as follows:—And next folowyng begynnith an amerowse compleynte made at Wyndesore in the laste May afore Novembre.

group  $\gamma$  of Chaucer's own tract. The few definitions not directly traceable to Sacrobosco are perhaps additions of Chaucer's own.

The technical character of the work has preserved it in a number of MSS.; eighteen are now known. Many of them are very poor, but, fortunately for a critical text, the inferior ones all derive from the same source which is itself preserved to us in good MSS. The following have been used for the text:—MS. Bodley 619 ( $B_1$ ), the basis of the text; E. Museo 54 ( $M_1$ ), in the Bodleian Library; Dd 3. 53 of the Cambr. Univ. Library; Rawl. D. 913 ( $R_1$ ), in the Bodleian; Dd. 12. 51 ( $Dd_2$ ), Cambr. Univ. Library; Ashmole 391 ( $A_1$ ) (fragmentary), Bodleian Library; Ashmole 360 ( $A_2$ ), Bodleian; Bodley 68 ( $B_2$ ); E. Museo 216 ( $M_2$ ) (fragmentary), Bodleian; Rawl. Misc. 3, Bodleian.

MS. Bodley 619 (which was evidently copied by an astronomer) has been made the basis of the text on account of the almost uniform excellence of its readings. The text is critical, based upon an arrangement of the MSS. as roughly shown in the following table:—



$\gamma$  shows a confusion in the arrangement of Pt. II., is late, and contains a number of spurious conclusions.

## ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE

(MARK H. LIDDELL)

The chief interest that attaches to *The Romaunt of the Rose* is due to the possibility of its being wholly or in part the work of Chaucer. Its felicity as a translation, making anew, as it were, the French poem, the beauty and ease of its versification, the fact that Chaucer did translate Jehan de Meung's French poem, and that a large part of this version offers little to hang an objection to as far as Chaucerian grammar is concerned, have combined to enable it to resist most successfully all attempts to fix it among the spurious Chaucer pieces.

As the matter now stands it is generally agreed that Chaucer could not have written the part beginning somewhere about v. 1705<sup>1</sup> and ending with v. 5810. The last part, extending from this point to the end and commonly called C by scholars, may possibly have been written by Chaucer, though it contains some rhymes that are, to say the least, unusual in Chaucer. The first part, known as A, though brief when compared to B and C, has been held by many to be of Chaucer's early work. It is not possible to decide this question yet. All that we can say at present is that A (vv. 1-1705) may be part of the translation Chaucer says he made; that C is

<sup>1</sup> B is usually supposed to begin with v. 1706, but cp. the note to the verse.

also possibly Chaucer's, but this assumption is less likely than the former; that B (vv. 1706-5810) is probably the interpolation of a northern writer later than Chaucer who made an attempt to join the two parts of the poem A and C, and make a complete translation, but wearied of his task and dropped it at v. 5810. But it is just this part that Chaucer specifically refers to in *Leg.* 430, 431, where he speaks of 'misseyng' women. This horrible slander is contained in vv. 4252-4266 of the English version. His translation must, therefore, have extended at least to this point, so that our version, if it is Chaucer's, was originally more complete than it is now. But whoever wrote it, the translation is well worthy to take a place beside Chaucer's best work; and it is difficult to understand how this comes to be the only surviving work of a poet who was such a master of English verse and had such power of reproducing with added skilful touches of his own Jehan de Meung's *Roman de la Rose*.

The present edition offers a text based almost solely upon the Glasgow MS. By comparison with the French original, many unintelligible lines have for the first time been corrected so as to make good Middle-English sense. Many unintelligible words have been put back into their proper form by observing the recurrence of certain scribal errors in the Glasgow MS. e.g. *i* and *y* for *e*, *a* for *o*, *e* for *o*, *u* for *ou*, *u* for *v*, *b* for *l*. The notes give such variants as are of any importance, together with such citations of the French original as are necessary to understand the English version.

Throughout the poem *u* and *v*, *i* and *j* are used with their modern values, except that *I* is retained for modern *J*. The dotted *é* is used to denote a separate syllable in the middle of the line.





# THE CANTERBURY TALES

## THE PROLOGUE

*Here bygynneth the Book of the tales  
of Caunterbury*

WHAN that Aprille with his shourés  
soote

The droghte of March hath percéd to the  
roote,

And bathéd every veyne in swich licour  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour ;

Whan Zephirus eek with his sweté breeth  
Inspired bath in every holt and heeth

The tendré croppés, and the yongé sonne  
Hath in the Ram his halfé cours y-ronne,

And smale fowelés maken melodye, 9  
That slepen al the nyght with open eye,—

So priketh hem Nature in hir corages,—  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrim-

ages,  
And palmeres for to seken straunge

strondes,  
To ferné halwés, kowthe in sondry londes ;

And specially, from every shirés ende  
Of Engélond, to Caunturbury they wende,

The hooly blisful martir for to seke,  
That hem hath holpen whan that they

were seeké.

Bifil that in that seson on a day,  
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay, 20

Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage  
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,

8. The first half course in  
the second half course, and the second  
half course, and the second half course.

17. The first half course in  
the second half course, and the second  
half course, and the second half course.

At nyght were come into that hostelrye  
Wel nyne-and-twenty in a compaignye,  
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle  
In felawshipe, and pilgrimes were they  
alle,

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.  
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,

And wel we weren eséd atté beste. 29  
And shortly, whan the sonné was to reste,

So hadde I spoken with hem everychon,  
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,

And madé forward erly for to ryse,  
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But natheles, whil I have tyme and  
space,

Er that I ferther in this talé pace,  
Me thynketh it accordaunt to resoun

To tellé yow al the condicioun  
Of ech of hem, so as it seméd me,

And whiche they weren and of what  
degree, 40

And eek in what array that they were inne;  
And at a Knyght than wol I first bygynne.

A KNYGHT ther was and that a worthy  
man,

That fro the tymé that he first bigan  
To riden out, he lovéd chivalrie,

Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.  
Ful worthy was he in his lordés werre,

And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,  
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,

And ever honoured for his worthynesse. 50

was for wove, H<sup>2</sup>.

At Alexandria he was when it was wonne ;  
 Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne  
 Aboven allé nacons in Pruce.  
 In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Rupe,—  
 No cristen man so ofte of his degree.  
 In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be  
 Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.  
 At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,  
 When they were wonne ; and in the  
 Greté See

At many a noble armee hadde he be. 60  
 At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,  
 And foughten for oure feith at Tramsy-  
 sene

In lystés thrís, and ay slayn his foo.  
 This ilké worthy knyght hadde been also  
 Somtyme with the lord of Palatye  
 Agayn another hethen in Turkye ;  
 And evermoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.  
 And though that he were worthy, he was  
 wys,

And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.  
 He never yet no vileynye ne sayde, 70  
 In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.  
 He was a verray parfit, gentil knyght.  
 But for to tellen yow of his array,  
 His hors weren goode, but he ne was nat

gay ;  
 Of fustian he wered a gypon  
 Al bismótered with his habergeon,  
 For he was late y-come from his viage,  
 And wenté for to doon his pilgrymage.

With hym ther was his sone, a yong  
 SQUIRE,  
 A lovyere and a lusty bachelor, 80

52. *Alexandrie*, Alexandria, taken by Pierre de Lusignan, in 1365.

53. *the bord bigonne*, taken the head of the table.

54. *Pruce*, Prussia, i.e. in company with the Teutonic Knights.

55. *Lettow*, Lithuania. *Rupe*, Russia.

56. *Gernade*, Granada.

57. *Algezir*, taken from the Moors in 1344.

58. *Belmarye*, a Moorish kingdom in Africa.

59. *Lyeys*, in Armenia, taken from the Turks 1367.

60. *Satalye*, Attalia, taken from Turks 1361.

61. *the Grete See*, the Mediterranean.

62. *armee*, an expedition, especially one by sea ; *array*, a disembarkation, HQ.

63. *Tramsysene*, a Moorish kingdom in Africa.

64. *Palatye*, a Christian lordship in Anatolia.

65. *was for evere*, HQ, but *array* is plural, and refer to the knight's horses in general.

With lokkés crulle as they were leyd |  
 presse.

Of twenty year of age he was, I gesse,  
 Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,  
 And wonderly delyvere and greet  
 strengthe ;

And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachy  
 In Flaundrés, in Artoys and Pycardie,  
 And born hym weel, as of so litel space  
 In hope to stonden in his lady grace.  
 Embrouded was he, as it were a meede  
 Al ful of fresshè flourés whyte and reede,  
 Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day  
 He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.  
 Short was his gowne, with sleves long  
 and wyde ;

Wel koude he sitte on hors and fairé ryde  
 He koudé songés make and wel endite,  
 Juste and eek daunce and weel purtrey  
 and write.

So hoote he lovéde that by nyghtertale  
 He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghty  
 gale.

Curteis he was, lowely and servysable,  
 And carf biforn his fader at the table. 90

A YEMAN hadde he and servántz nam  
 At that tyme, for hym listé ridé soo ;  
 And he was clad in cote and hood of grene  
 A sheef of pocok arwés, bright and kene  
 Under his belt he bar ful thriftily—  
 Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly ;  
 His arwés droupéd noght with fether  
 lowe—

And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe  
 A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage  
 Of woodcraft wel koude he al the usage  
 Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer, 100  
 And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,  
 And on that oother syde a gay dagger,  
 Harneiséd wel and sharpe as point of spere  
 A Cristophere on his brest of silver sheene  
 An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene  
 A forster was he, soothly as I gesse.

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,

86. *In Flaundrés*, i.e. in minor expedition against the French.

88. *lady grace* ; *lady* is here a surname.

115. *Cristophere*, a small figure of St Christopher worn on a surcoat, etc.

hat of hir smylyng was ful symple and  
coy;

ire gretteste ooth was but by seinté  
Loy,

nd she was clepéd madame Eglentyne.  
ul weel she soong the servicé dyvyne,  
ntuned in hir nose ful semely,  
nd Frenash she spak ful faire and fetisly  
fter the scole of Stratford-atté-Bowe,  
or Frenash of Parys was to hire un-  
knowe.

t meté wel y-taught was she with-alle,  
he leet no morsel from hir lippés falle,  
le wette hir fyngers in hir saucé depe.  
Vel koude she carie a morsel and wel  
kepe,

hat no drope ne fille upon hire breste;  
a curteisie was set ful muchel hir leste.  
Hire over-lippé wypéd she so clene,  
hat in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng  
sene

X grece, whan she dronken hadde hir  
draughte.

ul semely after hir mete she raughte,  
nd sikerly she was of greet desport,  
nd ful plesant and amyable of port,  
nd peynéd hire to countrefeté cheere

X Court, and been estatlich of manere,  
nd to ben holden digne of reverence.  
but for to speken of hire conscience,  
he was so charitable and so pitous  
he wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous  
laught in a trappe, if it were deed or  
bledde.

Of smale boundés hadde she that she fedde  
With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel  
breed;

but soore wepte she if oon of hem were  
sdeed,

Or if men smoot it with a yerdé smerte;  
nd al was concience and tendré herte.

120. *seinté Loy*. St. Eligius refused to take an  
oath which King Dagobert demanded of him, so  
perhaps this means the Prioress did not swear at  
all.

121. *After the scole of Stratford-atté-Bowe*.  
An Anglo-Norman French, still in use in convents  
such as the Benedictine nunnery at Stratford-le-  
bow, where Chaucer probably means that his  
Prioress was educated. The French spoken at  
Court in this date would be French of Paris.

127. *of smale boundés*, a reminiscence of a passage  
in the *Roman de la Rose*, l. 25, 615, 697.

Ful semely hir wympul pyntéd was;  
Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,  
Hir mouth ful smal and ther-to softe and  
reed,

But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;  
It was almost a spannéd brood I trowe,  
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.  
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war;  
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar  
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,  
And ther-on heng a brooch of gold ful  
sheene,

On which ther was first write a crownéd A,  
And after *Amor vincit omnia*.

Another NONNÉ with hire haddé she  
That was hire Chapéleyné, and PREESTÉS  
thre.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the  
maistrie,

An outdriere, that lovéd venerie;  
A manly man, to been an abbot able.  
Ful manya deyntee hors hadde he in stable,  
And whan he rood men myghte his  
brydel heere

Gýnglen in a whistlyng wynd als cleere,  
And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel bellé,  
Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle.  
The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit,  
By-cause that it was old and som-del  
streit,—

This ilké Monk leet oldé thyngés pace,  
And heeld after the newé world the space.  
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen  
That seith that hunters bethnat hooly men,  
Ne that a Monk whan he is recchélees  
Is likned til a fish that is waterlees;  
This is to seyn, a Monk out of his cloystre.  
But thilké text heeld he nat worth an oystre;  
And I seyde his opinioun was good.

129. *gauded*, dyed, especially dyed green; or  
perhaps, having in green the gawdies, or large  
beads which stood for the Lord's Prayer.

162. *Amor vincit omnia*: Love overcomes all  
things.

173. *seint Maure*, a disciple of *seint Beneit*  
or Benedict, established the Benedictine Order  
in France.

177. *that text*, from the Decretal of Gratian,  
'Sicut piscis sine aqua caret vita, ita sine  
monasterio monachus.'

179. *recchélees*, reckless; *cloysterles*, H only;  
neither reading is satisfactory.

What shalde he studie and make hym-  
selven wood,

Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,  
Or swynken with his handes and laboure,  
As Austyn bit? how shal the world be  
served?

Lat Austyn have his wynde to him reserved.  
Therefore he was a prikasour aright;  
Greihoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel  
in flight: 190

Of prikyng and of hunting for the hare  
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.  
I seigh his sleeves y-purified at the hond  
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;  
And for to festne his hood under his chyn  
He hadde of gold y-wroght a ful curious pyn,  
A love knotte in the gretter ende ther was.  
His heed was balled that shoon as any glas,  
And eek his face as he hadde been enoynt.  
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;  
His eyn stepe and rollynge in his heed,  
That stemed as a forneys of a leed; 200  
His bootis souple, his hors in greet estaat.  
Now certeinly he was a fair prelaat.  
He was nat pale, as a forpynd goost;  
A fat swan loved he best of any roost;  
His palfrey was as broun as is a beiry.

A FRERE ther was, a wantowne and  
a merye,

A lymytour, a ful solempné man, 209  
In allé the ordres foure is noon that kan  
So muchel of daliaunce and fair langage;  
He haddé maad ful many a mariage  
Of yongé-wommen at his owene cost:  
Unto his ordre he was a noble post,  
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he  
With frankeleyns over al in his contree;  
And eek with worthy women of the toun,  
For he hadde power of confessoun,  
As seyde hym-self, moore than a curat,  
For of his ordre he was licenciat. 220  
Ful swetely herdé he confessioun,  
And plesaunt was his absolucioun.

199. *he, E. ii.*

210. *ordres foure*, Dominicans, Carmelites, Franciscans, and Augustinians.

211. *ful many a mariage*, etc., i.e. he found husbands for women he had himself seduced.

220. *licenciat*, i.e. he was licensed to hear confessions without asking leave of the parson.

He was an esy man to yeve penaunce  
Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce  
For unto a poure ordre for to yive  
Is signé that a man is wel y-shryve;  
For, if he yaf, he dorsté make graunt  
He wisté that a man was répentant:  
For many a man so harde is of his hent  
He may nat wepe al thogh hym so  
smerte,

Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyen  
Men moote yeve silver to the poure frere  
His tyet was ay farsed full of knyves  
And pynnes, for to yeven yongé wyves  
And certeinly he hadde a murie note;  
Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote  
Of yeddyinges he baar outrély the pris;  
His nekké whit was as the flour-de-lys,  
Ther-to he strong was as a champioun.  
He knew the tavernes well in all the toun  
And everich hostiler and tappestere;  
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;  
For unto swich a worthy man as he  
Acordéd nat, as by his facultee,  
To have with silk lazars aqueyntaunce;  
It is nat honeste, it may nat avaunce  
For to deelen with no swiche poraille;  
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille  
And over al, ther as profit sholde arise,  
Curteis he was and lowely of servyse,  
Ther nas no man nowher so vertuouse.  
He was the besté beggere in his hous,  
For thogh a wydwe haddé noght a sho,  
So plesaunt was his *In principio*,  
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng er he wente  
His purchas was wel bettre than his rent,  
And rage he koudé, as it were right  
whelpe.

232. Hengwrt MS. here inserts two lines:

'And yaf a certeyn ferme for the grant,  
Noun of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt.'

i.e. paid rent for his privilege and was left undisturbed by his brethren. The couplet is probably Chaucer's, but may have been deliberately omitted by him, as it interrupts the sentence.

234. *In principio*, the beginning of St. John's Gospel, to the first few verses from which magic value was attached.

235. *His purchas*, etc. The proceeds of his begging were much greater than the rent of 'ferme' (see note to 1, 232) which he paid to his convent.

237. He reads 'and rage he' in the original as a whole.

lovē-dyts ther koude he muchel helpe,  
 x there he was nat lyk a cloysterer  
 ith a thredbare cope, as is a poure scolér,  
 it he was lyk a maister, or a pope; 261  
 f double worstede was his semycope,  
 nat rounded as a belle out of the presse.  
 x what he lised for his wantowneas,  
 o make his Englishsh sweet upon histonge,  
 nd in his harpyng, whan that he hadde  
 songe,

is eyen twynkled in his heed aryght  
 doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.  
 his worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.

A MARCHANT was ther with a forked  
 berd, 270

1 mottēle, and hye on horse he sat;  
 pon his heed a Flaundrysh bevere hat;  
 is bootēs claspéd faire and fetisly;  
 is resons he spak ful solempnly,  
 ownynge alway thencrees of his wynnyn.  
 e wolde the see were kept for any thing  
 itwix Middelburgh and Orwēlle.  
 /el koude he in eschaungē sheeldēs selle.  
 his worthy man ful wel his wit bisette,  
 her wistē no wight that he was in dette,  
 o estably was he of his governaunce 281  
 /ith his bargaynes and with his  
 chevyssaunce.

or sothe he was a worthy man with-alle  
 ut, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym  
 calle.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also  
 hat unto logyk haddē longe y-go.  
 u leenē was his hors as is a rake,  
 and he nas nat right fat, I undertake,  
 but looked holwe, and ther-to sobrelly;  
 ful thredbare was his overeste courtpey;  
 or he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,  
 he was so worldly for to have office;  
 or hym was leverē have at his beddes heed  
 twenty bookēs clad in blak or reed  
 of Aristotle and his philosophie,  
 than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie:

277. *Middelburgh*, nearly opposite the Orwell  
 to the Dutch coast. Professor Hales notes that  
 between 1284 and 1388 the wool-staple was at  
 Middelburgh instead of at Calais.

278. *Alpynes*, French crowns or *denars*: he  
 paid debts by the turn of exchange.

But al be that he was a philosopre,  
 Yet haddē he but litel gold in cofre;  
 But al that he myghte of his freendes hente  
 On bookēs and his lernynge he it spentē,  
 And bisily gan for the soules preye 301  
 Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye.  
 Of studie took he moost cure and moost  
 heede,  
 Noght o word spak he moorē than was  
 neede,

And that was seyde in forme and reverence,  
 And short and quyk and ful of hysentēce.  
 Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche  
 And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAW, war and  
 wys,

That often haddē been at the Parvy, 310  
 Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.  
 Discreet he was, and of greet reverence;  
 He semed swich, hise wordēs weren so  
 wise.

Justice he was ful often in Assise,  
 By patente and by pleyn commissioun:  
 For his science and for his heigh renoun.  
 Of fees and robes hadde he many oon;  
 So greet a purchasour was nowher noon.  
 Al was fee symple to hym in effect,  
 His purchasyng myghtē nat been infect.  
 Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas, 321  
 And yet he semed bisier than he was.  
 In termēs hadde he cas and doomēs alle  
 That from the tyme of kyng William  
 were falle;

Ther-to he coude endite and make a thyng,  
 Ther koudē no wight pynchen at his  
 writyng;  
 And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.  
 He rood but hoonly in a medlee cote,  
 Girt with a ceint of silk, with barrē smale;  
 Of his array telle I no lenger tale. 330

A FRANKLEYN was in his compaignye.

297. *philosopre*, an allusion to the philosophy  
 of the alchemists.

310. *Parvys*, church-porch, i.e. of St. Paul's,  
 where lawyers met for consultation.

319. *fee symple*. The meaning may be either  
 (literally) that the Sergeant could overcome all  
 restrictions on ownership, or (metaphorically)  
 that he could carry-all before him.

Whit was his berd as is a daytaye,  
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.  
Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn;  
To lyven in delit was ever his wone,  
For he was Epicurus owent sone,  
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit  
Was verrailly felicitee parfit.

An housholdere, and that a greet, was he:  
Seint Julian was he in his contree; 340  
His breed, his ale, was always after oon;  
A better envyned man was nowher noon.  
Withoute baké mete was never his hous,  
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteuous  
It snwed in his hous of mete and drynke.  
Of allé deyntees that men koudé thynke  
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,  
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.  
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe  
And many a breem and many a luce in  
stuwe. 350

Wo was his cook but if his saucé were  
Poynant and sharpe and redyal his geere.  
His table dormant in his halle alway,  
Stood redy covered al the longé day.  
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;  
Ful ofté tymé he was knyght of the shire.  
An anlaas, and a gipser al of silk,  
Heeng at his girdel, whit as morné milk;  
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour.  
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour. 360

AN HABERDASSHERE, and a CAR-  
PENTER,

A WEBBE, a DYERE, and a TAPYCEr,—  
And they were clothed alle in o lyveree  
Of a solémpne and greet fraternitee;  
Ful fresch and newe hir geere apikéd was;  
Hir knyvés weré chapéd noght with bras,  
But al with silver, wrought ful clene and  
weel,

Hire girdles and hir pouches everydeel.  
Wel seméd ech of hem a fair burgeys  
To sitten in a yeldehalle, on a days. 370

332. *head for berd, E.*

340. St. Julian was famed for providing his  
votaries with good entertainment.

342. *after oon, of one kind, i.e. the best.*

343. *o, one.* H reads 'Weren with uss eaks  
clothed in oo lyvere.'

364. *E<sup>2</sup> add a before greet, with which reading  
we must scan: 'Of a ad | lampne and |,' etc.*

Éverich for the wisdom that he kan  
Was shaply for to been an alderman.  
For catel haddé they ynogh and rente,  
And eek hir wyvés wolde it wel assente  
And ellés certeyn weré they to blame.  
It is ful fair to been y-cleped *Madame*,  
And goon to vigiliés al bifore,  
And have a mantel roialliche y-bore.

A COOK they haddé with hem for the  
nonés,  
To boille the chiknès with the marybone  
And poudré-marchant tart and galyngale  
Wel koude he knowe a draughte of  
Londoun ale;

He koudé rooste and sethe and boille  
and frye,  
Máken mortreux and wel bake a pye.  
But greet harm was it, as it thoughté me  
That on his shyne a mormal haddé he.  
For blankmanger, that made he with the  
beste.

A SHIPMAN was ther, wonynge fer  
weste;

For aught I woot he was of Dertémouth.  
He rood upon a rouncy as he kouthe,  
In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.  
A daggere hangynge on a laas hadde he  
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.  
The hooté somer hadde maad his hew  
al broun;

And certainly he was a good felawe.  
Ful many a draughte of wyn hadde he  
y-drawe

Fro Burdeuxward whil that the Chapman  
sleepe.

Of nycté conscience took he no keepe. 380  
If that hefaught, and hadde the hyer hond,  
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.  
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,  
His stremés and his daungers hym bisides,  
His herberwe and his moone, his lode  
menage,

Ther nas noon swich from Hullé to Cartage  
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake:  
With many a tempest hadde his berd  
been shake;

400. *By water, etc., i.e. he drowned his  
prisoners.*

He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,  
From Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,  
And every crykein Britaigne and in Spayne.  
His barge y-cleped was the Maudélayne.

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF  
PHISIK ; 411

In all this world ne was ther noon hym lik,  
To speke of phisik and of surgerie ;  
For he was grounded in astronomye.  
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel  
In houre, by his magyk natureel.  
Wel koude he fortunene the ascendent  
Of his ymages for his pacient.  
He knew the cause of everich maladye,  
Were it of hoot, or cold, or moyste, or drye,  
And where they engendred and of what  
humour ; 421

He was a verray parfit praktisour.  
The cause y-knowe and of his harm the  
roote,

Anon he yaf the siké man his boote.  
Ful rédy hadde he his apothecaries  
To sende him drogges and his letuaries,  
For ech of hem made oother for to wynne,  
Hir frendshipe nas nat newé to bigynne.  
Wel knew he the oldé Esculapius  
And Deyscorides, and eek Rufus, 430  
Olde Ypocras, Haly and Galyen,  
Serapion, Razis and Apycen,  
Averrois, Damascien and Constantyn,

408. *Gootlond*, the Isle of Gottland.

411. *With us ther was*, E8; *Ther was also*, H.

415. *a full greet deel*, E8; *wondrously wel*, H.

416. *In houre*, i.e. the astrological hours.

418. *ymages*, astrological figures, cp. *House of Fame*, III. 175-180.

420. *hoot, or cold*, etc., the four elements of which the world was believed to be composed.

430. *Deyscorides*, Dioscorides, a physician of the 2nd century A.D., born in Cilicia.

430. *Rufus*, a physician of Ephesus, about the time of Trajan.

431. *Olde Ypocras*, Hippocrates, born in Cos about 460 B.C.

431. *Haly*, or Hall, an Arabian commentator on Galen in the 11th century: John Serapion and the famous Avicenna were his contemporaries.

431. *Galyen*, Galen, born at Pergamus 130 A.D.

432. *Razis*, or Rhazes, an Arabian physician of the 10th century.

432. *Averrois*, born at Cordova 1126.

433. *Damascien*, John Damascene, an Arab physician and theologian of the 9th century.

433. *Constantyn*, Constantinus Afer, born at Arhage in the 11th century.

Bernard and Gátésden and Gilbertyn.  
Of his dieté mesurable was he,  
For it was of no superfluitee,  
But of greet norissyng and digestible.  
His studie was but litel on the Bible.  
In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,  
Lynéd with taffata and with sendal. 440  
And yet he was but esy of dispenche,  
He kepté that he wan in pestilence.  
For gold in phisik is a cordial,  
Therefore he lovédé gold in special.

A GOOD WIF was ther of bisidé BATHE,  
But she was som-del deef, and that was  
scathe.

Of clooth-makyn she haddé swich an  
haunt

She passéd hem of Yprès and of Gaunt.  
In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon  
That to the offrynge bifore hire sholdé  
goon ; 450

And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was  
she,

That she was out of allé charitee.  
Hir coverchiefs ful fyné weren of ground,—  
I dorsté swere they weyédén ten pound,—

That on a Sunday weren upon hir heed.  
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,  
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoes ful moyste  
and newe ;

Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of  
hewe.

She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,  
Housbondes at chirché dore she haddé  
fyve,

Withouten oother compaignye in  
youthé,— 460

434. *Bernard*, Bernardus Gordonius, a contemporary of Chaucer, Professor of Medicine at Montpellier.

434. *Gátésden*, John Gátésden, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and court physician in the first half of the 14th century. He wrote a medical treatise called *Rosa Anglica*.

434. *Gilbertyn*, Gilbertus Anglicus, one of the earliest English writers on medicine, fl. 1250.

442. *pestilence*. The great plague of the 14th century was in 1349, but lesser ones recurred every few years.

450. *to the offryngs*. Offerings in kind or money at mass and other services were presented by the people going up in order to the priest.

460. *at chirché dore*. The first part of the marriage service used to be read there.



But ther-of nedeth nat to speke as  
nowthe,—

And thris hadde she been at Jerusalem;  
She haddé passed many a straungé strem;  
At Rome she haddé been, and at Boloigne,  
In Galice, at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne,  
She koudé muchel of wandrynge by the  
weye.

Gat-tothéd was she, soothly for to seye.  
Upon an ambler eaily she sat, <sup>469</sup>  
Y-wympléd wel, and on hir heed an hat  
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;  
A foot mantel aboute hir hips large,  
And on hire feet a paire of sporis sharpe.  
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and  
carpe;

Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,  
For she koude of that art the oldé daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,  
And was a POURE PERSON OF A TOUN;  
But riche he was of hooly thought and werk;  
He was also a lernéd man, a clerk, <sup>480</sup>  
That Cristés Gospel trewely wolde preche:  
His parissheis devoutly wolde he teche.  
Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,  
And in adversitee ful pacient;  
And swich he was y-preved oft sithes.  
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,  
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,  
Unto his pouré parissheis aboute,  
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce:  
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.  
Wyf was his pariashe, and houses fer  
asonder, <sup>491</sup>

But he ne lasté nat for reyn ne thonder,  
In siknesse nor in meschief to visite;  
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,  
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.  
This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf  
That firste he wroghte and afterward he  
taughte.

Out of the gospel he tho wordés caughte,

<sup>469.</sup> *Boloigne*, Boulogne, where an image of the Blessed Virgin was exhibited to pilgrims.

<sup>466.</sup> *In Galice at S. Jame*, i.e. at the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Galicia in Spain.

<sup>466.</sup> *Coloigne*, to the shrine of the Three Kings of the East at Cologne.

<sup>476.</sup> *Houde the olde daunce* ('Qu'il soit toute la vieille dance', *Rem. de la Rose*), knew the ancient custom.

And this figure he added eek thereto,  
That if gold rusté what shal iren doo? <sup>501</sup>  
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,  
No wonder is a lewéd man to ruste;  
And shame it is, if a preest také kcepe,  
A shiten shepherde and a clené sheepe.  
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive  
By his clennessé how that his sheepe  
sholde lyve.

He setté nat his benefice to hyre  
And leet his sheepe encombred in the myre,  
And ran to London, unto Seint Poules,  
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules; <sup>510</sup>  
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,  
But dwelte at hoom and kepté wel his folde,  
So that the wolf ne made it nat mysarie,—  
He was a shepherde, and noght a  
mercenarie:

And though he hooly were and vertuous,  
He was to synful man nat despitous,  
Ne of his speché daungerous ne digne,  
But in his techyng déscreet and benygne.  
To drawen folk to hevене by fairnesse,  
By good ensample, this was his biyeness:  
But it were any persone obstinat, <sup>521</sup>  
What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,  
Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the  
nonys.

A bettré preest I trowe that nowher  
noon ys;  
He waited after no pompe and reverence,  
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,  
But Cristés loore, and his Apostles twelve,  
He taughte, but first he folwed it hym  
selve.

With hym ther was a PLOWMAN, was  
his brother,  
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a  
fother,— <sup>530</sup>

A tréwé swynkere and a good was he,  
Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.  
God loved he best, with al his hoolé herte,  
At allé tymés, thogh him gamed or smerte,  
And thanne his neighboure right as hym  
selve.

He woldé thressahe, and therto dyke and  
delve,

For Cristés sake, for every pouré wight,  
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght.

His tithes paydē he ful faire and wel,  
Bothe of his proprē swynk and his catel.  
In a tabard he rood upon a mere. 542

There was also a REVE and a MILLERE,  
A SOMNOUR and a PARDONER also,  
A MAUNCIPLE and myself,—ther were  
namo.

The MILLERE was a stout carl for the  
nones,  
Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones;  
That provéd wel, for over-al, ther he cam,  
At wrastlyng he wolde have awey the ram.  
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke  
knarre,

Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve of  
harre, 550

Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.  
His berd, as any sowe or fox, was reed,  
And therto brood, as though it were aspade.  
Upon the cope right of his nose he hade  
A werte, and theron stood a toft of herys,  
Reed as the brustles of a sowes crys;  
His nosethirles blakē were and wyde;  
A swerd and a bokeler bar he by his syde;  
His mouth as wyde was as a greet forneys,  
He was a janglere and a goliardes, 560  
And that was moost of synne and harlotries.  
Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries,  
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.  
A whit cote and a blew hood wered he.  
A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and  
sowne,  
And therewithal he broghte us out of towne.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a  
temple,

Of which achátours myghtē take exemple  
For to be wise in byyng of vitaille;  
For, whether that he payde or took by  
taille, 570

Agate he wayted so in his achaaat  
That he was ay biforn and in good staat.

548. away, E<sup>3</sup> alwey.

549. wyde, H; greet, E<sup>3</sup>.

562. tollen thries, take threefold his due.

563. yet he hadde a thombe of gold. Millers  
are said to test samples with their thumb. Hence  
the proverb 'An honest miller has a thumb of  
gold,' which suggests the meaning here to be  
that he was honest,—for a miller.

570. by taille, on trust, the debt being scored  
on a tally.

Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace  
That swich a lewed mannēs wit shal pace  
The wisdom of an heepe of lerned men?  
Of maistrē hadde he mo than thries ten,  
That weren of lawe expert and curious,  
Of whiche ther weren a duszeyne in that  
hous

Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond  
Of any lord that is in Engélond, 580  
To maken hym lyvē by his proprē good  
In honour dettēlees, but he were wood,  
Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;  
And able for to helpen al a shire  
In any caas that myghtē falle or happe;  
And yet this Manciple sette hir aller cappe.

The REVē was a sclendré colerik man,  
His berd was shave as ny as ever he kan;  
His heer was by his crys round y-shorn,  
His tope was dokéd lyk a preest biforn,  
Ful longē were his legges and ful lene,  
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene. 590  
Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne,  
Ther was noon auditour koude on him  
wynne.

Wel wiste he, by the droghte and by the  
reyn,

The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.  
His lordēs sheepe, his neet, his dayērye,  
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his  
pultrye,

Was hoolly in this revēs governyng,  
And by his covenant yaf the rekēnyng 600  
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;  
Ther koude no man bryng hym in  
arriage.

There nas baillif, ne hierde, nor oother  
hyne,

That he ne knew his sleighte and his  
covyne;

They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.  
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth,  
With grenē trees y-shadwéd was his  
place.

581. by his propre good, on his own property.

586. sette hir aller cappe, set the caps of, i.e.  
befooled, them all.

594. on, E of.

595. Wel wiste he, etc., i.e. when he had to  
present his accounts he attributed the loss of the  
corn he had stolen to bad weather.

604. he, i.e. the Reeve, though H reads they.

He koudé bettre than his lord purchace.  
 Ful riche he was a-stored pryvely,  
 His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly 610  
 To yeve and lene hym of his owene good  
 And have a thank, and yet a gowne and  
 hood.

In youthe he lernéd hadde a good myster,  
 He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.  
 This Revé sat upon a ful good stot,  
 That was al pomely grey, and highté.  
 Scot;

A long surcote of pers upon he hade,  
 And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.  
 Of Northfolk was this Reve of which I  
 telle,

Biside a toun men clepen Baldéswele.  
 Tukked he was as is a frere, aboute, 621  
 And ever he rood the hyndreste of oure  
 route.

A SOMONOUR was ther with us in  
 that place,

That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnés face,  
 For sawctfeem he was, with eyen narwe.  
 As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe,  
 With scaled browes blake and piled berd,—  
 Of his visagé children were aferd.  
 Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brym-  
 stoon,

Boras, ceruce, ne oille of Tartre noon, 630  
 Ne oynement that woldé clense and byte,  
 That hym myghte helpen of the whelkés  
 white,

Nor of the knobbés sittynge on his chekes.  
 Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek  
 lekes,

And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as  
 blood;

Thanne wolde he speke, and crie as he  
 were wood.

And whan that he wel dronken hadde  
 the wyn,

Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.  
 A fewé termés hadde he, two or thre,  
 That he had lernéd out of som decree,—  
 No wonder is, he herde it al the day, 641  
 And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay

*See Cherubynnes face.* The author of the *Phil-  
 ologus* speaks of books brilliantly illuminated as  
 'cherubical libri.'

Kan clepen *Watts* as wel as kan the pope.  
 But whoso koude in oother thyng hym  
 grope,

Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie;  
 Ay *Questio quid juris* wolde he crie.  
 He was a gentil harlot and a kynde;  
 A bettre felawe sholdé men nocht fynde.  
 He woldé suffre, for a quart of wyn,  
 A good felawe to have his concubyn 650  
 A twelf monthe, and excuse hym atté fulle;  
 And pryvely a fynch eek koude he pulle;  
 And if he foond owher a good felawe,  
 He woldé techen him to have noon awe,  
 In swich caas, of the Erécékenes curs,  
 But-if a mannés soule were in his purs;  
 For in his purs he sholde y-punysshed be:  
 'Purs is the Erécékenes helle,' seyde he.  
 But wel I woot he lyéd right in dede,  
 Of cursynge oghte ech gilty man him drede,  
 For curs wol slee,—right as assoillyng  
 savith; 661

And also war him of a *Significavit*.  
 In daunger hadde he at his owene gise  
 The yongé girlés of the diocese,  
 And knew hir conséil, and was al hir reed.  
 A gerland hadde he set upon his heed,  
 As greet as it were for an alé-stake;  
 A bokeleer hadde he maad him of a cake.

With hym ther rood a gentil *PARDONER*  
 Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer.  
 That straighte was comen from the court of  
 Romé. 671

Ful loude he soong *Com hider, love, to me!*  
 This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun,  
 Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.  
 This Pardonere hadde heer as yelow as wax  
 But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of  
 flex; 681

643. *Kan clepen Watts*, can call Walter.

646. *Questio quid juris*, the question is, what  
 is the law?

652. *pulle a fynch*, as we should say 'pluck a  
 pigeon,' plunder a fool.

662. *Significavit*, the opening word of a writ  
 for imprisoning an excommunicated person.

664. *girlés*, youths of both sexes.

670. *Of Rouncivale*. 'An Hospital *Beatus Marti  
 de Rounceivale in Charing, London* is mentioned  
 in the *Monasticon* (Dugdale's), t. ii. p. 443, and  
 there was a Runceval Hall in Oxford. So the  
 perhaps it was the name of some confraternity  
 —Tyrrwhitt. The parent Roncevaux was in  
 Navarre.

By ounces henge his lokkés that he hadde,  
 And therwith he his shuldres overspradde.  
 But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon;  
 But hood, for jolitee, ne wered he noon;  
 For it was trussed up in his walet. 68  
 Hym thoughte he rood al of the newé jet;  
 Dischevelee, save his cappe, herood al bare.  
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare,  
 Avernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe;  
 His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe  
 Bret-ful of pardon, comen from Rome al  
 hoot.

A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot;  
 No berd hadde he, ne never sholdé have,  
 As smothe it was as it were laté shave;  
 I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare. 69  
 But of his craft, fro Berwyk unto Ware  
 Ne was ther swich another pardoner,  
 For in his male he hadde a pilwé-beer,  
 Which that, he seyde, was oure lady veyl;  
 He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl  
 That Seinté Peter hadde, whan that he wente  
 Upon the see, til Jhesu Crist hym hente.  
 He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,  
 And in a glas he haddé piggé bones. 70  
 But with thise relikés, whan that he fond  
 A pouré person dwellynge upon lond,  
 Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye  
 Than that the person gat in monthés tweye;  
 And thus with feynéd flaterye and japes  
 He made the person and the peple his apes.  
 But, trewely to tellen atté laste,  
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;  
 Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie,  
 But alderbest he song an Offertorie; 71  
 For wel he wisté, whan that song was  
 songe,

He mosté preche, and wel affile his tonge  
 To wynné silver, as he ful wel koude;  
 Therefore he song the murierly and loude.

Now have I toold you shortly, in a  
 clause,  
 The staat, tharray, the nombre, and eek  
 the cause

Why that assembled was this compaignye  
 In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,  
 That nighte the Tabard, fasté by the Belle.  
 But now is tyme to yow for to telle 720  
 How that we baren us that ilké nyght,  
 Whan we were in that hostelrye alyght;

And after wol I telle of our viage  
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.

But first, I pray yow of youre curteisye,  
 That ye narette it nat my vileynye,  
 Thogh that I pleynly speke in this matere  
 To tellé yow hir wordés and hir cheere,  
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordés proprely;  
 For this ye knowen al-so wel as I, 730  
 Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,  
 He moote reherce, as ny as ever he  
 kan,

Everich a word, if it be in his charge,  
 Al speke he never so rudéliche or large;  
 Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe,  
 Or feyné thyng, or fyndé wordés newe.  
 He may nat spare, althogh he were his  
 brother;

He moot as wel seye o word as another.  
 Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,  
 And wel ye woot no vileynye is it. 740  
 Eek Plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,  
 'The wordés moote be cosyn to the dede.'

Also I prey yow to foryeve it me  
 Al have I nat set folk in hir degree  
 Heere in this tale, as that they sholdé  
 stonde;

My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.  
 Greet chieré made oure hoost us  
 everichon,

And to the soper sette he us anon,  
 And servéd us with vitaille at the beste:  
 Strong was the wyn and wel to drynke  
 us lesté. 750

A semely man OURE HOOSTÉ was  
 with-alle

For to han been a marchal in an halle.  
 A largé man he was, with eyen stepe,  
 A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe;  
 Boold of his speche, and wys and well  
 y-taught

And of manhod hym lakkedé right naught.  
 Eek therto he was right a myrie man,  
 And after scper pleyen he bigan,  
 And spak of myrthe amongés othere  
 thynges,

Whan that we haddé maad our rekenynges;

727. *pleynly speke*, *EP*; *speke al pleyn*, *H*.  
 741. *Eek Plato seith*. Chaucer takes his  
 quotation from Boethius, *De Consolatione*, bk.  
 iii. prose 12.  
 753. *is*, *EP* was.

And seyde thus : ' Now, lordynges,  
trewely, <sup>761</sup>

Ye been to me right welcome, hertely ;  
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,  
I ne saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye  
At ones in this herberwe as is now ;  
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I  
how.

And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght,  
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.

' Ye goon to Canterbury—God yow  
speede, <sup>769</sup>

The blisful martir quitte yow youre meede !  
And, wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,  
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye ;  
For trewely confort ne myrthe is noon  
To ride by the weye dounb as a stoon ;  
And therefore wol I maken yow disport,  
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som  
confort.

And if you liketh alle, by oon assent,  
Now for to stonden at my juggement,  
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,  
To-morwe, whan ye riden by the weye,  
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed, <sup>781</sup>  
But ye be myrie, smyteth of myn heed !  
Hoold up youre hond, withouten moore  
speche.'

Oure conseil was nat longé for to seche ;  
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make  
it wys,

And graunted hym withouten moore avys,  
And bad him seye his verdit, as hym leste.

' Lordynges,' quod he, ' now herkneth  
for the beste ;

But taak it nought, I prey yow, in  
desdeyn ;

This is the poynt, to speken short and  
pleyn, <sup>790</sup>

That ech of yow, to shorté with your weye,  
In this viage shal tellé talés tweye,—

To Caunterburyward, I mean it so,  
And homward he shal tellen othere two,—  
Of aventúres that whilom han bifalle.

*For smyteth of (i.e. off), E<sup>8</sup> read I wol  
smyte.*

*E<sup>8</sup> read ours for your, but this makes the  
sense too precipitate.*

*790-794. As the pilgrims progress we see clearly  
that they are only to tell one tale each on their  
way to Canterbury.*

And which of yow that bereth hym beste  
of alle,

That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas  
Talés of best sentence and moost solas,  
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost, <sup>799</sup>  
Heere in this placé, sittynge by this post,  
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.  
And, for to maké yow the moore mury,  
I wol myselven gladly with yow ryde  
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre  
gyde ;

And whoso wole my juggement withseye  
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.  
And if ye vouché-sauf that it be so  
Tel me anon, withouten wordés mo,  
And I wol erly shapé me therfore.'

This thyng was graunted, and oure  
othés swore <sup>810</sup>  
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also  
That he would vouché-sauf for to do so,  
And that he woldé been oure gouverour,  
And of our talés juge and réportour,  
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,  
And we wol reuléd been at his devys  
In heigh and lough ; and thus, by oon  
assent,

We been accorded to his juggement.  
And therupon the wyn was fet anon ;  
We dronken, and to resté wente echon,  
Withouten any lenger taryynge. <sup>821</sup>

Amorwé, whan that day gan for to  
sprynge,

Up roos oure Hoost and was oure aller cok,  
And gadrede us togidre alle in a flok,  
And forth we riden, solitel moore than pass,  
Unto the wateryng of Saint Thomas ;  
And there oure Hoost bigan his hors areste  
And seyde, ' Lordynges, herkneth, if  
yow leste :

Ye woot youre foreward and I it yow  
recorde.

If even-song and morwé-song accorde, <sup>830</sup>  
Lat se now who shal telle the firsté tale.  
As ever mote I drynké wyn or ale,  
Whoso be rebel to my juggement  
Shal paye for all that by the wey is spent !

*799. ours aller, of us all. your aller, E<sup>8</sup>.  
803. gladly, E<sup>8</sup> goodly.*

*822. the wateryng of St. Thomas, a brook  
near the second milestone on the Canterbury  
Road, where pilgrims watered their horses.*

Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twynne.  
He which that bath the shorteste shal  
bigynne.

Sire Knyght,' quod he, 'my mayster and  
my lord,

Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord.  
Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady Prioresse,  
And ye sire Clerk, lat be your shame-  
fastnesse, 840  
Nestudieth noght; ley hond to, every man.'

Anon to drawn every wight bigan,  
And, shortly for to tellen as it was,  
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,  
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,  
Of which ful blithe and glad was every  
wyght:

And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,  
By foreward and by composicioun,  
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes  
mo?

And whan this goode man saugh that it  
was so, 850

As he that wys was and obedient  
To kepe his foreward by his free assent,  
He seyde, 'Syn I shal bigynne the game,  
What, welcome be the cut, & Góddés  
name!

Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I  
seye.'

And with that word we ryden forth oure  
weye;

And he bigan with right a myrie cheere  
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

## [TALES OF THE FIRST DAY]

### [GROUP A]

#### KNIGHT'S TALE

##### *Heere bigynneth The Knyghtes Tale*

WHILOM, as oldé stories tellen us,  
Ther was a duc that highté Theseus; 860  
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour,  
And in his tymé swich a conquerour,  
That gretter was thernoon under the sonne.  
Ful many a riché contree hadde he wonne;  
That with his wysdom and his chivalrie  
Hé conquered al the regne of Femenye,  
That whilom was y-clepéd Scithia;  
And weddedé the queene Ypolita,  
And broghte hire hoom with hym in his  
contrée

With muchel glorie and greet solempnytee,  
And eek hir fairé suster Emelye. 871  
And thus with victorie and with melodye  
Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde,  
And al his hoost in armés hym bisyde.

*Knights Tale.* A discussion of Chaucer's  
adaptation of Boccaccio's *Tesiride* in this tale  
will be found in the Introduction.

866. *The regne of Femenye*, the kingdom of the  
Amazones.

871. *Leten*, He *young*.

And certés, if it nere to long to heere,  
I wolde han told yow fully the manere  
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye  
By Theseus and by his chivalrye;  
And of the greté bataille for the nones  
Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones; 880  
And how asségéd was Ypolita,  
The fairé, hardy queene of Scithia,  
And of the feste that was at hir weddyng,  
And of the tempest at hir hoom-comyng;  
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere.  
I have, God woot, a largé feeld to ere,  
And wayké been the oxen in my plough.  
The remenant of the tale is long ynough,  
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route.  
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute, 890  
And lat se now who shal the soper wyne;  
And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigyane.

This duc, of whom I maké mencoun,  
Whan he was come almost unto the  
toun,

In al his wele, and in his moosté pride,  
He was war, as he caste his eye aside,  
Where that ther kneled in the hyé weye  
A compaignye of ladyes, tweye and tweye,

Each after oother, clad in clothés blake ;  
 But swich a cry and swich a wo they make  
 That in this world nys créature lyvyng  
 That herdé swich another waymentyng :  
 And of this cry they noldé nevere stenten,  
 Till they the reynés of his brydel henten.

'What folk been ye, that at myn  
 hom-comfyng

Perturbén so my festé with cryfngé ?'  
 Quod Theséus. 'Have ye so greet envye  
 Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and  
 crye ?

Or who hath yow mysboden or offended ?  
 And telleth me if it may been amended,  
 And why that ye been clothéd thus in  
 blak ?' 911

The eldeste lady of hem allé spak  
 Whan she hadde swowned with a deedly  
 cheere,

That it was routhe for to seen and heere,  
 And seyde, 'Lord, to whom fortune hath  
 yeven

Victorie, and as a conqueror to lyven,  
 Nat greveth us youre glorie and youre  
 honour,

But we biseken mercy and socour.  
 Have mercy on oure wo and oure distresse :  
 Som drope of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,  
 Upon us wrecchéd women lat thou falle :  
 For certés, lord, ther is noon of us alle  
 That she ne hath been a duchesse or a  
 queene.

Now be we caytyves, as it is wel seene :  
 Thankéd be Fortune and hire falsé wheel,  
 That noon estat assurèth to be weel.

And certés, lord, to abyden youre presence,  
 Heere in the temple of the goddesse  
 Clemence

We han ben waityngé al this fourtē-  
 nyght ;

Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy  
 myght. 930

'I wrecché, which that wepe and  
 waillé thus,

Was whilom wyf to kyng Cappaneüs,  
 That starf at Thebés ; curséd be that  
 day !

And telle we that been in this array,  
 And maken al this lamentacioun,

931. waillé, 2<sup>d</sup> crié.

We losten alle oure housbondes at that  
 toun,

Whil that the seegé ther-abouté lay,  
 And yet now the oldé Creon, weylaway !  
 That lord is now of Thebés, the citee,  
 Fulfid of ire and of inquitee, 940  
 He, for despit and for his tyrannye,  
 To do the dedé bodyes vileynye  
 Of alle oure lordés, whiché that been  
 slawe,

Hath alle the bodyes on an heepe y-drawe,  
 And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,  
 Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,  
 But maketh houndés ete hem in despit.'

And with that word, withouten moore  
 respit,

They fillen gruf, and criden pitously,  
 'Have on us wrecched women som  
 mercy, 950

And lat oure sorwé synken in thyn herte.'  
 This gentil duc down from his courser  
 sterte

With herté pitous, whan he herde hem  
 speke.

Hym thoughté that his herté woldé breke  
 Whan he saugh hem, so pitous and so maat,  
 That whilom weren of so greet estaat ;  
 And in his armés he hem alle up hente,  
 And hem conforteth in ful good entente,  
 And swoor his ooth, as he was trewé  
 knyght, 959

He woldé doon so ferforthly his myght  
 Upon the tiraunt Creon hem to wreke,  
 That all the peple of Grece sholdé speke  
 How Creon was of Theséus y-served  
 As he that hadde his deeth ful wel  
 deserved.

And right anon, withouten moore abood,  
 His baner he displayeth and-forth rood  
 To Thebésward, and al his hoost biside.  
 No neer Atthénés wolde he go né ride,  
 Ne take his esé fully half a day, 969  
 But onward on his wey that nyght he lay ;  
 And sente anon Ypolita the queene,  
 And Emelye, hir yongé suster sheene,  
 Unto the toun of Atthénés to dwelle,  
 And forth he rit ; ther is namoore to telle.

The redé statue of Mars, with spere  
 and targe

949. fillen gruf, fall on their knees.

So shyneth in his whité baner large,  
That alle the feeldes glyteren up and doun,  
And by his baner born is his penoun  
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete  
The Mynotaur, which that he slough in  
Crete.

Thus rit this duc, thus rit this con-  
querour,

And in his hoost of chivalrie the flour,  
Til that he cam to Thebés, and alighte  
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.  
But, shortly for to speken of this thyng,  
With Creon, which that was of Thebés  
kyng,

He faught, and slough hym manly as a  
knyght,

In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to  
flyght,

And by assaut he wan the citee after,  
And rente adoun bothe wall and sparre  
and rafter

And to the ladyes he restored agayn  
The bonés of hir housbondes that weren  
slayn,

To doon obsequies as was tho the gyse.  
But it were al to longe for to devyse

The grete clamour and the waymentynge  
That the ladyes made at the brennyng  
Of the bodies, and the grete honour  
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,  
Dooth to the ladyes whan they from hym  
wente ;

But shortly for to telle is myn entente.

When that this worthy duc, this  
Theseus,

Hath Creon slayn, and wonné Thebés thus,  
Stille in that feeld he took al nyght his reste,  
And dide with al the contree as hym leste.

To ransake in the taas of bodies dede,  
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,  
The pilours diden bisynesse and cure  
After the bataille and disconfiture.

And so bifel that in the taas they founde,  
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous, bloody  
wounde,

Two yonge knyghtes, liggyng by and by,  
Bothe in oon armés, wrought ful richely,

Of the feeldes; sometimes wrongly explained  
as the sacred ground of his banner; but cp.  
Anno 1030.

And the knyghtes, H. 1030

Of whiché two Arcita highte that oon,  
And that oother knyght highte Palamon.  
Nat fully quyke, ne fully dede they were,  
But by here cote-armures and by hir gere  
The heraudes knewe hem best in special,  
As they that weren of the blood roial  
Of Thebés, and of sustren two y-born.

Out of the taas the pilours han hem torn  
And han hem caried softe unto the tente  
Of Theseus, and ful sooné he hem sente  
To Atthenés, to dwellen in prisoun  
Perpetuelly, he noldé no raunsoun.

And whan this worthy duc hath thus y-don,  
He took his hoost and hoom he rood anon,  
With laurer crownéd as a conquerour ;  
And ther he lyveth in joye and in honour  
Terme of his lyve ; what nedeth wordés mo?  
And in a tour, in angwisch and in wo,  
This Palamon and his felawe Arcite  
For evermoore ; ther may no gold hem  
quite.

This passeth yeer by yeer and day by day,  
Till it fil onés, in a morwe of May,  
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene  
Than is the lylie upon his stalké grene,  
And fressher than the May with flourés  
newe,—

For with the rosé colour stroof hire hewe,  
I noot which was the fyner of hem two,—  
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,  
She was arisen and al redy dight :  
For May wole have no slogardrie a nyght,  
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte  
And maketh hym out of his slepe to sterte,  
And seith, ' Arys, and do thyn óbservance.'  
This makéd Emelye have rémembráunce  
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.  
Y-clothéd was she fresshe, for to devyse ;  
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse  
Bihynde hir bak, a yerdé long, I gesse ;  
And in the gardyn, at the sonne up-riste,  
She walketh up and doun, and as hire liste  
She gadereth flourés, party white and rede,  
To make a subtil gerland for hire hede,  
And as an aungel hevenyschly she soong.

The grete tour, that was so thikke and  
stroong,

Which of the castel was the chief dongeon  
(Ther as the knyghtes weren in prisoun,  
Of whiche I toldé yow and tellen shal),



Was even joynant to the gardyn wal,  
 Ther as this Emelye hadde hir playyng.  
 Bright was the sonne, and cleer that  
 morwenyng,  
 And Palamon, this woful prisoner,  
 As was his wone, bi leve of his gayler,  
 Was risen, and romed in a chambre on  
 heigh, 1065

In which he al the noble citee seigh,  
 And eek the gardyn, ful of braunthes grene,  
 Ther as this fresshé Emelye the sheene  
 Was in hire walk and romed up and doun.  
 This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,  
 Goth in the chambré gomyng to and fro,  
 And to hymself compleynyng of his wo ;  
 That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'allas !'  
 And so bifel, by aventure or cas,  
 That thurgh a wyndow, thikke of many  
 a barre 1075

Of iren, greet and square as any sparre,  
 He cast his eyen upon Emelya,  
 And therwithal he bleynte and cridé, 'A !'  
 As though he stongen were unto the herte.  
 And with that cry Arcite anon up sterite,  
 And seyde, 'Cosyn myn, what eyleth thee,  
 That art so pale and deedly on to see ?  
 Why cridestow ? who hath thee doon  
 offence ?

For Goddés love, taak al in pacience  
 Oure prisoun, for it may noon oother be ;  
 Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.  
 Som wikke aspéct or disposicioun  
 Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,  
 Hath yeven us this, although we hadde  
 it sworn ;

So stood the hevene whan that we were  
 born ; 1090  
 We moste endure : this is the short and  
 playn.'

This Palamon answerde, and seyde  
 agayn,

'Cosyn, for sothe of this opinioun  
 Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioun ;  
 This prison causéd me nat for to crye,  
 But I was hurt right now thorough myn eye  
 Into myn herte, that wol my bané be.  
 The fairnesse of that lady that I see  
 In the gardyn romen to and fro,  
 Is cause of al my crying and my wo. 1100  
 I noon wher she be woman or goddesse,

But Venus is it, soothly, as I gease.'  
 And therwithal on kneés doun he fil,  
 And seyde : 'Venus, if it be thy wil  
 Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure  
 Bifore me, sorweful, wrecché creature,  
 Out of this prison helpe that we may  
 scapen.

And if so be my destynce be shapen,  
 By eterné word, to dyen in prisoun,  
 Of our lynage have som compassioun, 1110  
 That is so lowe y-brought by tyrannye.'

And with that word Arcite gan espye  
 Wher as this lady romed to and fro,  
 And with that sighte hir beautee hurte  
 hym so,

That if that Palamon was wounded sore,  
 Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or moore ;  
 And with a sigh he seyde pitously :  
 'The fresshé beautee sleeth me sodeynly  
 Of hire that rometh in the yonder place,  
 And but I have hir mercy and hir grace,  
 That I may seen hire atté leesté weye, 1120  
 I nam but deed ; ther is namoore to seye.'

This Palamon, whan he tho wordés  
 herde,

Dispitously he lookéd, and answerde,  
 'Whether scistow this in earnest or in play ?

'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in earnest, by my  
 fey !

God helpe me so, me list ful yvele pleye.'

This Palamon gan knytte his browés  
 tweye,

'It nere,' quod he, 'to thee no greet  
 honour,

For to be fals, ne for to be traitour 1130  
 To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother  
 Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til oother,  
 That never, for to dyen in the peysse,  
 Til that deeth departé shal us tweyne,  
 Neither of us in love to hyndré oother,  
 Ne in noon oother cas, my leevé brother,  
 But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me  
 In every cas, as I shal forthren thee.  
 This was thyn ooth, and myn also certeyn ;  
 I woot right wel thou darst it nat withseyne.  
 Thus artow of my conseil, out of doute :  
 And now thou woldest falsly been aboute  
 To love my lady, whom I love and serve,  
 And ever shal, til that myn herte serve.  
 Nay certés, fals Arcite, thou art nat so ;

I loved hire first, and toldé thee my wo  
As to my conseil, and my brother sworn  
To forthré me, as I have toold biforn.  
For which thou art y-bounden as a knyght  
To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght; 1150  
Or ellés artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'

This Arcité ful proudly spak ageyn;  
'Thow shalt,' quod he, 'be rather fals  
than I;

And thou art fals, I telle thee, outré,  
For *par amour* I loved hire first er thow.  
What wiltowseyn? thou wistest nat yet now  
Whether she be a womman or goddesse!  
Thyn is affectioun of foolynesse,  
And myn is love as to a créature;

For which I toldé thee myn aventure 1160  
As to my cosyn and my brother sworn.  
I posé that thow lovedest hire biforn,  
Wostow nat wel the oldé clerkés sawe,  
That *who shal yewe a lovere any lawe*;  
*Love is a grutter lawe, by my pan,*  
*Than may be yewe of any erthely man?*

And therefore positif lawe and swich decree  
Is broken al day for love, in ech degree.  
A man moot nedés love, maugree his heed;  
He may nat flee it, thogh he sholde be  
deed, 1170

Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or ellés wyf;  
And eek it is nat likly, al thy lyf,  
To stonden in hir grace; namoore shal I;  
For wel thou woost thyselfen, verrailly,  
That thou and I be dampned to prisoun  
Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.

We stryven as didé the houndés for the  
boon,

They foughte al day, and yet hir part  
was noon;

Ther cam a kyte, whil that they weren  
so wrothe,

And baar away the boon bitwixe hem  
bothe; 1180

And therefore, at the kyngés court, my  
brother,

Éch man for hymself, ther is noon oother.  
Love, if thee list, for I love and ay shal,  
And soothly, leevé brother, this is al.  
Heere in this prisoun mooté we endure  
And everich of us take his aventure.'

Greet was the strif, and long, bitwix  
hem tweye,

If that I haddé leyser for to seye;  
But to theffect. It happéd on a day,—

To telle it yow as shortly as I may,— 1190  
A worthy duc, that highte Perothéus,  
That felawe was unto duc Theséus,

Syn thilké day that they were children lite,  
Was come to Atthènes, his felawe to visite,

And for to pleye, as he was wont to do;  
For in this world he lovéd no man so,

And he lovéd hym as tendrely agayn.  
So wel they lovedé, as oldé bookés sayn,

That whan that oon was deed, soothly to  
telle,

His felawe wente and soughte hym down  
in helle,— 1200

But of that storie list me nat to write.

Duc Perothéus lovéd wel Arcite,  
And hadde hym knowe at Thebés, yeer  
by yere;

And finally, at réquest and preyére  
Of Perothéus, withouten any raunsoun,

Duc Theséus hym leet out of prisoun  
Frelly to goon wher that hym liste over-al,

In swich a gyse as I you tellen shal.

This was the forward, pleynly for tendite,  
Bitwixen Theséus and hym Arcite; 1210

That if so were that Arcite were y-founde,  
Ever in hislif, by day or nyght, oo stounde,

In any contree of this Theséus,  
And he were caught, it was accorded thus,

That with a sward he sholdé lese his heed;  
Ther nas noon oother remedie, ne reed,

But taketh his leve and homward he him  
spedde;

Lat hym be war, his nekké lith to wedde.  
How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!

1192. Chaucer is out here in his mythology,  
for Pirithous, King of Thessaly, was originally  
the enemy of Theseus, and invaded Attica.

1200. Chaucer takes this from the *Roman de  
la Rose*. According to the original legend  
Theseus and Pirithous visited hell, when the  
latter was minded to carry off its queen, Pro-  
serpina.

1212. *cc.*, MSS. *cc.*

1147. For conseil Lansdowne MS. reads *costin*,  
p. l. 1147.

1163. *oldé clerkés sawe*. The proverb is found  
in Boccaccio's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, lib.  
ii. met. 10, translated by Chaucer: 'But what  
is he that yewe a lawe to lovers? Love is  
grutter lawe, a strengere to hymself than any  
we the world yewe.'

This deeth he feeleth thurgh his herté  
smyte ; 1230

He wepeth, wayleth, crieth pitously ;  
To sleen hymself he waiteth prively.  
He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was born !  
Now is my prisoun worsé than biforn ;  
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle,  
Nat in my purgatorie, but in helle.

Allas that ever knew I Perothéus !"  
For ellés hadde I dwelled with Theséus,  
Y-fetered in his prisoun evermo.

Thanne hadde I been in blisse, and nat  
in wo, 1230

Oonly the sighte of hire, whom that I  
serve,—

Though that I never hir gracé may  
deserve,—

Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.  
O deeré cosyn Palamon, quod he,

'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure !  
Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure,—

In prisoun ? certés nay, but in paradys !  
Wel hath Fortune y-turned thee the dys,

That hast the sighte of hire and I  
thabsence. 1239

For possible is, syn thou hast hire presence,  
And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,  
That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaunge-  
able,

Thowmaist to thy desir some tyme atteyne,  
But I, that am exiléd and bareyne  
Of allé grace, and in so greet dispeir,  
That ther nys erthé, water, fir, ne eir,  
Ne créature, that of hem makéd is,  
That may me heele, or doon confort in  
this—

Wel oughte I sterve in waáhope and  
distresse ; 1249

Farwel, my lif, my lust and my gladnesse !  
'Allas, why pleyneþ folk so in commune

Of purvieaunce of God, or of Fortune,  
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse

Wel bettre than they kan hem self devyse ?  
Som man desireth for to han richése,

That cause is of his moerdre, or greet  
siknesse ;

And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayne,  
That in his hous is of his meynce slayn.

1246. ~~om.~~ H<sup>1</sup>.  
1248. ~~Aske~~, H<sup>1</sup> ~~Aske~~.

Infinite harmés been in this mateere, 1239  
We witen nat what thing we preyen heere.

We faren as he that dronke is as a mous,  
A dronké man woot wel he hath an hous,

But he noot which the righté wey is thider,  
And to a dronké man the wey is slider ;

And certés in this world so faren we,—  
We seken faste after felicitée,

But we goon wrong ful often, trewely.  
Thus may we seyén alle, and namely I,

That wende and hadde a greet opinioun  
That if I myghte escapen from prisoun,

Thanne hadde I been in joye and perfé  
heele, 1271

Ther now I am exiléd from my wele.  
Syn that I may nat seen you, Emelye,

I nam but deed, there nys no remedye.'

Upon that oother sydé, Palamon,  
Whan that he wiste Arcité was agon,

Swich sorwe he maketh that the greté tou  
Resouned of his youlyng and clamour ;

The puré fettes on his shynés grete  
Weren of his bittre, salté teerés wete. 124

'Allas !' quod he, 'Arcita, cosyn myn,  
Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is  
thyn ;

Thow walkest now in Thebés at thy large  
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.

Thou mayst, syn thou hast wysdom and  
manhede,

Assemblen alle the folk of oure kynrede,  
And make a werre so sharpe on this citee

That by som aventure, or som trettee,  
Thow mayst have hire to lady and to wyf,

For whom that I moste nedés lese my lif.  
For, as by wey of possibilitee, 1251

Sith thou art at thy large, of prisoun free  
And art a lord, greet is thyn ávauntage,

Moore than is myn that sterve here in  
cage ;

For I moot wepe and waylé while I lyve  
With al the wo that prison may me yeve

And eek with payne that love me yevéd  
also,

That doubleth al my torment and my wo  
Therwith the fyr of jalousie up-sterce

Withinne his brest, and hente him by th  
herte 127

So woody, that he lyk was to biholde  
1278. ~~recovered~~, H<sup>1</sup> ~~recovered~~.

The boxtree, or the asshen, dede and colde.

Thanne seyde he, 'O cruel goddes that governe

This world with byndyng of youre word eterne,

And writen in the table of atthamaunt  
Your parlément and youre eterné graunt,  
What is mankynde moore unto you, holde  
Than is the sheepe that rouketh in the folde? 1308

For slayn is man, right as another beest,  
And dwelleth eek in prison and arreest,  
And hath siknease and greet adversitee,  
And ofté tymés gyltéles, *pardee*.

'What governance is in this prescience,  
That gyltéles tormenteth innocence?

And yet encresseth this al my penaunce,  
That man is bounden to his observance  
For Goddés sake to letten of his wille,  
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille;  
And whan a beest is deed he hath no peyne,  
But after his deeth man moot wepe and pleyne, 1320

Though in this world he havé care and wo;  
Withouten douté it may stonden so.  
The answer of this I leté to dyvynys,  
But well I woot that in this world greet pyne ya.

Allas! I se a serpent or a theef,  
That many a trewé man hath doon mescheef,

Goon at his large, and where hym list may turne;

But I moot been in prisoun thurgh Saturne,  
And eek thurgh, Juno, jalous and eek wood,

That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood 1330

Of Thebés, with his wasté wallés wyde;  
And Venus sleeth me on that oother syde  
For jalousie and fere of hym Arcite.'

Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite  
And lete hym in his prisoun stillé dwelle,  
And of Arcite forth I wol yow telle.

1320. *But after his deeth man, etc., so E<sup>4</sup>, throwing a stress, which accords well with the sense, on *Ati*; H<sup>2</sup> more smoothly, But man after his deeth, etc.*

1323. *I. *lyth*, E<sup>2</sup> lets I, spoiling the accents throughout the line.*

The somner passeth, and the nyghtés longe

Encressen double wise the peynés stronge  
Bothe of the lover and the prisoner. 1339  
I noot which hath the wofuller mester;  
For shortly for to seyn this Palamoun  
Perpetuelly is dampné to prisoun,  
In cheynés and in féttes to been deed,  
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed  
For ever-mo, as out of that contree,  
Ne never-mo he shal his lady see.

Yow lovers axe I now this questoun,  
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?  
That oon may seen his lady day by day,  
Bút in prison he moot dwelle alway; 1350  
That oother wher hym list may ride or go,  
But seen his lady shal he never mo.  
Now demeth as yow listé, ye that kan,  
For I wol tellé forth as I bigan.

## PART II

Whan that Arcite to Thebés comen was,  
Ful ofte a day he swelté and seyde, 'Allas!'  
For seen his lady shal he never mo.  
And, shortly to concluden al his wo,  
So muché sorwe hadde never créature  
That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure. 1360

His slepe, his mete, his drynke, is hym biraft,

That lene he wexe and drye as is a shaft;  
His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde,  
His hewé falow, and pale as asshen colde,  
And solitarie he was and ever allone,  
And waillynge al the nyght, makynge his mone:

And if he herdé song or instrument  
Thanne wolde he wepe, he myghté nat be stent.

So feble eek were his spiritz and so lowe,  
And chaungéd so that no man koudé knowe 1370

His spech nor his voys, though men it herde:

And in his geere for al the world he ferde,  
Nat oonly like the loveris maladye

1337. *somner, E. songe.*

1344. *upon his head, on pain of losing his head.*

1362. *were, E<sup>2</sup> wereth.*

6-5953

Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye,  
Engendred of humour malencolik,  
Biforn, in his owene cellé fantastik.  
And, shortly, turned was al up-so-doun  
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun  
Of hym, this woful lover daun Arcite.

What sholde I al day of his wo endite?  
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two 1378  
This cruel torment and this peyne and  
woo,

At Thebes, in his contree, as I seyde,  
Upon a nyght, in sleepe as he hym leyde,  
Hym thoughte how that the wynged god  
Mercurie

Biforn hym stood and ba1 hym to be  
murie ;

His slepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte,  
An hat he werede upon his heris brighte.  
Arrayed was this god, as he took keepe,  
As he was whan that Argus took his sleepe,  
And seyde hym thus, 'To Atthénés  
shal thou wende ;' 1391

Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.  
And with that word Arcité wook and  
sterde,—

'Now trewely, hou soore that me smerte,  
Quod he, 'to Atthénés right now wol I fare,  
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare,  
To se my lady that I love and serve ;  
In hire presence I recche nat to sterve.'

And with that word he caughte a  
greet mirour 1399

And saugh that chaunged was al his colour  
And saugh his visage al in another kynde ;  
And right anon it ran hym in his mynde,  
That sith his face was so disfigured  
Of maladye the which he hadde endured,  
He myght wel, if that he bar hym lowe,  
Lye in Atthénés evermore unknowe,  
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.  
And right anon he chaunged his array  
And cladde hym as a pouré laborer,

1374. *Hereos*, Eros, Love.

1376. *Biforn*, in his owene celle fantastik ; in  
is from H only ; *owene* from E<sup>2</sup> only. According  
to medieval theory Mania was begotten in the  
front cell of the head which was appropriated to  
the imagination.

1387. *serde*, Mercury's caduceus.

1389. *he*, E I.

1390. *Argus*, the hundred-eyed guardian of Io.  
Mercury lulled him with music and slew him.

And al allone,—save oonly a squier 1401  
That knew his privetee and al his cas,  
Which was disguised pourely as he was,—  
To Atthénés is he goon the nexte way,  
And to the court he wente upon a day,  
And at the gate he profreth his servyse  
To druge and drawe, what so men wo  
devyse.

And, shortly of this matere for to seyn,  
He fil in office with a chamberleyn  
The which that dwellynge was with  
Emelye ; 1404

For he was wys and koude soone espye  
Of every servaunt which that serveth here  
Wel koude he hewen wode and water bere  
For he was yong, and myghty for the none,  
And therto he was long and big of bone,  
To doon that any wight kan hym devyse  
A yeer or two he was in this servyse,  
Page of the chambere of Emelye the brighte  
And Philostrate he seyde that he highte  
But half so wel biloved a man as he 1408  
Ne was ther never in court of his degree  
He was so gentil of his condicioun  
That thurghout the court was his renoun  
They seyden that it were a charitee  
That Theseus wolde enhauncen his degree  
And putten hym in worshipful servyse,  
Ther as he myghte his vertu exercise.  
And thus withinne a while his name is  
spronge,

Bothe of his dedés and his goodé tonge,  
That Theseus hath taken hym so neer,  
That of his chambere he made hym a squier,  
And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree ;  
And eek men broghte hym out of his  
contree,

From yeer to yeer, ful prively, his rente ;  
But honestly and alyly he it spent  
That noman wondred how that he it hadde  
And thre year in this wise his lif he ladd  
And bar hym so in pees, and eek in werre  
Ther was no man that Theseus hath derre  
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite  
And speke I wole of Palamon a lite. 1418

1404. *long*, EH<sup>2</sup> ; Hengwrt<sup>4</sup>, *strong*.

1408. *Philostrate* : in the *Teseide* Arcite takes  
the name of Pentheo. The name Philostrate was  
probably suggested to Chaucer by Boccaccio's  
poem *Philostrate*, the original of *Troilus and  
Criseida*.

In derknesse and horrible and strong  
prison

hise seven yer hath seten Palamon.  
orpynd, what for wo and for distresse.  
Who feeleth double soor and hevynesse  
but Palamon? that love destreyneth so  
that wood out of his wit he goth for wo;  
and eek ther-to he is a prisoner  
perpetuelly, nocht only for a yer.

Who koudé ryme in Englyssh proprely  
his martirdom? for sothe it am nat I;  
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may. 1461

It fel that in the seventh yer, in May,  
the thriddé nyght, as oldé bookés seyn,  
that al this storic tellen mooré pleyn,  
Were it by aventure or destynce,—

as whan a thyng is shapen it shal be,—  
That soone after the mydnyght, Palamoun,  
by helpyng of a freend brak his prisoun  
and fleeth the citee, faste as he may go,  
for he hade yeve his gayler drynké so,  
of a clarrée, maad of a certeyn wyn, 1471  
With nercotikes, and opie of Thebés fyn,  
that al that nyght, thogh that men wolde  
him shake,

he gayler sleepe, he myghté nat awake;  
And thus he fleeth, as faste as ever  
he may.

The nyght was short and faste by the day,  
that nedés-cost he moot hymselfen hyde,  
and til a grové, faste ther bisyde,  
With dredeful foot, thanne stalketh Pala-  
moun.

For, shortly, this was his opinioun, 1480  
that in that grove he wolde hym hyde al  
day,

and in the nyght thanne wolde he take  
his way.

To Thebés-ward, his freendés for to preye  
on Theseus to helpe him to werreye;  
and, shortly, outhur he woldé lese his lif,  
or wynnen Emelye unto his wyf.  
This is theeffect and his ententé pleyn.

Now wol I turné to Arcite ageyn,  
that litel wiste how ny that was his care,  
that litel Fortúne had brought him in the  
spare. 1490

1454. *over*, E<sup>5</sup>; H<sup>3</sup>, *corvus*.

1472. *Thebes*, in Egypt, not in Greece.

1472. *with*, E. c.

The bisy larké, messenger of day,  
Salueth in hir song the morwé gray,  
And fry Phebus riseth up so brighte  
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,  
And with his stremés dryeth in the greves  
The silver dropés, hangyng on the leves.  
And Arcita, that is in the court roial  
With Theseus, his squier principal,  
Is risen, and looketh on the myrie day;  
And for to doon his óbservance to May,  
Remembryng on the poynt of his desir,  
He on a courser, stertyng as the fir,  
Is riden into the feeldés hym to pleye,  
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;  
And to the grove of which that I yow tolde,  
By aventure, his wey he gan to holde,  
To maken hym a gerland of the greves,  
Were it of wodébynde, or hawethorn leves,  
And loude he song agcyn the sonnéd shene:  
'Má, with alle thy floures and thy grene,  
Wélcome be thou, fairé, fresshé May, 1511  
In hope that I som grené geté may.'  
And from his courser with a lusty herte  
Into a grove ful hastily he sterte,  
And in a path he rometh up and down,  
Ther as by aventure this Palamoun  
Was in a bush, that no man myghte  
hym se,

For soore aferéd of his deeth was he.  
No-thing ne knew he that it was Arcite:  
God woot he wolde have trowéd it ful lite;  
But sooth is seyde, gon sithen many yeres,  
That feeld hath eyen, and the wode hath  
eres.

It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,  
For al day meeteth men at unset stevene.  
Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe  
That was so ny to herkennen al his sawe,  
For in the bush he sitteth now ful stille.

Whan that Arcite hadde roméd al his  
fille,

And songen al the roundel lustily,  
Into a studie he fil al sodeynly, 1530  
As doon thise lovers in hir queynté  
geres,—

Now in the cropé, now down in the breres,

1494. *That al the orient laugheth*; Dante, *Purg.* l. 20, 'faceva tutto rider l' oriente.' (Skeat.)

1522. *That feeld hath eyen*: 'Campus habet lumen et habet nemus auris rcumen.'

1524. *unset stevene*, unappointed time.

Now up, now down, as boket in a welle.  
 Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,  
 Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,  
 Right so kan geery Venus overcaste  
 The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day  
 Is gereful, right so chaungeth she array,—  
 Selde is the Friday al the wowke y-like.

Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan  
 to sike, 1540  
 And sette hym doun withouten any moore:  
 'Allas,' quod he, 'that day that I was  
 bore!

How longé, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,  
 Woltow werreyen Thebes the citee?  
 Allas, y-broght is to confusioun  
 The blood roial of Cadme and  
 Amphioun,—

Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man  
 That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,  
 And of the citee first was crowned kyng.  
 Of his lynage am I, and his ofspryng 1550  
 By verray ligne, as of the stok roial;  
 And now I am so caytyf and so thral,  
 That he that is my mortal enemy,  
 I serve hym as his squier pourély.  
 And yet dooth Juno me wel moore shame,  
 For I dar noght biknowemyn owene name;  
 But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,  
 Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a  
 myte.

Allas, thou fellé Mars! alas, Juno! 1559  
 Thus hath youre ire oure kynrede al fordo,  
 Save oonly me, and wrecched Palamoun,  
 That Theséus martireth in prisoun.  
 And over al this, to sleen me outrely,  
 Love hath his fryr dart so brennyngly  
 Y-stikéd thurgh my trewe, careful herte,  
 That shapen was my deeth erst than my  
 sherte.

Ye sleen me with youre eyén, Emelye!  
 Ye been the causé wherfore that I dye!  
 Of al the remenant of myn oother care  
 Ne sette I nat the montance of a tare,  
 So that I koude doon aught to youre  
 plesaunce. 1571

And with that word he fil doun in a trauce  
 A longé tyme, and afterward up-sterre.

This Palamoun, that thoughte that  
 thurgh his herte

He felte a coold swerd sodeynliché glyde,  
 For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde,  
 And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,  
 As he were wood, with face deed and pale,  
 He sterte hym up out of the buskés thikke,  
 And seide, 'Arcité, falsé traytour wikke!  
 Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so,  
 For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,  
 And art my blood, and to my conseil sworn,  
 As I ful ofte have seyde thee heer-biforn,  
 And hast byjapéd heere duc Theséus,  
 And falsly chaungéd hast thy namé thus;  
 I wol be deed, or ellés thou shalt dye;  
 Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,  
 But I wol love hire oonly, and namo;  
 For I am Palamon, thy mortal foo, 1590  
 And though that I no wepene have in  
 this place,

But out of prison am astert by gráce,  
 I dredé noght that outhur thou shalt dye,  
 Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelye.  
 Chees which thou wolt, for thou shalt  
 nat asterte!

This Arcité, with ful despitous herte,  
 Whan he hym knew, and hadde his talé  
 herd,

As fiers as leoun pulléd out his swerd,  
 And seyde thus, 'By God that sit above,  
 Nere it that thou art sik and wood for love,  
 And eek that thou no wepene hast in this  
 place, 1600

Thou sholdest never out of this grové pace,  
 That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond,  
 For I defyde the seurete and the bond  
 Which that thou seist that I have maad  
 to thee.

What, verray fool, thyng wel that love is fre!  
 And I wol love hire mawgree al thy myght.  
 But for as muche thou art a worthy knyght,  
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille,  
 Have heer my trouthe, tomorwe I wol  
 nat faile, 1610

Withouté wityng of any oother wight,  
 That heere I wol be founden as a knyght,  
 And bryngen harneys right nowgh for  
 thee,—

1536. *han*, H<sup>4</sup> *gan*.  
 1566. *sherte*, *shirt*; cp. *Legend of Good Women*, l. 626, and *Troilus*, 734.

1564. *seyd*, H<sup>3</sup> *told*.  
 1592. *for*, H<sup>3</sup> *or*. 1598. *his*, H<sup>3</sup> *a*.

And chese the beste and leve the worste  
for me,—

And mete and drynké this nyght wol I  
byryge

Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy  
beddyng;e;

And if so be that thou my lady wyne  
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,  
Thou mayst wel have thy lady, as for me.

This Palamon answerde, 'I graunte it  
thee.' 1620

And thus they been departed til a-morwe,  
Whan ech of hem had leyd his feith to  
borwe.

O Cupide, out of allé.charitee!

O regne, that wolt no felawe have with  
thee!

Ful sooth is seyde that lové ne lordshipe  
Wol noght, his thankés, have no felawe-  
shipe.

Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun!  
Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,

And on the morwe, er it were dayés light,  
Ful prively two harneys bath he dight, 1630

Bothe suffisaunt and meté to darreyne  
The bataille in the feeld betwix hem  
tweyne;

And on his hors, allone as he was born,  
He carieth al the harneys hym biforn:

And in the grove, at tyme and place y-set,  
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.

To chaungen gan the colour in hir face,  
Right as the hunters, in the regne of

Trace,

That stondeth at the gappé with a spere,  
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,

And hereth hym come russhyng in the  
greves, 1641

And breketh both bowés and the leves,  
And thyneketh, 'Heere cometh my

mortal enemy,

With-outé faille he moot be deed or I;  
For outhir I moof sleen hym at the gappe,

Or he moot sleen me, if that me  
myahappe':

So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe,  
As fer as everich of hem outhir knewe.

Ther nas no 'Good day,' ne no saluyng,  
1637. 76, H<sup>1</sup> 160.

But streight, withouten word or re-  
hersyng, 1650

Everich of hem heelpes for to armen outhir,  
As frendly as he were his owene brother;

And after that, with sharpe sperés stronge,  
They foynen ech at outhir wonder longe.

Thou myghtest wené that this Palamoun,  
In his fightyng were a wood leoun,

And as a cruell tigre was Arcite:  
As wildé borés gonné they to smyte,

That frothen whit as foom for ire wood,—  
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.

And in this wise I lete hem fightyng  
dwelle, 1661

And forth I wole of Thesëus yow telle.

The Destinee, ministré general,  
That executeth in the world over al,

The purveiaunce that God hath seyn biforn,  
So strong it is that, though the world had  
sworn

The contrarie of a thyng by ye or nay,  
Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day

That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand  
yeere.

For certainly oure appetités heere, 1670  
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,  
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.

This mene I now by myghty Thesëus,  
That for to hunten is so desirous,

And namely at the greté hert in May,  
That in his bed ther daweth hym no day

That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde  
With hunte and horne, and houndés hym

bisyde.

For in his huntynghath he swich delit,  
That it is al his joye and appetit 1680

To been hymself the greté hertés bane,  
For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.

Cleer was the day, as I have toold er  
this,

And Thesëus, with allé joye and blis,  
With his Ypolita, the fairé queene,

And Emelyé, clothéd al in grene,  
On huntynghat they riden roially;

And to the grove, that stood ful fasté by,  
In which ther was an hert, as men hym

tolde,

Duc Thesëus the streighté way hath  
holde; 1690



Arméd for lystés up at allé rightes,  
 Al redy to darreyné hire by bataille ;  
 And this bihote I yow with-outen faille  
 Upon my trouthe and as I am a knyght,  
 That wheither of yow bothé that bath  
 myght,

This is to seyn, that wheither he or thow  
 May with his hundred, as I spak of now,  
 Sleen his contrarie, or out of lystés dryve,  
 Him shal I yewe Emelya to wyve, 1860  
 To whom that Fortune yeveth so fair a  
 grace.

The lystés shal I maken in this place,  
 And God so wisly on my soulé rewe  
 As I shal evene jugé been, and trewe.  
 Ye shul noon oother endé with me maken  
 That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken ;  
 And if yow thynketh this is weel y-sayd,  
 Seyeth youre avys and holdeth you apayd.  
 This is youre ende and youre conclusioun.

Who looketh lightly now but Pala-  
 moun? 1870

Who spryngeth up for joyé but Arcite?  
 Who kouthe tellé, or who kouthe endite,  
 The joyé that is makéd in the place  
 When Theséus hath doon so fair a grace?  
 But down on knees wente every maner  
 wight

And thonken hym with al hir herte and  
 myght ;

And namély the Thebans often sithe.  
 And thus with good hope and with herte  
 blithe

They taken hir leve, and homward gonne  
 they ride 1879

To Thebés, with his oldé wallés wyde.

## PART III

I trowe men woldé deme it negligence  
 If I forgete to tellen the dispence  
 Of Theséus, that gooth so bisily  
 To maken up the lystés roially,  
 That swich a noble theatre as it was  
 I dar wel seyn that in this world there nas.  
 The circult a mylé was aboute,  
 Walléd of stoon and dychéd al withoute.  
 Round was the shape, in manere of  
 compass, 1889

Ful of degrees, the heighte of sixty pas,

That whan a man was set on o degree,  
 He letté nat his felawe for to see.

Estward therstood a gate of marbul whit,  
 Westward right swich another in the  
 opposit.

And, shortly to concluden, swich a place  
 Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space ;  
 For in the lond ther was no crafty man  
 That géométrie or ars-metrik kan,  
 Ne portreitour, ne kervere of ymáges,  
 That Theséus ne yaf him mete and wages,  
 The theatre for to maken and devyse. 1901  
 And, for to doon his ryte and sacrificie,  
 He estward hath, upon the gate above,  
 In worshippe of Venus, goddessse of love,  
 Doon make an auter and an oratorie ;  
 And westward, in the mynde and in  
 mémorie

Of Mars, he makéd hath right swich  
 another,

That costé largely of gold a fother.  
 And northward, in a touret on the wal,  
 Of alabastre whit and reed coral, 1910  
 An oratorie riché for to see,  
 In worshippe of Dyane of chastitee  
 Hath Theséus doon wrought in noble wyse.

But yet hadde I forgeten to devyse  
 The noble kervyng and the portreitures,  
 The shape, the contenance, and the  
 figures

That weren in thise oratories thre.

First, in the temple of Venus maystow  
 se, 1918

Wrought on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,  
 The broken slepés, and the sikés colde,  
 The sacred teeris, and the waymentynge,  
 The firy strokés, and the desairynge,  
 That lovés servauntz in this lyf endure ;  
 The othés that her covenantz assuren ;  
 Plesaunce and Hope, Desir, Foolhardy-  
 nesse,  
 Beautee and Youthé, Bauderie, Richesse,  
 Charmés and Force, Lesyngés, Flaterye,  
 Despensé, Bisynesse and Jalousye,  
 That wered of yelewe gooldés a gerland

1900. *him*, om. E<sup>3</sup>; H, *hem*.

1906. *And westward*, etc., text from H; and on the westward in memorie, E<sup>3</sup>; and on the westward side in memorie, Petworth.

1921. *sacred*, Cambridge MS. *secret*, an attractive reading.

And a cokkow sitynge on hir hand ; 1930  
Fétes, instrumentz, caróles, daunces,  
Lust and array, and alle the circum-  
staunces

Of love, whiche that I reken, and rekne  
shal,

By ordre weren peynted on the wal,  
And mo than I kan make of mencion ;  
For soothly al the mount of Citheroun,  
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,  
Was shewed on the wal in portreyngge,  
With al the gardyn and the lustynesse.  
Nat was forgotten the porter Ydelnesse,  
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon, 1941  
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,  
Ne yet the greté strengthe of Ercules,  
Thenchautementz of Medea and Circeus,  
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,  
The riché Cresus, kaytyf in servage.  
Thus may ye seen that Wysdom ne  
Richesse,

Beautee ne Sleighté, Strengthé, Hardy-  
nesse,

Ne may with Venus holdé champartie,  
For as hir list the world than may she  
gye. 1950

Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las  
Til they for wo ful oft seyde, 'Allas !'  
Suffiseth heere ensamples oon or two,  
And though I koudé rekene a thousand mo.

The statue of Venus, glorious for to se,  
Was naked, fletyng in the largé see,  
And fro the navele doun al covered was  
With wawés grene, and brighte as any  
glas.

A citole in hir right hand haddé she,  
And on hir heed, ful semely for to se, 1960  
A rosé gerland, fresch and wel smellynge,  
Above hir heed hir dowrés flikerynge.  
Biforn hire stood hir soné Cupido,  
Upon his shuldrés wyngés hadde he two,  
And blind he was, as it is often seene ;  
Above he bar and arwés brighte and kene.

1933. *goken*, Cambridge MS.; E, *rekned*  
*have*; H, *rekned*.

1936. *Citherroun*. Chaucer seems to confuse the  
island of *Cythera*, the home of Venus, with *Mt.*  
*Citherron*, on the borders of Attica, sacred to  
Bacchus and the Muses.

1940. *the porter Ydelnesse*, cp. *Romaunt of*  
*the Rose*, ll. 531-593.

1951. *las*, *unare*; H, *truce*.

Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle  
yow al

The portreiture that was upon the wal  
Withinne the temple of myghty Mars the  
rede ?

Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and  
brede, 1970

Lyk to the estrés of the grisly place  
That highte the greté temple of Mars in  
Trace,

In thilké coldé, frosty regioun  
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

First, on the wal was peynted a forest,  
In which ther dwelleth neither man nor  
best,

With knotty, knarry, bareyne treés olde  
Of stubbés sharpe and hidouse to biholde,  
In which ther ran a rumbel and a swough,  
As though a storm sholde bresten every  
bough ; 1980

And dounward from an hille, under a  
bente,

Ther stood the temple of Mars army-  
potente,

Wrought al of burnéd steel, of which the  
entree

Was long and streit, and gastly for to see ;  
And ther out came a rage, and such a veze  
That it made all the gatés for to rese.

The northren lyght in at the dorés  
shoon,—

For wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon  
Thurgh which men myghten any light  
discerne,—

The dorés were al of adamant eterne, 1990  
Y-clenchéd overthwart and endélong  
With iren tough, and for to make it strong,  
Every pylér, the temple to sustene,  
Was tonnéd greet, of iren bright and shene.

Ther saugh I first the derke ymaginyng  
Of felonye, and al the compassyng ;

The cruceil ire, reed as any gleede ;  
The pyképur, and eke the palé drede ;

1972. *grets temple of Mars in Trace*, i.e. the  
temple under Mt. Hæmus, described by Statius  
in the seventh book of the *Thebaid*, lines 40-63.  
Statius here served as a model to Boccaccio.

1979. *rumbel*, H *swymbel*, moaning (of wind).

1986. *gates*, E<sup>2</sup> *gate*.

1990. *dorés were*, E<sup>2</sup> *dore was*.

1998. *pyképur*. The pickpurse is not mentioned  
in Boccaccio. Wright explains it to refer to the

The smylere, with the knyfe under the cloke;

The shepde, brennyng with the blaké smoke; <sup>2000</sup>

The tresoun of the mordryng in the bedde;

The open werre, with woundés al bi-blede;

Contek, with bloody knyf, and sharpe manace;

Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.

The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther,  
His herté blood hath bathéd al his heer;  
The nayl y-dryven in the shode a-nyght;  
The coldé deeth, with mouth gapyng up-  
right.

Amyddés of the temple sat Meschaunce,  
With disconfort and sory contenance.

Yet saugh I Woodnesse, lauhyinge in his rage, <sup>2011</sup>

Arméd complaint, out-hees, and fiers outrage,

The careyne, in the busk, with throte y-corve,

A thousand slayn and nat of qualm y-storve;

The tiraunt, with tne pray by force y-raft;  
The toun destroyéd, ther was no thyng laft.

Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppe-steres;

The hunté strangled with the wildé beres;  
The sowé freten the child right in the cradel; <sup>2019</sup>

The cook y-scalded, for al his longé ladel.

Noght was forgeten by the infortune of Marte,

The cartere over-ryden with his carte;  
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.

rifers of the dead after a battle. But in Wright's own quotation from the *Composit of Ptolemy* it is said, 'Under Mars is borne theves and robbers that kepe hye wayes.'

<sup>2009.</sup> *Meschaunce.* Statius 'virtus tristissima.'  
<sup>2012.</sup> *Arméd complaint.* Statius has 'Mors armata.'

<sup>2014.</sup> *and nat, E and nat oon,* a good reading if we omit *and*.

<sup>2017.</sup> *the shippes hoppesteres,* the dancing ships. Chaucer is translating *Tesside*, vii. 37, 'Vedei ancor le navi ballatrici,' and probably read the last word 'ballatrici' in error.

<sup>2018.</sup> *hunte,* hunter. H ends the line 'with wilde beres courage' to rhyme with 'rage' in next, omitting all between.

Ther were also of Martes divisoun,  
The barbour and the bocher, and the smyth  
That forgeth sharpe swerdés on his styth;  
And al above, depeynted in a tour,  
Saugh I Conquest sittynge in greet honour  
With the sharpe swerd over his heed  
Hángynge by a soutil twynés threed. <sup>2030</sup>

Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,  
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius,—  
Al be that thilké tyme they were unborn,  
Yet was hir deth depeynted ther-bifrom  
By manasyng of Mars, right by figure,  
So it was shewed in that portreiture  
As is depeynted in the sterres above  
Who shal be slayn or ellés deed for love;  
Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde, <sup>2039</sup>  
I may nat rekenne hem allé though I wolde.

The statue of Mars upon a carté stood,  
Arméd, and lookéd grym as he were wood,  
And over his heed ther shynen two figures  
Of sterres that been clepéd in scriptures,  
That oon Puella, that oother Rubéus.  
This god of armés was arrayéd thus:  
A wolf ther stood bifrom hym in his feet  
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet.  
With soutil pencil depeynted was this storie <sup>2049</sup>

In rédoutynge of Mars and of his glorie.

Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste  
As shortly as I kan, I wol me haste  
To tellé yow al the descripcioun.  
Depeynted been the wallés up and doun  
Of huntynge and of shamefast chastitee.  
Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,  
Whan that Diane agrevéd was with here,  
Was turnéd from a womman to a bere,  
And after was she maad the loodé-sterre;  
Thus was it peynted, I kan sey yow no ferre. <sup>2060</sup>

Hir gone is cek a sterre, as men may see.

<sup>2005.</sup> *barbour, i.e.* barber-surgeon. In Wright's extract from the *Composit of Ptolemy* it is said, 'These men of Mars . . . will be gladly Smythes or workers of iron . . . good to be a barboire and a blode letter and to drawe tethe.'

<sup>2037.</sup> *sterres, E<sup>3</sup> servies or cervies.*

<sup>2045.</sup> *Puella.* 'Signifieth Mars retrograde and Rubéus, Mars direct' (Speght).

<sup>2049.</sup> *depeynted was, E<sup>3</sup> was depeynted.*

<sup>2050.</sup> *Calistopee, i.e.* the Arcadian nymph Callisto.

<sup>2061.</sup> *cek a sterre,* the constellation Boötes.

Ther saugh I Diane, y-turned til a tree,—  
I ment nat the goddess Diane,  
But Penneus doughter which that highte  
Dane.

Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,  
For vengeance that he saugh Diane al  
naked;

I saugh how that his houndes have hym  
caught

And freeten hym, for that they knewe  
hym naught.

Yet peynted was a litel forther moor  
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,  
And Meleagre, and many another mo,  
For which Dyané wroghte hym care and  
wo.

Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,  
The which I me list nat drawn to memorie.

This goddess on an hert ful hye seet,  
With smale boundes al aboute hir feet,  
And underne the hir feet she hadde a  
moone,

Werynge it was, and sholdé wanye soone.  
In gaudé grene hir statue clothéd was,  
With bowe in honde and arwés in a cas;  
Hir eyen casté she ful lowe adoun 208:  
Ther Pluto hath his derké region.

A womman travayllynge was hire biforn,  
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,  
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle  
And seyde, 'Helpe, for thou mayst best  
of alle.'

Wel koude he peynten lifly, that it wroghte;  
With many a floryn he the hewes boghte.

Now ben the lystés maad, and Theséus,  
That at his greté cost arrayéd thus 209:  
The templés, and the theatre every deel,  
Whan it was doon hym lykéd wonder weel;  
But stynte I wole of Theséus a lite,  
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

The day approacheth of hir retournynge,  
That everich sholde an hundred knyghtés  
brynge,

The bataille to dareyne, as I yow tolde,

206a. *Diane*, i.e. *Daphne*.

206b. *Attheon*, *Actizon*.

207a. *Atthalante*, *Atalante*.

207b. *hym*, *him*.

208. *Lucyna*, the name of *Diana* as helper of  
women in labour.

209. *the*, *the*.

And til Atthenes, hir covenantz for to  
holde,

Hath everich of hem brought an hundred  
knyghtes 2099

Wel arméd for the werre at allé rightes;  
And sikerly ther trowéd many a man  
That never, sithen that the world bigan,  
As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,  
As fer as God hath makéd see or lond,  
Nas, of so fewe, so noble a compaignye;  
For every wight that lovéd chivalrye  
And wolde, his thankés, han a passant  
name,

Hath preyéd that he myghte been of that  
game;

And wel was hym that ther-to chosen was;  
For if ther fille toniorwé swich a cas, 2110  
Ye knowen wel that every lusty knyght  
That loveth paramours, and hath his  
myght,

Wére it in Engélond or ellés-where,  
They wolde, hir thankés, wilnen to be  
there.

To fighté for a lady,—*benedicite*!  
It were a lusty sighté to to see.

And right so ferden they with Palamon.  
With hym ther wenten knyghtés many  
oon;

Som wol ben arméd in an haubergeoun.  
In a bristplate and in a light gypoun;  
And somme woln have a pairé platés  
large; 2121

And somme woln have a Puce sheeld or  
a targe;

Somme woln ben arméd on hir leggés weel,  
And have an ax, and somme a mace of  
steel;

Ther is no newé gyse that it nas old.  
Arméd were they, as I have yow told,  
Everych after his opinon.

Ther maistow seen comynge with  
Palamon

Lygurge hymself, the greté kyng of Trace;  
Blak was his berd, and manly was his  
face; 2130

The cercles of his eyen in his heed,  
They glowéden bitwyxen yelow and reed;  
And lik a griffon looked he aboute,

2129. *Lygurge*, *Lycurgus*. In the *Tesside* he  
fights on Arcite's side.

With kempt heeris on his browes stoute;  
His lymes grete, his brawnés harde and  
stronge,

His shuldrés brode, his armés rounde  
and longe,

And, as the gysé was in his contree,  
Ful hye upon a chaar of gold stood he,  
With fouré whité bolés in the trays.

In stede of cote-armure, over his  
harnays 2140

With naylés yelewe, and brighte as any  
gold,

He hadde a berés skyn, col-blak, for-old.  
His longé heer was kembd bihynde his  
bak;

As any ravenes fethere it shoon for-blak;  
A wrethe of gold, arm-greet, of hugé  
wighte,

Upon his heed, set ful of stonés brighte,  
Of fyné rubyés and of dyamauntz;  
Abouté his chaar ther wenten white  
alauntz,

Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,  
To huntén at the leoun or the deer; 2150  
And folwéd hym with mosel faste  
y-bounde,

Colered of gold and tourettes fyléd rounde.  
An hundred lordés hadde he in his route,  
Arméd ful wel, with hertés stierne and  
stoute.

With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,  
The grete Emetréus, the kyng of Inde,  
Upon a steedé bay, trappéd in steel,  
Covered in clooth of gold, dyapred wecl,  
Cam ridynge, lyk the god of armés, Mars.  
His cote armuré was of clooth of Tars  
Couchéd with perlés, white and rounde  
and grete; 2161

His sadel was of brend gold, newe y-bete;  
A mantelet upon his shulder hangynge,  
Brat-ful of rubyés rede, as fyr sparklyngé;  
His crisped heer, lyk ryngés was y-ronne,  
And that was yelow, and glytered as the  
sonne.

His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn;  
His lippés rounde, his colour was  
sangwyn;

*2160. clooth of Tars, i.e. Tartary, Chinese  
silk which passed through Tartary on their  
way to Europe.*

A fewé frakenes in his face y-spreynd,  
Bitwixen yelow and somdel blak y-meynd,  
And as a leoun he his lookyng caste. 2171  
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste;  
His berd was wel bigonné for to sprynge;  
His voys was as a trompé thondrynge;  
Upon his heed he wered, of laurer grene,  
A gerland, fresch and lusty for to sene.  
Upon his hand he bar, for his deduyt,  
An egle tame, as any lilye whyt.

An hundred lordés hadde he with hym  
there,

Al arméd, save hir heddes, in al hir gere,  
Ful richely in allé maner thynges; 2181  
For trusteth wel that dukés, erlés, kynges,  
Were gadered in this noble compaignye,  
For love and for encrees of chivalrye.  
Abouté this kyng ther ran on every part  
Ful many a tame leoun and leopard.

And in this wise these lordés, alle and  
some,

Been on the Sonday to the citee come  
Abouté pryme, and in the toun alight.

This Theséus, this duc, this worthy  
knyght, 2190

Whan he had broght hem into his citee  
And innéd hem, everich in his degree,  
He festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour  
To esen hem, and doon hem al honour,  
That yet men weneth that no manné  
wit

Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it.  
The mynstralcyé, the service at the  
feeste,

The greté yiftes to the meeste and leeste,  
The riche array of Theséus paleys,  
Ne who sat first, ne last, upon the deys,  
What ladyés fairest been, or best daun-  
synge, 2201

Or which of hem kan dauncen best and  
synge,

Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love;  
What haukés sitten on the perche above,  
What houndés ligen in the floor adoun,  
Of al this make I now no mendeoun,  
But al theeffect, that thynketh me the beste

*2177. deduyt, delight; H<sup>3</sup>, delite.*

*2188. the Sonday, i.e. the 'this day' fit  
wykes' from the Saturday May 5th in which  
Palamon and Arcite first fought (see l. 2160).  
2207. al, H of, perhaps rightly.*

Now cometh the point, and herkneth if  
yow leste.

The Sonday nyght, er day bigan to  
sprynge, 2209

Whan Palamon the larké herdé syngé,  
Al though it nere nat day by hours two,  
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.  
With hooly herteand with an heigh corage,  
He roos to wenden on his pilgrimage  
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,—  
Venus, honourable and digne,—  
And in hir houre he walketh forth a paas  
Unto the lystés, ther hire temple was,  
And doun he kneleth with ful humble cheer  
And herte soor, and seyde in this  
manere:— 2220

Fairste of faire, o lady myn, Venus,  
Doughter to Jove, and spouse of Vulcanus,  
Thow gladere of the mount of Citheron,  
For thalke love thow haddest to Adoon,  
Have pitee of my bittré teeris smerte,  
And taak myn humble preyere at thyn  
herte.

Allas ! I ne have no langage to telle  
Theffectés ne the tormentz of myn helle ;  
Myn herté may myne harmés nat biwreye ;  
I am so confus that I kan nocht seye. 2230  
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest weele  
My thought, and seest what harmés that  
I feele,

Considere al this and rewe upon my soore  
As wisly as I shal for evermoore,  
Emforth my myght, thy trewé servant be,  
And holden werre alwey with chastitee ;  
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.  
I kepé nocht of armés for to yelpé.  
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to havé victorie,  
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyné glorie 2240  
Of pris of armés, blowen up and doun,  
But I wolde have fully possessioun  
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse.

*2217. in his hours.* The first hour of each day  
belonged to that one of the seven deities, Saturn,  
Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Venus, Mercury, Luna, to  
whom the day was dedicated : the second to the  
next on the list, the third to the next, and so on.  
Sunday being dedicated to Sol, Venus would  
preside over the second, ninth, sixteenth and  
twenty-third hours, the last of which would begin  
two hours before day-break on Monday.

*2219. with sol, H<sup>o</sup> and with.*  
*2220. and seyde in this manere, H<sup>o</sup> he seide as  
he chaunge.*

Fynd thow the manere how, and in what  
wyse ;

I recche nat, but it may bettre be,  
To have victorie of hem, or they of me.  
So that I have my lady in myne armes,  
For though so be that Mars be god  
armes,

Youre vertu is so greet in heveng above  
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my love.  
Thy temple wol I worshiþe evermo, 2251  
And on thyn auter, wher I ride or go,  
I wol doon sacrifice and firés beete ;  
And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,  
Thanne preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere  
That Arcita me thurgh the herté bere ;  
Thanne rekke I nocht, whan I have lost  
my lyf,

Though that Arcita wyne hire to his wyf :  
This is theffect and ende of my preyere,—  
Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere.

Whan the orison was doon of Palamon,  
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon,  
Ful pitously with allé circumstaunces,  
Al telle I nocht as now his observances ;  
But atté laste the statue of Venus shook  
And made a signé, wher-by that he took  
That his preyere accepted was that day ;  
For thogh the signé shewed a delay,  
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his  
boone,

And with glad herte he wente hym boon  
ful soone. 2270

The thridde houre in-equal that  
Palamon

Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,  
Up roos the sonne and up roos Emelye,  
And to the temple of Dyane gan she hye.  
Hir maydens, that she thider with hire  
ladde,

Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,  
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al  
That to the sacrificé longen shal,  
The hornés fulle of meeth, as was the  
gyse,— 2279

*2271. The thridde houre in-equal, three hours  
after 'two hours before sunrise,' i.e. the first  
hour on Monday, that dedicated to Luna or  
Diana : in-equal shows that the reckoning is by  
planetary hours, which vary with the length of  
the day.*

*2274. she, om. E<sup>h</sup>.*

Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificse.  
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes  
faire,

This Emelye, with herte debonaire,  
Hir body weesh with water of a welle;  
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,  
But it be any thing in general;  
And yet it were a game to heeren al;  
To hym that meneth wel it were no charge,  
But it is good a man been at his large.

Hir brighte heer was kempd, un-  
tressed al,

A coroune of a grene ook cerial <sup>2390</sup>  
Upon hir heed was set, ful faire and meete;  
Two fyres on the auter gan she beete,  
And dide hir thynges, as men may biholde  
In Stace of Thebes, and thise bookes olde.  
Whan kyndled was the fyr, with pitous  
cheere,

Unto Dyane she spak as ye may heere:—  
'O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,  
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and  
see is sene,

Queene of the regne of Pluto, derk and  
lowe,

Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast  
knowe <sup>2300</sup>

Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,  
As keepe me fro thy vengeaunce and  
thyn ire,

That Attheon aboughte cruelly;  
Chaste goddess, wel wostow that I  
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf,  
Ne never wol I be no love, ne wyf.

I am, thow woost, yet of thy compaignye,  
A mayde, and love huntynge and venerye,  
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,  
And noght to ben a wyf and be with childe;  
Noght wol I knowe the compaignye of man.  
Now helpe me, lady, sith ye may and kan,  
For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.  
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,  
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so soore,

<sup>2390.</sup> grene ook cerial, Boccaccio's 'quercia  
cerciale, the holm oak.

<sup>2394.</sup> In Stace of Thebes, i.e. the Thebais of  
Statius, where, however, no description of these  
observances occurs.

<sup>2395.</sup> Attheon, Acteon.

<sup>2397.</sup> the thre formes. Diana, a diva  
of the forest, was known as Luna in heaven, Diana  
on earth, and Proserpina in hell.

This grace I preyed thee withoute moore;  
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two,  
And fro me turne away hir hertes so  
That al hire hooted love and hir desir,  
And al hir bisy torment and hir fir, <sup>2320</sup>  
Be queynt, or turned in another place.  
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,  
Or if my destynnee be shapen so  
That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,  
As sende me hym that moost desireth  
Bihoold, goddesse of clen chastite,  
The bittre teeres that on my chekes falle  
Syn thou art mayde, and keper of us alle,  
My maydenhede thou kepe and wel  
conserve <sup>2330</sup>

And whil I lyve a mayde I will serve.  
The fyres brenne upon the auter cleere  
Whil Emelye was thus in hir prayere,  
But sodeynly she saugh a sighte queynte,  
For right anon oon of the fyres queynte,  
And quyked agayn, and after that, anon  
That oother fyr was queynt and al agon  
And as it queynte it made a whistelynge  
As doon thise weté brondes in hi  
brennyng;

And at the brondes ende out-ran anon  
As it were bloddy dropes, many oon; <sup>2340</sup>  
For which so soore agast was Emelye  
That she was wel ny mad; and gan to crye,  
For she ne wiste what it signyfyed,  
But oonly for the feere thus hath she cried,  
And weep that it was pitee for to heere;  
And ther-with-al Dyané gan appeere,  
With bowe in honde, rightas an hunteresse,  
And seyde, 'Doghter, stynt thyn hev-  
nesse.

Among the goddes hye it is affirmed, <sup>2340</sup>  
And by eterné word writen and confirmed  
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho  
That han for thee so muchel care and wo  
But unto which of hem I may nat telle.  
Farwel, for I ne may no longer dwelle.  
The fyres whiche that on myn auter brenn  
Shulle thee declaren, er that thou g  
henne,

Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas.  
And with that word the arwes in the ca  
Of the goddess clateren faste and rying

<sup>2338.</sup> brondes, brands; H, as doth a wyte bren  
in his brennyng.

And forth she wente and made a  
 vanyashynge, <sup>2363</sup>  
 For which this Emelye astonéd was,  
 And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas !  
 I putté me in thy proteccioun,  
 Dyane, and in thy disposicioun.'  
 And hoom she goth anon the nexté weye.  
 This is theeffect, ther is namoore to seyc.  
 The nexté houre of Mars folwyng this,  
 Unto the temple walkéd is  
 Mars, to doon his sacrificise <sup>2369</sup>  
 With alle the rytés of his payen wyse.  
 With pitous herte and heigh devocioun  
 Right thus to Mars he seyde his  
 prayer : —  
 'O god, that in the regnés colde  
 Of thyng honoured art and lord y-holde,  
 And hast in every regne and every lond  
 Of armés al the brydel in thyn hond,  
 And hem fortunést as thee lyst devyse,  
 Accepte of me my pitous sacrificise.  
 If so be that my youthé may deserve,  
 And that my myght be worthy for to serve  
 Thy godhede, that I may been oon of  
 thyne, <sup>2381</sup>  
 Thanne preye I thee to rewe upon my pyne.  
 For thilké payne, and thilké hooté fir,  
 In which thou whilom brendest for desir,  
 Whan that thou usedeste the béautee  
 Of fairé, yongé, fresshé Venus free,  
 And haddest hire in armés at thy wille,  
 Al-though thee onés on a tyme mysfille,  
 Whan Vulcanus hadde caught thee in  
 his las, <sup>2389</sup>  
 And foondest thee liggyng by his wyf, allas !  
 For thilké sorwé that was in thyn herte,  
 Have routheas wel upon my peynés smerte.  
 I am yong and unkonnyng, as thou woost,  
 And, as I trowe, with love offended moost  
 That ever was any lyvés creature ;  
 For she that dooth me al this wo endure  
 Ne reccheth never wher I synke or fleete.  
 And wel I woot, er she me mercy heete,  
 I moot with strengthé wynne hire in the  
 place ; <sup>2399</sup>  
 And wel I woot withouten helpe or grace  
 Of thee, ne may my strengthé noght availle.

<sup>2367.</sup> The nexte houre of Mars, the fourth  
 hour of the day.

<sup>2369.</sup> Of Mars Mars, H To fyry Mars.

Thanne helpe me, lord, tomorwe in my  
 bataille,  
 For thilké fyr that whilom brenté thee,  
 As well as thilké fyr now brenneth me,  
 And do that I tomorwe have victorie.  
 Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the  
 glorie !  
 Thy sovereyn temple wol I moost  
 honouren  
 Of any place, and alwey moost labouren  
 In thy plesunce, and in thy craftés  
 stronge ; <sup>2409</sup>  
 And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,  
 And alle the armés of my compaignye,  
 And ever mo, un-to that day I dye,  
 Eterné fir I wol biforn thee fynde :  
 And eek to this avow I wol me bynde.  
 My beard, myn heer, that hongeth long  
 adoun,  
 That never yet ne felte offensioun  
 Of rasour nor of shere, I wol thee yive,  
 And ben thy trewé servant whil I lyve.  
 Now, lord, have routhe upon my sorwés  
 soore, <sup>2419</sup>  
 Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namoore !'  
 The preyere stynt of Arcita the stronge,  
 The ryngés on the temple dore that honge,  
 And eek the dorés, clatereden ful faste,  
 Of which Arcita som-what hym agaste.  
 The fyrés brenden upon the aüter brighte,  
 That it gan al the temple for to lighte ;  
 And sweeté smel the ground anon up yaf,  
 And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,  
 And moore encens into the fyr he caste,  
 With othere rytés mo, and atté last <sup>2430</sup>  
 The statue of Mars bigan his hauberck  
 ryngé ;  
 And with that soun he herde a mur-  
 muryngé  
 Ful lowe and dym, and seyde thus :  
 'Victorie !'  
 For which he yaf to Mars honour and  
 glorie.  
 And thus with joye and hopé wel to fare,  
 Arcite anon unto his inne is fare,  
 As fayn as fowel is of the brighté sonne.  
 And right anon swich strif ther is  
 bigonne  
 For thilké grauntynge in the hevene above,  
 Bitwixé Venus, the goddessé of love, <sup>2446</sup>



And Mars, the stierne god armypotente,  
That Juppiter was bisy it to stente;  
Til that the palé Saturnus the colde,  
That knew so manye of adventures olde,  
Foond in his olde experience an art  
That he ful soone hath plesed every part.  
As sooth is seyd, elde hath greet avantage;  
In elde is bothé wysdom and usage;  
Men may the olde at-renne and noght  
at-rede. <sup>2449</sup>

Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede,  
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,  
Of al this strif he gan remédie fynde.

'My deeré doghter Venus,' quod  
Saturne,

'My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,  
Hath moore power than woot any man;  
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan,  
Myn is the prison in the derké cote,  
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by  
the throte,

The murmure and the cherlès rébellyng,  
The groynynge and the pryvee empy-  
sonyng; <sup>2460</sup>

I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun  
Whil I dwelle in signe of the leoun;  
Myn is the ruyn of the hye halles,  
The fallynge of the toures and of the  
walles,

Upon the mynour or the carpenter,—  
I slow Sampson, in shakynge the piler,—  
And myné be the maladyés colde,  
The derké tresons and the castés olde;  
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence;  
Now weepe namoore, I shal doon dili-  
gence <sup>2470</sup>

That Palamon, that is thyn owene knyght,  
Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.  
Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet  
nathéless,

<sup>2445.</sup> *an, E<sup>2</sup> and.*

<sup>2449.</sup> The line is a proverb.

<sup>2454.</sup> *My cours.* The reference is to the supposed malign influence of the planet Saturn: for its 'width' Wright quotes the *Composit of Ptolemeus*, which gives Saturn an orbit of more than thirty years.

<sup>2459.</sup> *cherles rebellyng.* Possibly Chaucer had in his mind 'he Jacke Strawe and his meynce'; cp. Group B, l. 4584.

<sup>2460.</sup> *In signe of the leoun.* Prof. Skeat notes that the first ten degrees of the sign *Leo* are called the 'face of Saturn.'

Bitwixé yow ther moot be som tyme pee  
Al be ye noght of o compleccioun,  
That causeth al day swich divisoun.  
I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille;  
Weepe now namoore, I wol thy lust  
fulfille.'

Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,  
Of Mars, and of Venus, goddesses of love,  
And tellé yow, as pleyntly as I kan,  
The grete effect for which that I

## PART IV

Greet was the feeste in Athenes the  
day,

And eek the lusty seson of that May  
Made every wight to beeff in such  
plesaunce,

That al that Monday justen they and  
daunce,

And spenten it in Venus heigh servyse;  
But, by the causé that they sholdé ryse  
Eerly, for to seen the greté fight,  
Unto hir resté wenten they at nyght. <sup>249</sup>  
And on the morwé, whan that day ga  
sprynge,

Of hors and harneys noyse and claterynge  
Ther was in hostelryés al aboute,  
And to the paleys rood ther many a route  
Of lordés, upon steedés and palfreys.  
Ther maystow seen divisynge of harneys.  
So unkouth and so riche, and wrought so  
weel

Of goldsmythrye, of browdynge, and of  
steel,

The sheeldés brighte, testerés, and  
trappures;

Gold-hewen helmés, hauberkes, cote  
armures; <sup>2501</sup>

Lordés in paramantz on hir coursures;  
Knyghtés of retenue, and eek squieres,  
Nailyngthesperes, and helmés bokélyng  
Giggyng of sheeldés, with laynere  
lacyng;

There, as nede is, they weren no thyn  
ydel.

The fomy steedés on the golden brydel  
Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also,  
<sup>2500.</sup> *Gold-hewen, H Gold-hewen.*

With fyle and hamer, prikyng to and fro;  
Yemen on foote, and communnes many oon  
With shorté stavés, thikke as they may  
goon; 2520

Pypés, trompés, nakers, clariounes,  
That in the bataille blowne bloody sounes;  
The paleys ful of peplés up and down,—  
There thre, ther ten, holdyng hir  
questioun,

Two of these Thebane knyghtés two.  
They seyden thus, somme seyde it shal  
be so,

Somme helden with hym with the blaké  
berd,

Somme with the balled, somme with the  
thikke herd,

Some seyde he lookéd grymme and he  
wolde fighte,

He hath a sparth of twenty pound of  
wighte,— 2530

Thus was the hallé ful of divynyng  
Longe after that the sonnè gan to spryng.

The greté Theseus, that of his sleepe  
awaked

With mynstralcie and noysé that was  
maked,

Heeld yet the chambre of his paleys riche,  
Il that the Thebane knyghtés, bothe y-  
liche

Honoured, were into the paleys fet.  
Duc Theseus was at a wyndow set,

Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.  
The peple preeseth thiderward ful soone

Hym for to seen, and doon heigh  
reverence, 2532

And eek to herkne his heste and his  
sentence.

An heraud on a scaffold made an 'Ho!'  
Til al the noyse of peple was y-do;

And whan he saugh the peple of noyse  
al stille

He shewed he the myghty dukés wille.  
'The lord hath of his heih discrecioun

Considered that it were destruccioun  
To gentil blood to fighten in the gyse 2539

Of mortal bataille now in this emprise;  
Wherfore, to shapen that they shal nat dye,

He wolde his firsté purpos modifye.  
'No man ther-fore, up payne of los of

lyf,

No maner shot, ne polax, ne shorte knyht,  
Into the lystés sende, ne thider bryng;  
Ne short swerd, for to stoke with poynt  
bitynge,

No man ne drawe, ne beré by his syde.  
Ne no man shal unto his felawe ryde  
But o cours with a sharpe y-groundé spere;  
Foyne, if hym list, on foote, hym self to  
were. 2550

And he that is at meschief shal be take,  
And noght slayn, but be brought unto the  
stake

Thát shal ben ordeyned on either syde;  
But thider he shal by force, and there  
abyde.

'And if so falle the chieftayn be take  
On outhir syde, or ellés sleen his make,  
No lenger shal the turneyngé laste.  
God spedé you! gooth forth, and ley on  
faste!

With long swerd and with maces fighteth  
yours fille.

Gooth now yours wey, this is the lordés  
will.' 2560

The voys of peple touchéd the hevене,  
So loudé cridé they, with murie stevene,  
'God savé swich a lord, that is so good,  
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!'

Up goon the trompés and the melodye  
And to the lystés rit the compaignye  
By ordinance, thurgh-out the citee large,  
Hangéd with clooth of gold, and nat  
with sarge.

Ful lik a lord this noble duc gan ryde,  
These two Thebanes upon either side; 2570

And after rood the queene and Emelye,  
And after that another compaignye

Of oon and oother, after hir degre;  
And thus they passen thurgh-out the citee,

And to the lystés comé they by tyme.  
It nas not of the day yet fully pryme

Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,  
Ypolita the queene and Emelye,

And othere ladys in degrees aboute.  
Unto the seettés preeseth al the route,

And westward, thurgh the gatés under  
Marte, 2582

Arcite, and eek the hondred of his parte,  
With baner reed is entred right anon

2555. *chieftayn, chivalier* H<sup>2</sup>.

And in that selvé moment Palamon  
Is under Venus, estward in the place,  
With baner whyt, and hardy chiere and  
face.

In al the world to seken up and doun  
So evene, withouten variacioun,  
Ther neré swiché compaignýs tweye;  
For ther was noon so wys that koudé seye  
That any hadde of oother avauntage 2591  
Of worthynesse, ne of estaat, ne age,  
So evene were they chosen, for to gesse;  
And in two rengés fairé they hem dresse.

Whan that hir namés rad were  
everichon,  
That in hir nombré gylé were ther noon,  
Tho were the gatés shet, and cried was  
loude,

'Do now youre devoir, yongé knyghtés  
proude!'

The heraudes lefte hir prikyng up and  
doun; 2599

Now ryngen trompés loude and clarioun;  
Ther is namoore to seyn, but west and est  
In goon the speres ful sadly in arrest;  
In gooth the sharpé spore into the syde.  
Ther seen men who kan juste and who  
kan ryde;

Ther shyveren shaftés upon sheeldés  
thikke;

He feeleth thurgh the herté-spoon the  
prikke.

Up spryngen sperés twenty foot on highte;  
Out gooth the swerdés as the silver  
bryghte;

The helmés they to-hewen and to-shrede,  
Out brest the blood with stierné stremés  
rede; 2610

With myghty maces the bonés they to-  
breste.

He, thurgh the thikkeste of the throng  
gan threate,

Ther, stomblen steedés stronge, and doun  
gooth al;

He, rolleth under foot as dooth a bal;  
He, foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,

And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun;  
He, thurgh the body is hurt and sithen  
y-take,

Maugree his heed, and broght unto the  
stake,

Asforward was, right ther he moste abyde.  
Another lad is on that oother syde. 2620  
And som tyme dooth hem Thebes to  
reste,

Hem to refresshe and drynken, if hem leste.  
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanés two,  
Togydre y-met and wrought his felawe wo;  
Unhorséd hath ech oother of hem tweye  
Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Calpe  
pheye,

Whan that hir whelpé is stole whan it  
lite,

So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite.  
For jelous herte upon this Palamoun;  
Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel leoun, 2630  
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,  
Ne of his praye desireth so the blood,  
As Palamoun, to sleen his foo Arcite.  
The jelous stokes on hir helmes byte;  
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sydés rede.

Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede,  
For, er the sonne unto the resté wente,  
The strongé kyng Emetréus gan hente  
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,  
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to  
byte, 2640

And by the force of twenty is he take  
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.  
And in the rescus of this Palamoun  
The strongé kyng Lygurge is born adoun  
And kyng Emetréus, for al his strengthe  
Is born out of his sadel a swerdés lengthe  
So hitte him Palamoun, er he were take  
But al for noght; he was broght to the  
stake.

His hardy herté myghte hym helpé naught  
He moste abyde, whan that he was caught  
By force, and eek by composicioun. 2650

Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun  
That moot namoore goon agayn to fight  
And whan that Theseus haddé seyn the  
sighte

Unto the folk that foghten thus echon  
He cryde, 'Hoo! namoore, for it is doo  
I wol be trewé juge, and no partie;  
Arcite of Thebes shall have Emelie

2626. *Calpepheye*. Prof. Skeat identifies it  
with the valley of Gargaphie (in Boeotia), whi  
Actaeon was torn in pieces. Tyrwhitt suggest  
town called Galapha in Mauricia. Tingitane.  
2630. *Belmarye*, in North Africa.

That by his fortune hath hire faire y-  
wonne.

Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne,  
for joye of this, so loude and heighe  
with alle, 2661

It semed that the lystes sholde falle.

What kan now faire Venus doon above?  
What seith she now, what dooth this  
queene of love,

Wher so, for wantynge of hir wille,  
That hir teetes in the lystes fille?

She seyde, 'I am ashamed doutlees.'

Saturnus seyde, 'Doghter, hoold thy pees,  
Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al  
his boone,

And, by myn heed, thou shalt been esed  
soone. 2670

The trompes, with the loudé myn-  
stralcie,

The heraudes, that ful loudé yolle and cric,  
Been in hire wele, for joye of daun Arcite.  
But herkneth me, and stynteth now a lite,  
Which a myracle ther bifel anon.

This fierse Arcite hath of his helm y-don,  
And on a courser, for to shewe his face,  
He priketh endelóng the largé place,  
Lokyng upward up-on this Emelye, 2679  
And she agayn hym caste a freendlich eye  
For women, as to speken in comune,  
Thei folwen all the favour of Fortune),  
And was al his, in chiere, as in his herte.

Out of the ground a fyr infernal sterte,  
From Pluto sent, at réqueste of Saturne,  
For which his hors for feré gan to turne,  
And leep aside, and foundred as he leep,  
And er that Arcité may taken keep,  
He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,  
That in the place he lay as he were deed,  
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.  
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,

2683. *And was al his, in chiere, as in his herte.* This is Dr. Furnivall's emendation, no MS. containing the first *is*—'she was all his in her looks, as the queen of his heart'; H reads *and for as*; Hengwrt, *And she was al his herte*, etc., i.e. 'all his delight, as regarded his heart, but this is not the use of *chiere* here wanted.

2684. *fyr, E<sup>3</sup> fure.* In Boccaccio (*Tes.* ix. 4) it is a fury raised by Venus.

2691. *sadel-bowe.* The 'bow' was a curved piece of wood fixed before and behind the saddle to hold the rider in his seat.

So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.  
Anon he was y-born out of the place,  
With herté soor, to Theséus paleys.  
Tho was he korven out of his harneys,  
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve;  
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,  
And alwey crynge after Emelye. 2699

Duc Theséus with al his compaignye  
Is comen hoom to Atthenes his citee,  
With allé blisse and greet solempnitee;  
Al be it that this aventure was falle,  
He noldé nought disconforten hem alle,—  
Men seyden eek that Arcite shal nat dye,  
He shal been heeled of his maladye.

And of another thyng they weren as  
fayn,

That of hem allé was ther noon y-slayn;  
Al were theysoore y-hurt, and namelyoon,  
That with a spere was thirled his brest  
boon. 2720

To othere woundes and to broken armes,  
Somme hadden salvés and somme hadden  
charmes,

Fermaciés of herbès, and eek save  
They drunken, for they wolde hir lymés  
have.

For which this noble duc, as he wel kan,  
Conforteth and honoureth every man,  
And madé revel al the longé nyght  
Unto the straungé lordés, as was right;  
Ne ther was holden no disconfitynge  
But as a justés, or a tourneyng; 2730  
For soothly ther was no disconfiture,  
For fallying nys nat but an aventure,  
Ne to be lad by force unto the stake  
Unyolden, and with twenty knyghtés take,  
O persone alone, withouten mo,  
And haryed forth-by armé, foot and too,  
And eke his' steedé dryven forth with  
staves,

With footmen, bothé yemen and eek  
knaves,—

It nas aretted hym no vileynye;  
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye. 2730

For which anon duc Theséus leet crye,  
To stynten allé rancour and envye,  
The gree as wel of o syde as of oother,  
And eyther syde y-lik as ootheres brother;  
And yaf hem yiftés after hir degree,  
And fully heeld a feesté dayés three,

And convoyed the kynges worthily  
Out of his toun, a journee largely,  
And hoom wente every man the righte  
way;

Ther was namooore, but 'Fare wel !'  
'Have good day !' 2740

Of this bataille I wol namooore endite,  
But speke of Palamoun and of Arcyte.

Swellleth the brest of Arcite, and the  
soore

Encresseth at his herte moore and moore.  
The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,  
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,  
That neither veyné-blood ne ventusynge,  
Ne drynke of herbes may ben his  
helpynge;

The vertu expulsif, or animal,  
Fro thilke vertu cleped natural, 2750

Ne may the venym voyden ne expelle.

The pipés of his longés gonne to swelle,

And every lacerte in his brest adoun

Is shent with venym and corrupcioun.

Hym gayneth neither, for to gete his lif,

Vomyt upward, ne downward laxatif;

Al is to-brosten thilke region;

Nature hath now no dominacioun;

And certainly, ther Nature wol nat wirche,

Farewel, phisik ! go ber the man to chirche:

This al and som, that Arcita moot dye,

For which he sendeth after Emelye,

And Palamon, that was his cosyn deere.

Thanne seyde he thus as ye shal after  
heere:

'Naught may the woful spirit in myn  
herte

Declare o point of alle my sorwes smerte

To yow, my lady, that I lové moost,

But I biquethe the servyce of my goost

To yow above every créature, 2760

Syn that my lyf ne may no lenger dure.

Allas the wo ! alas, the peynés stronge,

That I for yow have suffred, and so longe !

Allas, the deeth ! alas, myn Emelye !

Allas, departynge of our compaignye !

Allas, myn hertés queene ! alas, my wyf !

Myn hertés lady, endere of my lyf !

What is this world ? what asketh men to  
have ?

Now with his love, now in his coldé grave

2770. *as*; supplied by Tyrwhitt.

Allone, withouten any compaignye. 2775  
Farewel, my sweté foo, myn Emelye !

And softé taak me in youre armés tweye  
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.

'I have heer with my cosyn Palamon  
Had strif and rancour, many a day agon,

For love of yow, and for my jealousye,

And Juppiter so wys my soule gye

To speken of a servaunt proprely,

With allé circumstances trewely,—

That is to seyn, trouthe, honour, and  
knyghthede,

Wysdom, humblesse, estaat and heigh  
kynrede, 2790

Fredom, and al that longeth to that art,—

So Juppiter have of my soule part,

As in this world right now ne knowe I non

So worthy to ben loved as Palamon,

That serveth yow and wol doon al his lyf

And if that ever ye shul ben a wyf,

Forget nat Palamon, the gentil man,—

And with that word his speche faille gan,

For from his feet up to his brest was come

The coold of deeth, that hadde him over-  
come; 2800

And yet moore-over, in his armés two,

The vital strengthe is lost and al ago.

Oonly the intellect, withouten moore

That dwelléd in his herte syk and soore,

Gan failen when the herte felt deeth,

Duskéd his eyen two and failled breeth.

But on his lady yet caste he his eye;

His lasté word was, 'Mercy, Emelye !'

His spirit chaungéd hous, and wenté ther,

As I cam never, I kan nat tellen wher.

Therfore I stynte, I nam no divinistre;

Of soulés fynde I nat in this registre,

Ne me ne list thilke opinions to telle,

Of hem, though that they writen wher  
they dwelle.

Arcite is coold, ther Mars his soule gye

Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.

Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon

And Theséus his suster took anon

Swownynge, and baar hire fro the cort  
away.

What helpeth it to tarien forth the day

2790. *fast*, EH<sup>3</sup> *herte*; Petworth, *for from*  
*fole unto the herte*.

2801. *in*, EH<sup>3</sup> *for in*.

To tellen how she weepe, bothe eve and  
morwe? 2821

For in swich cas wommen have swiche  
sprwe,

Whan that hir housbonds ben from hem  
ago.

That, for the moore part, they sorwen so,  
Or ellis fallen in swich maladye,  
That, at the laste, certeinly they dye.

Infinite been the sorwes and the teeres  
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeeres,  
In all the toun for deeth of this Theban;  
For hym ther wepeth bothe child and  
man; 2830

So greet a wepyng was ther noon, certayn,  
Whan Ector was y-brought al fresch y-slayn  
To Troye. Allas! the pitee that was ther,  
Cracchyng of chekes, rentyng eek of  
heer.

'Why woldestow be deed?' thise  
wommen crye,

'And haddest gold ynough, and Emelye.'  
No man myghte gladen Theseus,  
Savyng his olde fader Egeus,  
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,  
As he hadde seyn it chaungen, up and  
down, 2840

Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse,  
And shewed hem ensamples and liknesse.

'Right as ther dyed never man,' quod  
she,

'That he ne lyvede in erthe in som degree,  
Right so ther lyvede never man,' he seyde,  
'In all this world, that som tym he ne  
deyde;

This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,  
And we been pilgrymes, passyng to and  
fro;

Deeth is an ende of every worldly soore';  
And over al this yet seyde he muchel  
moore 2850

To this effect, ful wisely to enhorte  
The peple that they sholde hem reconforte.

Duc Theseus, with all his bisy cure,  
Cast busily wher that the sepulture  
Of goode Arcite may best y-maked be,

2840. *chaungen*, from Hengwrt; H *turne*; E<sup>8</sup> *am*.

2849. *wer* *ally*, E *worldes*.

2854. *busily*, E<sup>8</sup> *now*.

And eek moost honorable in his degree;  
And at the laste he took conclusioun

That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun  
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,  
That in that selvé grové, swoote and  
grene, 2860

Ther as he hadde his amoureuse desires,  
His compleynte, and for love his hooté  
fires,

He woldé make a fyr in which the office  
Fúneral he myghte al accomplice;  
And leet comande anon to hakke and  
hewe

The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe,  
In colpons, wel arrayed for to brenne.  
His officers with swifté feet they renne,  
And ryden anon at his comandément.

And after this Theseus hath y-sent 2870  
After a beere, and it al over spradde  
With clooth of gold, the richeste that he  
hadde;

And of the same suyte he clad Arcite.  
Upon his hondés hadde he gloves white,  
Eek on his heed a coroune of laurer grene,  
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and  
kene.

He leyde hym, bare the visage, on the  
beere.

Ther-with he weep that pitee was to heere;  
And, for the peple sholdé seen hym alle,  
Whan it was day he broghte hym to the  
halle, 2880

That roreth of the cryng and the soun.

Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,  
With flotery berd and ruggy ashy heeres,  
In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teeres;  
And passyng othere of wepyng, Emelye,  
The rewefulleste of al the compaignye.

In as muche as the servyce sholdé be  
The moore noble and riche in his degree,  
Duc Theseus leet forth thre steedés  
brynge,

That trapped were in steele al gliteryng  
And covered with the armes of daun  
Arcite. 2891

Upon thise steedes, that weren grete and  
white,

Ther sitten folk, of whiche oon baar his  
sheeld,

Another his spere up in his hondés heeld,

The thriddé baar with hym his bowe  
 Turkeys <sup>2895</sup>  
 (Of brend gold was the caas, and eek the  
 harneys);  
 And riden forth a paas with sorweful  
 cheere,  
 Toward the grove, as ye shul after heere.  
 The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were  
 Upon hir shuldrés caryeden the beere, .  
 With slaké paas, and eyen rede and wete,  
 Thurgh-out the citee, by the maister strete,  
 That sprad was al with blak, and wonder  
 hye  
 Right of the same is al the strete y-wrye.  
 Upon the right hond wente olde Egéus,  
 \* And on that oother syde duc Theseus,  
 With vessels in hir hand of gold ful fyn  
 Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn:  
 Eek Palamon, with ful greet compaignye,  
 And after that cam woful Emelye, <sup>2910</sup>  
 With fyr in honde, as was that tyme the  
 gyse  
 To do the office of funeral servyse.  
 Heigh labour, and ful greet apparail-  
 lyng,  
 Was at the service and the fyr makynge,  
 That with his grené tope the heven  
 raughte,  
 And twenty fadme of brede the armés  
 straughte;  
 This is to seyn, the bowés weren so brode.  
 Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode;  
 But how the fyr was makéd up on highte,  
 And eek the namés that the trees highte,—  
 As ook, firre, birch, aspe, alder, holm,  
 popeler, <sup>2921</sup>  
 Wylugh, elm, plane, assh, box, chasteyn,  
 lynde, laurer,  
 Mapul, thorn, bech, hasel, éw,  
 whippeltre,—  
 How they weren feld shal nat be toold  
 for me;  
 Ne how the goddés ronnen up and doun,  
 Disherited of hire habitacioun,  
 In whiche they wonéden in reste and pees,  
 Nymphés, fawnes, and amadriades;  
 Ne how the beestés and the briddés alle  
 Fledden for feré, whan the wode was falle;  
 Ne how the ground agast was of the light,

*spec. that, H<sup>o</sup> hom.*

That was nat wont to seen the sonne  
 bright;  
 Ne how the fyr was couchéd first with  
 stree,  
 And thanne with dryé stokkés, eloven a  
 thre,  
 And thanne with grené wode and spicerye,  
 And thanne with clooth of gold, and  
 with perrye,  
 And gerlandes, hangynge with ful many  
 a flour,  
 The mirre, thencens, with al so greet  
 odour;  
 Ne how Arcite lay among al this,  
 Ne what richesse aboute his body is, <sup>2940</sup>  
 Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,  
 Putte in the fyr of funeral servyse,  
 Ne how she swownéd whan men made  
 the fyr,  
 Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desyr,  
 Ne what jeweles men in the fyr tho caste  
 Whan that the fyr was greet and brenté  
 faste;  
 Ne how somme caste hir sheeld, and  
 somme hir spere,  
 And of hire vestimentz, whiche that they  
 were,  
 And coppés full of wyn, and milk, and  
 blood,  
 Into the fyr, that brente as it were  
 wood; <sup>2950</sup>  
 Ne how the Grekes, with an huge route,  
 Thriés riden al the place aboute .  
 Upon the left hand, with a loud shoutynge,  
 And thriés with hir sperés claterynge,  
 And thriés how the ladyes gonné crye,  
 And how that lad was homward Emelye  
 Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde,  
 Ne how that lychéwaké was y-holde  
 Al thilké nyght; ne how the Grekes play  
 The waké-pleyes; ne kepe I nat to sey  
 Who wrestleth best naked, with oill  
 enoynt, <sup>2960</sup>  
 Ne who that baar hym best in no disjoynt  
 I wol nat tellen eek how that they goo  
 Hoom til Athenés, whan the playe  
 doon;  
 But shortly to the point thanne wol  
 wende,  
 And maken of my longé tale an ende.

By processe and by lengthe of certeyn  
yeres,

All styntyd is the moornyng and the teres  
Of Grekes, by oon general assent. 2969  
Thanne semed me ther was a parlement  
At Athenes, upon certein poyntz and caas;  
Among the whiché poyntz y-spoken was,  
To have with certein contrees alliaunce,  
And have fully of Thebens obeissaunce.  
For which this noble Theseus anon  
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,  
Unwist of hym what was the cause and  
why;

But in his blaké clothés sorwefully  
He cam at his comandément in hye.  
Tho senté Theseus for Emelye. 2980  
Whan they were set, and hust was al  
the place,

And Theseus abiden hadde a space  
Er any word cam fram his wisé brest,  
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,  
And with a sad visage he sikéd stille,  
And after that right thus he seyde his wille:

'The Firsté Moevere of the cause above,  
Whan he first made the fairé cheyne of love,  
Greet was the effect and heigh was his  
entente;

Wel wiste he why and what therof he  
mente, 2990

For with that fairé cheyne of love he bond  
The fyr, the eyr, the water and the lond,  
In certeyn boundés that they may nat flec.  
That same Prince, and that same  
Moevere,' quod he,

'Hath stablissed in this wrecchéd world  
adoun

Certeyné dayés and duracioun  
To al that is engendrid in this place,

Over the whiché day they may nat pace,—  
Al mowe they yet tho dayés wel abregge,

Ther nedeth noon auctoritee allegge 3000  
For it is preevéd by experience,

But that me list declaren my sentence.  
Thanne may men by this ordre wel  
discerne

2967-3016. *The Firsté Moevere*, etc. Theseus takes the arguments of this speech from Boethius, *De Consolatione*, bk. ii. met. 8; bk. iv. pr. 6; bk. iii. pr. 10.

2994. and that same Moevere, Heng.<sup>2</sup> om. that; HL. and moevers ech.

That thilké Moevere stable is and eterne.  
Wel may men knowé, but it be a fool,  
That every part diryvet from his hool;  
For nature hath nat taken his bigynnyng  
Of no partie, ne cantel, of a thyng,  
But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,  
Descendynge so, til it be corruptable.  
And therfore of his wisé purveiaunce 3011  
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,  
That spesces of thyngés and progressiouns  
Shullen endure by successiouns,  
And nat eterne, withouten any lye;  
This maystow understonde, and seen at  
eye.

'Loo the ook, that hath so long a  
norisshyng

From tymé that it first bigynneth sprynge,  
And hath so long a lif as we may see,  
Yet at the lasté wasted is the tree. 3020

'Considereth eek how that the hardé  
stoon

Under oure feet, on which we trede and  
goon,

Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye;  
The brodé ryver somtyme wexeth dreye;  
The greté tounés se we wane and wende;  
Thanne may ye se that al this thyng hath  
ende.

'Of man and womman seen we wel  
also,

That nedeth in oon of thisé termés two,  
This is to seyn, in youthe or ellés age,  
He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a  
page; 3030

Som in his bed, som in the depé see,  
Som in the largé feeld, as men may se;  
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilké  
weye:

Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng  
moot deye.

'What maketh this but Juppiter, the  
kyng,

The which is prince, and cause of allé  
thyng,

Convertinge al unto his propre welle,  
From which it is dirryvéd, sooth to telle?

3015. H. And nat eterne be, withoute lye.

3025. tounes, E. townes.

3034. that, om. E<sup>2</sup>.

3036. The whiché, E<sup>2</sup> that.



And here-agayns no creature on lyve,  
Of no degree, availleth for to stryve. 3040

'Thanne is it wysdom, as it thyneketh me,  
To maken vertu of necessitye,  
And take it weel that we may not eschue,  
And namely that to us alle is due.  
And whoso grucbeth ought, he dooth  
folye,

And rebel is to hym that al may gye ;  
And certainly a man hath moost honour,  
To dyen in his excellence and flour,  
Whan he is siker of his goodé name ;  
Thanne hath he doon his freend, ne hym,  
no shame, 3050

And gladder oghte his freend been of his  
deeth,

Whan with honour up-yolden is his breeth,  
Than whan his name apalléd is for age,  
For al forgeten is his vassellage.

Thanne is it best, as for a worthy fame,  
To dyen whan that he is best of name.

'The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.  
Why grucchen we, why have we hevynesse,  
That goode Arcite, of chivalrié flour,  
Departed is, with duetee and honour, 3060  
Out of this foulé prisoun of this lyf ?  
Why grucchen heere his cosyn and his wyf  
Of his welfare that loved hem so weel ?

Kaa he hem thank ?—Nay, God woot,  
never a deel—

That bothe his soule and eek hem-self  
offende,

And yet they mowe hir lustés nat amende.

'What may I conclude of this longé  
serye,

But after wo, I rede us to be merye,  
And thanken Juppiter of al his grace ?  
And er that we departen from this place  
I redé that we make of sorwés two 3071  
O parfit joyé, lastyngge evermo.

And looketh now, wher moost sorwe is  
her-inne,

Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.

'Suster,' quod he, 'this is my fulle  
assent,

With all thavyis heere of my parlément,  
That gentil Palamon, thyn owene knyght,  
That serveth yow with willé, herte, and  
myght,

3077. *thyn, H<sup>6</sup> your.*

And ever hath doon, syn that ye first  
hym knewe,

That ye shul of your grace upon hym  
rewe, 3080

And taken hym for housbonde and for  
lord ;

Lene me youre hond, for this is oure  
accord.

Lat se now of youre wommanly pitee ;  
He is a kyngés brother sone, *pardes*,  
And though he were a pouré bachelor,  
Syn he hath servéd yow so many a yeer  
And had for yow so greet adversaitee,  
It mosté been considered, leeveth me,  
For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.'

Thanne seyde he thus to Palamon ful  
right : 3090

'I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng  
To maké yow assenté to this thyng ;  
Com neer, and taak youre lady by the  
hond.'

Bitwixen hem was maad anon the bond  
That highté matrimoine, or mariage,  
By al the conseil and the baronage ;  
And thus with allé blisse and melodye  
Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye,  
And God, that al this wydé world hath  
wroght,

Sende hym his love that it hath deere  
aboght, 3100

For now is Palamon in allé wele,  
Lyvyng in blisse, in richesse, and in  
heele ;

And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,  
And he hire serveth al-so gently,  
That never was ther no word hem bitwene  
Of jalousie, or any oother tene.

Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye ;  
And God save al this fairé compaignye.

*Amor.*

*Heere folowen the wordes bitwene the  
Hoost and the Millers*

Whan that the Knyght had thus hi  
tale y-toold,  
In al the routé ne was ther yong n  
oold 3111

3106. *or any, H ne of non.*

That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,  
And worthy for to drawn to memorie;  
And namely the gentils everichon.

Oure Hoosté lough and swoor, 'So  
\* moot I gon,

This gooth aright; unboked is the male;  
Lat se now who shal telle another tale;  
For trewely the game is wel bigonne.  
Now telleth on, sire Monk, if that ye  
konne

Sumwhat to quitte with the Knyghts tale.'

The Millere, that for-dronken was al  
pale, <sup>3120</sup>

So that unneth upon his hors he sat,  
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,  
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie,  
But in Pilátés voys he gan to crie,  
And swoor by armés, and by blood and  
bones,

'I kan a noble tale for the nones,  
With which I wol now quite the  
Knyghts tale.'

Oure Hoosté saugh that he was dronke  
of ale,

And seyde, 'Abyd, Robyn, my leevé  
brother, <sup>3129</sup>  
Som better man shal telle us first another;  
Abyde, and lat us werken thriftily.'

'By Goddés soule,' quod he, 'that wol  
nat I,

For I wol speke, or ellés go my wey.'

Oure Hoosté answerde, 'Tel on a  
devele wey!

Thou art a fool, thy wit is overcome.'

'Now herkneth,' quod the Millere,  
'alle and some;

But first I make a protestacioun  
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my  
soun;

And, therefore, if that I mysspeke or seye,  
Wyte it the ale of Southwerk, I you  
preye; <sup>3140</sup>

For I wol telle a legende and a lyf,

3112. *for to drawn to, H to be drawn in.*

3114. *lough, H the lough.*

3115. *aright, H right wel.*

3117. *on, H<sup>6</sup> ye.*

3124. *in Pilates voys, the ranting tone assigned to Pilate in the Miracle Plays.*

3128. *saugh that he was dronke, H saugh wel how dronke he was.*

3138. *it, H wel.*

Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,  
How that a clerk hath set the wrightés  
cappe.'

The Reve answerde and seyde, 'Stynt  
thy clappe!

Lat be thy lewéd, dronken harlotrye;  
It is a synne, and eek a greet folye  
To apeyren any man, or hym defame,  
And eek to bryngen wyvès in swich fame;  
Thou mayst ynogh of othere thyngés seyn.'

This dronké Millere spak ful soone  
ageyn <sup>3130</sup>

And seyde, 'Levé brother Osewold,  
Who hath no wyf he is no cokéwold,  
But I sey nat therfore that thou art oon,  
Ther been ful goodé wyvès many oon,  
And ever a thousand goode ayeys oon  
badde;

That knowestow wel thyself, but if thou  
maddé.

Why artow angry with my talé now?

I have a wyf *parlee*, as wel as thou,  
Yet nolde I, for the oxen in my plough,  
Taken upon me moore than ynogh; <sup>3160</sup>  
Though that thou deme thiself that thou  
be oon,

I wol bilevé wel that I am noon.

An housbonde shal nat been inquisityf  
Of Goddés pryveteé, nor of his wyf;  
So he may fyndé Goddés foyssoun there,  
Of the remenant nedeth nat enquere.<sup>a</sup>

What sholde I mooré seyn, but this  
Millere

He nolde his wordés for no man forbere,  
But told his cherlés tale in his manere.  
Mathynketh that I shal reherce it heere;  
And therfore every gentil wight I preye,  
For Goddés love, demeth nat that I seye  
Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce  
Iiir talés allé, be they better or werse,  
Or ellés falsen som of my mateere: <sup>3175</sup>  
And therfore, who-so list it nat y-heere,

3148. *swich fame, H yllname.*

3161. *Though, etc.* This reading of H (partly supported by Camb.) is much better than the  
'As demen of myself that I were oon' of E<sup>2</sup>.

3167. *moore seyn but this, H seyn but that this  
proude.*

3173. *for, E<sup>2</sup> that.*

3174. *Hir tales alle, be they, etc., H Hore  
wordes alle, al be they, etc.*

Turne over the leef and chese another tale;  
For, he shal fynde ynowe, bothe grete  
and smale,

Of storial thyng that toucheth gentillesse,  
And eek moralitee, and hoolynesse,— 3180  
Blameth nat me if that ye chese amys.  
The Millere is a cherl, ye knowe wel this,  
So was the Reve, and othere manye mo,  
And harlotrie they tolden bothé two.  
Avyseth yow, putteth me out of blame;  
And eek men shal nat maken ernest of  
game.

### MILLER'S TALE

#### *Heere bigynneth The Millere his Tale*

Whilom ther was dwellynge at Oxenford  
A riché gnof, that gestés heeld to bord,  
And of his craft he was a carpenter.  
With hym ther was dwellynge a poure  
scoler, 3190

Hadde lernéd art, but al his fantasye  
Was turned for to lern astrologye,  
And koude a certeyn of conclusiouns,  
To demen by interrogaciouns,  
If that men asked hym in certain houres  
Whan that men sholde have droghte or  
ellés shoures,

Or if men asked hym what sholde bifalle  
Of every thyng, I may nat rekene hem  
alle.

This clerk was clepéd hendé Nicholas.  
Of deerné love he koude, and of solas,  
And ther-to he was sleigh and ful privee,  
And lyk a mayden meké for to see. 3202  
A chambré hadde he in that hostelrye  
Alloffe, withouten any compaignye,  
Ful fetisly y-dight, with herbés swoote,  
And he hymself as sweete as is the roote  
Of lycorys, or any cetéwale.

His Almageste, and bookés grete and  
smale,

*The Millere his Tale.* No original or analogue  
has been discovered for this story, and there is  
no reason to doubt that it is of Chaucer's own  
invention.

3202. *Almageste*, the chief work of the astron-  
omer Ptolemy, called by the Greeks *Μεγάλη*  
*Σύνταξις τῆς Ἀστρονομίας*, a name which the  
Arabs by substituting a superlative turned into  
*Al-magiste*, or *Almagest*.

His astrelabie, longynge for his art,  
His augrym stonés, layen faire apart, 3210  
On shelveis couched at his beddes heed,  
His presse y-covered with a faldyng reed,  
And all above ther lay a gay sautrie,  
On which he made a-nyghtés melodie  
So swetely, that al the chambré rong,  
And *Angelus ad Virginem*, he song;  
And after that he song the 'kyngés  
noote';

Ful often blesséd was his myrie throte,  
And thus this sweeté clerk his tyme  
spente 3219

After his freendés fyndyng and his rente.  
This carpenter hadde wedded newe a  
wyf,

Which that he lovéd mooré than his lyf;  
Of eightéene yeer she was of age.  
Jalous he was, and heeld hire narwe in  
cage,

For she was yong and wylde, and he was  
old,

And demed hymself been lik a cokéwold.  
He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was  
rude,—

That bad man sholdé wedde his  
simylitude.

Men sholdé wedden after hire estaat, 3220  
For youthe and elde is often at debaat;  
But sith that he was fallen in the snare,  
He moste endure, as oother folk, his care.

Fair was this yongé wyf, and therewithal.  
As any wezle, hir body gent and smal.  
A ceynt she werede, y-barréd al of silk;  
A barnclouth eek, as whit as morné milk,  
Upon hir lendés, ful of many a goore;  
Whit was hir smok, and broyden al bifore,  
And eek bihyndé, on hir coler aboute,  
Of colblak silk withinne and eek withoute.

3216. *Angelus ad Virginem*. The music of a  
13th-century chant to these words is extant at  
the British Museum. Of the 'kynges noote'  
nothing appears to be known.

3227. *He knew nat Catoun*. The maxim here  
alluded to is not properly one of Cato's; but I  
find it in a kind of Supplement to the *Moral*  
*Disticha*, entitled *Fuacius int. Auctores octo*  
*morales*, Lugd. 1538, cap. lii.

'Duc tibi prole parem sponsum moroseque ventum,  
Et cum pace velle vitam deducere iustum'  
(Tyrrwhitt). The sentiment is as old as the  
Seven Sages.

3231. *fallen in, H brought into.*

3232. *folk, H doom.*

The tapés of hir whitte voluper 3241  
 Were of the samé suyte of hir coler ;  
 Hir filet brood, of silk and set ful hyc ;  
 And slykerly she hadde a likerous eye.  
 Ful smale y-pulléd were hire browes two,  
 And tho were bent, and blake as any sloo.  
 She was ful mooré blisful on to see  
 Than is the newé pereionetté tree,  
 And softer than the wolle is of a wether ;  
 And by hir girdel heeng a purs of lether,  
 Tasseled with grene and perléd with  
 latoun. 3251

In al this world, to seken up and down,  
 There nas no man so wys that koudé  
 thenche

So gay a popelote, or swich a wenche.  
 Ful brighter was the shynying of hir hewe  
 Than in the Tour the noble y-forgéd newe.  
 But of hir song it was as loude and yerne  
 As any swalwé chitteryng on a berne.  
 Therto she koudé skippe and maké game,  
 As any kyde, or calf, folwyng his dame.  
 Hir mouth was sweete as bragot or the  
 meeth, 3261

Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.  
 Wynsyng she was, as is a joly colt ;  
 Long as a mast and uprighte as a bolt.  
 A brooch sche baar upon hir love coler,  
 As brood as is the boos of a bokeler ;  
 Hir shoes were laced on hir legges hye ;  
 She was a prymerole, a piggesnye  
 For any lord, to leggen in his bedde,  
 Or yet for any good yeman to wedde. 3270

Now, sire, and eft, sire, so bifel the cas,  
 That on a day this hendé Nicholas,  
 Fil with this yongé wyf to rage and pleye,  
 Whil that hir housbonde was at Oséneye,  
 As clerkés ben ful subtle and ful queynte ;  
 And privily he caughte hire by the queynte,  
 And seyde, 'Y-wis, but if ich have my  
 wille,

For deerné love of thee, lemman, 'I  
 spillé' ;  
 And heeld hire hardé by the haunché  
 bones,

3256. *Tour*, i.e. the Tower of London, where the Mint was.

3256. *the noble*, a gold coin (6s. 8d.), first minted by Edward III.

3258. *chitteryng*, E<sup>4</sup> *sittynge*.

3274. *Oséneye*, Osney, a village near Oxford.

And seyde, 'Lemman, love me al atones,  
 Or I wol dyen, also God me save !' 3281  
 And she sproong, as a colt doth in the  
 trave,

And with hir heed sche wryéd faste away,  
 And seyde, 'I wol nat kisse thee, by  
 my fey !

Why, 'lat be !' quod she, 'lat be,  
 Nicholas !

Or I wol crie, "out, Harrow," and "Allas !"   
 Du wey youre handés, for your curteisye !'

This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye ;  
 And spak so faire, and profréd hym so  
 faste,

That she hir love hym graunted atté laste,  
 And swoor hir ooth, by Seint Thomas of  
 Kent, 3291

That she wol been at his comandément  
 Whan that she may hir leysur wel espie.

'Myn housbonde is so ful of jalouse,  
 That but ye wayté wel and been privee,  
 I woot right wel I nam but deed,' quod  
 she ;

'Ye mosté been ful deerne, as in this cas.'  
 'Nay, ther-of cafe thee noght,' quod  
 Nicholas.

'A clerk hadde litherly biset his whyle  
 But if he koude a carpenter bigyle.' 3300  
 And thus they been accorded and y-sworn  
 To wayte a tyme, as I have told biforn.

Whan Nicholas had doon thus everideel,  
 And thakkéd hire aboute the lendés weel,  
 He kist hire sweete, and taketh his sawtrie,  
 And pleyeth faste, and maketh melodie.

Thanne fil it thus, that to the paryssh  
 chirche,

Christés owené werkés for to wirche,  
 This goodé wyf went on an holiday ; 3309  
 Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,  
 So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk.

Now was ther of that chirche a paryssh  
 clerk,

The which that was y-cleped Absolon ;  
 Crul was his heer and as the gold it  
 shoon,

And strouted as a fanné, large and brode,

3282. *H and she sprung out as doth a colt in trave.*

3285. *Nicholas*, *H thou Nicholas.*

3289. *hym*, *E hire.*

Ful streight and evene lay his joly shode.  
His rode was reed, his eyen greye as  
goos;

With Powles wyndow corven on his shoos,  
In hoses rede he wenté fetisly.

Y-clad he was ful smal and proprely, 3320  
Al in a kirtel of a lyght waget,

Ful faire and thikke been the poyptés set;  
And therupon he hadde a gay surpys,

As whit as is the blosme upon the rys.  
A myrie child he was, so God me save,

Wel koude he laten blood and clippe  
and shave,

And maken a chartre of lond or acquit-  
aunce.

In twenty manere koude he trippe and  
daunce

(After the scole of Oxenfordé tho),  
And with his legges casten to and fro, 3330

And pleyen songes on a small rubile;  
Therto he song somtyme a loud quynble,

And as wel koude he pleye on his giterne.  
In al the toun nas brewhous ne taverne

That he ne visited with his solas,  
Ther any gaylard tappestere was.

But, sooth to seyn, he was somdel  
squamous

Of fartyng, and of speche daungerous.

This Absolon, that jolif was and gay,  
Gooth with a sencer on the haliday, 3340

Sensynge the wyvys of the parisshe faste,  
And many a lovely look on hem he caste,

And namely on this carpenteris wyf.  
To loke on hire hym thoughte a myrie lyf,

She was so propre, and sweete, and  
likefous.

I dar wel seyn if she hadde been a mous,  
And he a cat, he wold hire hente anon.

This parisshe clerk, this joly Absolon,  
Hath in his herté swich a love longynge,

That of no wyf ne took he noon effrynge;  
For curteisie, he seyde, he woldé noon.

The moone, when it was nyght, ful  
bryghté shoon, 3352

3352. *Powles wyndow.* The reference is to the open-work tracery, like that of the great Rose window at Old St. Paul's, in the fashionable shoes of the time. H<sup>3</sup> *wyndowes.*

3352. *lyght, H. Syn.*

3352. *H. Schapen with goores in the nose get.*

3352. *when it was nyght, ful, H. at night ful clere and.*

And Absolon his gyterne hath y-take,  
For paramours he thoughté for to wake;

And forth he gooth, jolif and amorous,  
Til he cam to the carpenteris hous,

A litel after cokkés hadde y-crowe,  
And dressed hym up by a shotwyndowe.

That was upon the carpenteris wal.  
He syngeth in his voys gentil and smal:

'Now, deere lady, if thy will be, 3361  
I praye you that ye wolde thynke on me,'

Ful wel acordaunt to his gyternynge.

This carpenter awook, and herdé synge,  
And spak unto his wyf, and seyde anon,

'What, Alison, herestow nat Absolon,  
That chaunteth thus under oure bourés  
wal?'

And she answerde hir housbonde ther-  
withal,

'Yis, God woot, John, I heere it every del.'  
This passeth forth; what wol ye bet  
than weel? 3370

Fro day to day this joly Absolon  
So wothet hire that hym is wo bigon;

He waketh al the nyght and al the day,  
He kembeth his lokkés brode, and  
made hym gay,

He wothet hire by meenés and brocade,  
And swoor he woldé ben hir owene page;

He syngeth, brokkynge as a nyghtyngale;  
He sente hire pyment, meeth, and spiced  
ale,

And wafres, pipyng hoot out of the gleede;  
And, for she was of tounne, he profreth  
meede; 3380

For som folk wol ben wonnen for richesse,  
And somtyme for strokes, and somme for  
gentillesse.

Somtyme to shewe his lightnesse and  
maistrye

He pleyeth Heródés, on a scaffold hyc,  
But what availleth hym, as in this cas?

She loveth so this hendé Nicholas,

3354. *thoughté for to wake, H. seyde he woldé awake.*

3361. *thynke, H. rewe.*

3374. *He kembeth, H. To hembe, an amusing but unlikely variant.*

3377. *brokkynge, warbling?; H. crowing.*

3384. *He pleyeth Herodes, etc.* The Miracle Plays were at first chiefly acted by clerks; the stage or 'scaffold' often had three compartments to represent Heaven, Earth, and Hell.

That Absolon may blowe the bukkés horn,  
 He ne haddé for his labour but a scorn,  
 And thus she maketh Absolon hire ape  
 And al his earnest turneth til a jape. 3390  
 Ful sooth is this proverbe, it is no lye,  
 Men seyn right thus, 'Alwey the nyé slye  
 Maketh the ferré leevé to be looth';  
 For though that Absolon be wood or  
 wrooth,

By-causé that he fer was from hire sighte,  
 This nyé Nicholas stood in his' lighte.

Now bere thee wel, thou hendé  
 Nicholas,

For Absolon may waille and synge, allas !  
 And so bifel it on a Saterdag  
 This carpenter was goon til Osénay, 3400  
 And hendé Nicholas and Alisoun  
 Accorded been to this conclusioun,  
 That Nicholas shal shapen hym a wyle  
 This sely, jealous housbonde to bigyle ;  
 And, if so be the gamé wente aright,  
 She sholdé slepen in his arm al nyght,  
 For this was his desir and hire also.  
 And right anon, withouten wordés mo,  
 This Nicholas no lenger woldé tarie,  
 But dooth ful softe unto his chambré  
 carle 3410

Bothe mete and drynké for a day or  
 tweye ;  
 And to hire housbonde bad hire for to  
 seye,

If that he axéd áfter Nicholas,  
 She sholdé seye she nysté where he was,  
 Of al that day she saugh hym nat with  
 eye ;

She trowéd that he was in maladye,  
 For for no cry hir maydé koude hym calle,  
 He nolde answere for nought that myghté  
 falle.

This passeth forth al thilké Saterdag  
 That Nicholas stille in his chambré lay,  
 And eet and sleepe, or didé what hym  
 leste, 3421

Til Sondag, that the sonné gooth to reste.  
 This sely carpenter hath greet merveye

3387. *blows the bukkés horn*, a phrase meaning  
 'have his trouble for nothing.'

3403. *be the*, *H were this*.

3418. *that he was in*, *H he were falle in som*.

3427. *For for no cry hir mayde*, *H For no cry*  
*that hir mayde*, to be taken with next line.

Of Nicholas, or what thyng myghte hym  
 eyle,

And seyde, 'I am adrad, by Seint Thomas  
 It stondest nat aright with Nicholas.  
 God shildé that he deyde sodeynly ;  
 This world is now ful tikel, sikerly ;  
 I saugh to day a cors y-born to chirche,  
 That now on Monday last I saugh hym  
 wirche. 3430

'Go up,' quod he unto his knave anon,  
 'Clepe at his dore, or knocké with a stoon ;  
 Looke how it is, and tel me boldely.'

This knavé gooth him up ful sturdily  
 And at the chambré doré, whil he stood,  
 He cride and knockéd as that he were  
 wood,—

'What ! how ! what do ye, maister  
 Nicholay ?

How may ye slepen al the longé day ?'

But al for noght, he herdé nat a word.  
 An hole he foond, ful lowe upon a bord,  
 Ther as the cat was wont in for to crepe,  
 And at that hole he lookéd in ful depe,  
 And at the laste he hadde of hym a sighte.  
 This Nicholas sat gapyng ever uprighte,  
 As he had kikéd on the newé moone.  
 Adoun he gooth and tolde his maister  
 soone

In what array he saugh this ilké man.

This carpenter to blessen hym bigan,  
 And seyde, 'Help us, Seinté Frydeswyde !  
 A man woot litel what hym shal bityde ;  
 This man is fallé, with his astromye, 3451  
 In som woodnesse, or in some agonye.  
 I thoughte ay wel how that it sholdé be,  
 Mensholde nat knowe of Goddés pryvetee.  
 Ye, blesséd be alwey a lewéd man,  
 That noght but oonly his bilevé kan.  
 So ferde another clerk with astromye ;  
 He walkéd in the feeldés, for to pryé  
 Upon the sterres, what ther sholde bifalle,  
 Til he was in a marlé pit y-falle ; 3460  
 He saugh nat that. But yet by Seint  
 Thomas,

Me reweth soore of hendé Nicholas !

3449. *Seinte Frydeswyde*, still the patron saint  
 of one of the Oxford parishes.

3451. *astromye*, a corruption of 'astronomye';  
 the latter word in the reading of H<sup>2</sup>, but both  
 here and in 3457 it spoils the metre.

3457. *another clerk*, *Thales*.

He shal be ratéd of his studyng,  
If that I may, by Jhesus, hevene kyng !

'Get me a staf, that I may underspore,  
Whil that thou, Robyn, hevest of the dore:  
He shal out of his studyng, as I gesse.'  
And to the chambré dore he gan hym  
dresse ;

His knavé was a strong carl, for the  
noones,

And by the haspe he haaf it of atones,  
Into the floor the doré fil anon. 347<sup>r</sup>

This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,  
And ever gapéd upward into the eir.

This carpenter wende he were in despeir,  
And hente hym by the sholdrés myghtily  
And shook hym harde and cridé spitously,  
'What, Nicholay ! what how ! what,  
looke adoun !

Awake ! and thenk on Cristés passioun !  
I crouché thee from elvés and fro wightes.'  
Therwith the nyghtspel seyde he anon-  
rightes, 348<sup>o</sup>

On fouré halvés of the hous aboute,  
And on the thresshold of the dore  
withoute :

'Jhesu Crist and Seint Benedight,  
Blasse this hous from every wikked wight  
For nyghtés verye the white Pater noster.  
Whers wentestow, Seint Petres soster !'

And atté laste this hendé Nicholas  
Gan for to siké soore, and seyde, 'Allas !  
Shal al this world be lost eftsoónes now ?'

This carpenter answerdè, 'What  
seystow ? 349<sup>o</sup>

What, thyнк on God, as we doon, men  
that swynke.'

This Nicholas answerdè, 'Fecche me  
drynke ;

347<sup>r</sup>. *what* (3rd), *H man* : Heng.<sup>3</sup> om.

348<sup>o</sup>. *Jhesu*, *H Lord Jhesu*.

348<sup>o</sup>. *For nyghtes*, etc. Tyrwhitt reads: *For the nyghtes mare the white pater-noster* (may pater-noster defend thee from night-mare); Morris: *For nyghtes mare verye the with pater-noster* (guard thyself with pater-noster). But a charm of the 16th century quoted by Mr. Gilman runs :

'White Pater Noster, St. Peter's brother,  
What hast thou in one hand ? White-Book Leaves.

What hast t' th' other ? Heaven Gate keys.

Open Heaven Gates and welke Hell Gates.

And let every crymon child creep to its own mother :

White Pater Noster. Amen.'

If this be genuine the *white* must stand.

And after wol I speke, in pryvétee,  
Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and  
thee ;

I wol telle it noon oother man, certeyn.'

This carpenter goth doun and comth  
ageyn,

And broghte of myghty ale a largé quart,  
And whan that ech of hem had dronke  
his part,

This Nicholas his doré fasté shette 349<sup>r</sup>  
And doun the carpenter by hym he sette.

He seyde, 'John, myn hoosté, lief  
and deere,

Thou shalt upon thy trouthe swere me  
heere

That to no wight thou shalt this conseil  
wreye,

For it is Cristés conseil that I seye ;  
And if thou tellé man thou art forlore,  
For this vengaucé thou shalt han therfore,  
That if thou wreyé me thou shalt be wood.'

'Nay, Crist forbede it, for his hooly  
blood,' 350<sup>o</sup>

Quod tho this sely man, 'I nam no labbe,  
Ne, though I seye, I am nat lief to gabbe;  
Sey what thou wolt, I shal it never telle  
To child ne wyf, by hym that harwed  
helle !'

'Now, John,' quod Nicholas, 'I  
wol nat lye,

I have y-founde in myn astrologye,  
As I have lookéd in the mooné bright,  
That now a Monday next, at quarter nyght,  
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and  
wood,

That half so greet was never Nooes flood.  
This world,' he seyde, 'in lassé thanan how  
Shal al be dreyn't, so hidous is the shour  
Thus schal mankyndé drenche and les  
hir lyf.' 352<sup>o</sup>

This carpenter answerde, 'Allas, my  
wyf !

And shal she drenche ? Allas, my  
Alisoun !'

For sorwe of this he fil almoost adgun,  
And seyde, 'Is ther no remedie in this casi

349<sup>r</sup>. *faste shette*, etc. ; *H gan to schitte*, *An dede this carpenter doun by him stite*.

350<sup>o</sup>. *No, though I seye, H though I it seye*.

352<sup>o</sup>. *Shal al be dreyn't*, *H Shal hem i-dreyn't*.

'Why, yis, for Gode,' quod hendé  
Nicholas,  
'If thou wolt werken aftir loore and reed ;  
Thou mayst nat werken after thyn owene  
heed,  
For thus seith Salomoun, that was ful  
trewe,  
"Werk al by conseil and thou shalt nat  
rewe" ; 3530  
And if thou werken wolt by good conseil,  
I undertake, withouten mast and seyl,  
Yet shal I saven hire and thee and me.  
Hastow nat herd how savéd was Noé,  
Whan that oure Lord hadde warnéd hym  
biforn  
That al the world with water sholde be  
lorn ?  
'Yis,' quod this carpenter, 'ful yooore  
ago.'  
'Hastou nat herd,' quod Nicholas, 'also,  
The sorwe of Noé with his felaweshipe  
Er that he myghte brynghe his wyf to shipe?  
Hym hadde be levere, I dar wel undertake,  
At thilké tyme, than alle his wetheres  
blake, 3542  
That she hadde had a shipe hir-self allone.  
And therefore, woostou what is best to  
doone ?  
This asketh haste, and of an hastif thyng  
Men may nat preche or maken taryng.  
'Anon go gete us faste into this in  
A knedyng trogh, or ellis a kymélyn,  
For ech of us, but loke that they be large,  
In whiche we mowé swymme as in a barge,  
And han ther-inne vitaille suffisant 3551  
But for a day,—fy on the remenant,—  
The water shal aslake and goon away  
Abouté pryme upon the nexté day.  
But Robyn may nat wite of this, thy knave,  
Ne eek thy maydé Gille I may nat save ;  
Axé nat why, for though thou aské me,  
I wol nat tellen Goddés pryveteé ;  
Suffiseth thee, but if thy wittés madde,  
To han as greet a grace as Noé hadde.  
Thy wyf shal I wel saven, out of doute.

3540. *Er that he myghte brynghe, H that he  
had or he gat. In the Miracle Plays Noah's  
wife refused to be saved without her gossip, and  
when dragged in broke her husband's head.*

3550. *In whiche we mowé swymme, H in  
whiche that we may row.*

Go now thy wey and speed thee heer  
abouté. 3562  
'But whan thou hast for hire and  
thee and me  
Y-geten us thise knedyng-tubbés thre,  
Thanne shaltow hange hem in the roof  
ful hye,  
That no man of oure purveiauncé spyé,  
And whan thou thus hast doon as I have  
seyd,  
And hast oure vitaille faire in hem y-leyd,  
And eek an ax to smyte the corde atwo,  
Whan that the water comth, that we may  
go ; 3570  
And broke an hole, an heigh upon the  
gable,  
Unto the gardynward, over the stable,  
That we may frely passen forth oure way,  
Whan that the greté shour is goon away ;  
Thanne schalt thou swymme as myrie, I  
undertake,  
As dooth the whité doke after hire drake ;  
Thanne wol I clepe "how Alisoun, how  
John,  
Be myrie, for the flood wol passe anon,"  
And thou wolt seyn, "Hayl, maister  
Nicholay ! 3579  
Good morwe. I se thee wel for it is day !"  
And thanne shul we be lordés al oure lyf  
Of al the world, as Noé and his wyf.  
'But of o thing I warné thee ful right,  
Be well avyséd on that ilké nyght  
That we ben entred into shippés bord,  
That noon of us ne speké nat a word,  
Ne clepe, ne crie, but been in his prayére,  
For it is Goddés owene heeste deere.  
Thy wyf and thou moote hangé fer  
atwynne,  
For that bitwixé yow shal be no synne,  
Na moore in looking than ther shal in  
deede ; 3591  
This ordinance is seyde ; so God thee  
speede ;  
Tomorwe at nyght, whan folk ben alle  
aslepe,  
Into our knedyng-tubbés wol we crepe,  
And sitten there, abiding Goddés grace.  
Go now thy wey, I have no lenger space

3578. *wol passe, H passeth.*  
3592. *folk ben alle, H men ben.*



To make of this no lenger sermonyng,—  
Men seyn thus, "Sende the wise and sey  
nothyng";

Thou art so wys it needeth nat thee techen,  
Go save oure lyf, and that I the biseche.

This sely carpenter goth forth his wey;  
Ful ofte he seith 'Allas,' and 'Weylawey,'  
And to his wyf he tolde his pryvetee,  
And she was war, and knew it bet than he,  
What al this queynté cast was for to seye;  
But natheles she ferde as she wolde deye,  
And seyde, 'Allas! go forth thy wey anon,  
Help us to scape or we been lost echon!  
I am thy trewe, verray, wedded wyf,  
Go, deere spouse, and help to save oure  
lyf!' <sup>3610</sup>

Lo which a greet thyng is affeccioun!  
Men may dyen of ymaginacioun,  
So depé may impressioun be take.  
This sely carpenter bigynneth quake;  
Hym thynketh verrailly that he may see  
Noëes flood, come waiwyng as the see,  
To drenchen Alisoun, his hony deere.  
He wepeth, weyleth, maketh sory cheere;  
He siketh, with ful many a sory swogh;  
He gooth and geteth hym a knedyng trogh,  
And after that a tubbe and a kymelyn,  
And pryvely he sente hem to his in,  
And heng hem in the roof in pryvetee.  
His owene hande he made laddres thre,  
To clymben by the ronges and the stalkes,  
Into the tubbes, hangyng in the balkes;  
And hem vitailleth, bothé trogh and tubbe,  
With breed and chese and good ale in a  
jubbe,

Suffisyng right ynogh as for a day;  
But er that he hadde maad al this array,  
He sente his knave, and eek his wenche  
also, <sup>3631</sup>

Upon his nede to London for to go;  
And on the Monday, whan it drow to  
nyght,

He shette his dore withouté candel lyght,  
And dresseth al this thyng as it shal be;  
And shortly, up they clomben allé thre;  
They sitten stillé, wel a furlong way.

'Now, *Pater noster*, clom,' seyde  
Nicholay;

<sup>3632.</sup> Men may dyen (alre may), H A man  
may dye.

And 'Clom,' quod John, and 'Clom,'  
seyde Alisoun.

This carpenter seyde his devocioun, <sup>3640</sup>  
And stille he sit and biddeth his preyere,  
Ay waityng on the reyn, if he it heere.

The dedé sleepe, for verray bisynesse,  
Fil on this carpenter, right as I gesse  
Abouté corfew-tyme, or litel more;  
For travaille of his goost he groneth soore.  
And eft he routeth, for his heed myslay.  
Doun of the laddré stalketh Nicholay,  
And Alisoun ful softe adoun she spedde;  
Withouten wordes mo they goon to bedde.  
Ther as the carpenter is wont to lye, <sup>3651</sup>  
Ther was the revel and the melodye.

And thus lith Alisoun and Nicholas,  
In bisynesse of myrthe and of solas,  
Til that the belle of laudés gan to ryng,  
And freres in the chauncel gonné synge.

This pariss clerk, this amorous Ab-  
solon,

That is for love alwey so wo-bigon,  
Upon the Monday was at Oséneye  
With compaignye, hym to disporte and  
pleye, <sup>3660</sup>

And axéd upon cas a cloisterer  
Ful prively after John the carpenter.  
And he drough hym a-part out of the  
chirche,

And seyde, 'I noot, I saugh hym heere  
nat wirche

Syn Saturday; I trow that he be went  
For tymber ther our abbot hath hym sent;  
For he is wont for tymber for to go,  
And dwellen at the grange a day or two;  
Or ellés he is at his hous, certeyn; <sup>3669</sup>  
Where that he be I kan nat soothly seyn.'

This Absolon ful joly was and light,  
And thoughté, 'Now is tymé wake al nyght,  
For sikirly I saugh him nat stiryng.  
Abouté his dore, syn day bigan to spryng.  
So moot I thryve I shal, at cokkés crowe,  
Ful pryvely go knokke at his wyndowe,  
That stant ful lowe upon his bourés wal  
To Alisoun now wol I tellen al

My love-longyng; for yet I shal nat  
mysse <sup>3671</sup>

That at the lesté wey I shal hire kisse.

<sup>3643.</sup> verray, E<sup>3</sup> wery.

<sup>3658.</sup> alwey so, H so hard and.

com maner confort shal I have, parfay.  
 My mouth hath icched al this longe day,  
 That is a signe of kissing attē leste.  
 Al nyght me mette eek I was at a feeste;  
 Therefore I wol goon slepe an houre or  
 tweye,  
 And al the nyght thanne wol I wake  
 and pleye.'

Whan that the firstē cok hath crowe  
 anon

Up rist this joly love Absolon,  
 And hym arraieyth gay, at poynt devys;  
 But first he cheweth greyn and lycorys,  
 To smellen sweete, er he hadde kembd  
 his heer. 3691

Under his tonge a trewe-love he beer,  
 For ther-by wende he to ben gracious.  
 He rometh to the carpenter's hous,  
 And stille he stant under the shot-wyn-  
 dowe,—

Unto his brist it raughte, it was so lowe,—  
 And softe he knocketh with a semysoun:  
 What do ye, hony-comb, sweete Alisoun,  
 My fairē bryd, my sweetē cynamome?  
 Awaketh, lemman myn, and speketh to me.  
 Wel litel thynten ye upon my wo 3701  
 That for youre love I swete ther I go.  
 No wonder is, thogh that I swelte and  
 swete,

moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete;  
 Forwis, lemman, I have swich love-long-  
 ynge,

that lik a turtel trewe is my moornynge;  
 may nat ete na moore than a mayde.'

'Go fro the wyndow, jakkē-fool,' she  
 sayde,

As help me God, it wol nat be, "com  
 ba me"; 3709

love another, and elles I were to blame,  
 Wel bet than thee, by Jhesu, Absolon.

So forth thy wey, or I wol caste a ston,  
 And lat me slepe, a twenty devel wey!

'Allas,' quod Absolon, 'and weylawey,  
 That trewe love was ever so yvel biset!  
 Thanne kysse me, syn it may be no bet,  
 or Jhesus love, and for the love of me.'  
 Wiltow thanne go thy wey?' therwith  
 quod she.

3697. *Awaketh*, H<sup>4</sup> *crowneth*, *cougheth*, *coughed*.  
 3702. *swete*, H *swette*, faint.

'Ye certēs, lemman,' quod this Absolon.  
 'Thanne make thee redy,' quod she,  
 'I come anon,' 3720

And unto Nicholas she seyde stille,  
 'Now hust and thou shalt laughen al  
 thy fille.'

This Absolon doun sette hym on his  
 knees,

And seyde, 'I am lord at alle degrees,  
 For after this I hope ther cometh moore.  
 Lemman, thy grace, and sweetē bryd,  
 thyn oore.'

The wyndow she undoth, and that in  
 haste,

'Have do,' quod she, 'com of, and speed  
 the faste,

Lest that oure neighēborēs thee espie.'

This Absolon gan wpe his mouth ful  
 drie: 3730

Dirk was the nyght as pich, or as the cole,  
 And at the wyndow out she pitte his hole,  
 And Absolon hym fil no bet ne wers,  
 But with his mouth he kiste hir naked ers,  
 Ful savourly, er he was war of this.  
 Abak he stirte, and thoughte it was amys,  
 For wel he wiste a womman hath no berd.  
 He felte a thyng al rough and long y-herd,  
 And seyde, 'Fy, alas, what have I do?'  
 'Tchee!' quod she, and clapte the  
 wyndow to, 3740

And Absolon gooth forth a sory pas.

'A berd, a berd!' quod hendē Nicholas,  
 'By Goddēs corps, this game goth faire  
 and weel.'

This sely Absolon herde every deel,  
 And on his lippe he gan for anger byte,  
 And to hymself he seyde, 'I shal thee  
 quyte.'

Who rubbeth now, who froteth now  
 his lippes

With dust, with sond, with straw, with  
 clooth, with chippes,

But Absolon?—that seith ful ofte, 'Allas!  
 My soule bitake I unto Sathanas, 3750  
 But me were levere than al this toun,'  
 quod he,

'Of this despit awroken for to be.  
 Allas,' quod he, 'allas, I ne hadde  
 y-bleynt.'

His hootē love was coold and al y-queynt;

For fro that tyme that he hadde kiste  
her eris,

Of paramours he settē nat a-kers;  
For he was heeled of his maladie.  
Full oftē paramours he gan defie,  
And weepe as dooth a child that is y-bete.  
A softe paas he wente over the strete 3760  
Until a smyth men clepē daun Gerveys,  
That in his forge smythēd plough  
harneys,—

He sharpeth shaar and kultour bisily.  
This Absolon knokketh al esily,  
And seyde, 'Undo, Gerveys, and that  
anon.'

'What, who artow?' 'It am I, Absolon.'

'What, Absolon! For Cristēs sweetē tree,  
Why risē ye, so rathe? ey *benedicitee*!  
What eyleth yow? Som gay gerl, God  
it woot,

Hath brought yow thus upon the  
viritoot; 3770

By seintē Note, ye woot wel what I mene.'

This Absolon ne roghtē nat a bene  
Of al his pley; no word agayn he yaf;  
He haddē moorē tow on his distaf  
Than Gerveys knew, and seyde, 'Freend  
so deere,

That hootē kultour in the chymenee heere,  
As lene it me, I have therewith to doone,  
And I wol brynge it theē agayn ful soone.'

Gerveys answerde, 'Certēs, were it  
gold,

Or in a pokē nobles alle untold, 3780  
Thou sholdest have, as I am trewe smyth;  
Ey, Cristēs foo, what wol ye do ther-  
with?'

'Ther-of,' quod Absolon, 'be as be may,  
I shall wel telle it thee to-morwē day,'  
And caughte the kultour by the coldē stele.  
Ful softe out at the dore he gan to stele,  
And wente unto the carpenteris wal.  
He cogheth first, and knokketh therewithal  
Upon the wyndowe, right as he dide er.

This Alison answerde, 'Who is ther,  
That knokketh so? I warante it a theef.'

3770. *viritoot*, meaning doubtful—H *very* *trif*,  
Camb. *marryed*.

3771. *Note*, St. Neot.

3782. *Thou sholdest have*, H *Ye shul hem*  
*have*.

'Why nay,' quod he, 'God woot, my  
sweetē leef,  
I am thyn Absolon, my deertlyng.  
Of gold,' quod he, 'I have thee broght  
a syng;

My mooder yaf it me, so God me save;  
Ful fyn it is, and therto wel y-grave;  
This wol I yevē thee, if thou me kisse.'

This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,  
And thoughte he wolde amenden al the  
jape,

He sholdē kisse his ers, en that he scape;  
And up the wyndowe dide he hastily,  
And out his ers he putteth pryvely,  
Over the buttok to the haunchē bon.

And ther-with spak this clerk, this  
Absolon;

'Spek, sweetē bryd, I noot nat when  
thou art.'

This Nicholas anon leet fle a fart,  
As greet as it had been a thonder dent,  
That with the strook he was almost  
y-blent;

And he was redy with his iren hoot,  
And Nicholas amydde the ers he smoot.

Of gooth the skyn, an handē brek  
aboutē,

The hootē kultour brende so his toutē;  
And for the smert he wendē for to dye.  
As he were wood for wo he gan to crye,  
'Help, water, water, help, for Goddē  
herte!'

This carpenter out of his slomber sterte,  
And herde oon crie, 'water,' as he were  
wood,

And thoughte, 'Allas, now comth Nowelē  
flood!'

He sit hym up withouten wordēs mo,  
And with his ax he smoot the corde atwo.  
And doun gooth al; he foond neither  
selle,

Ne breed ne ale, til he cam to the celle.  
Upon the floor and ther aswowne he lay.  
Up sterte hire Alison and Nicholas,  
And criden, 'Out and harrow!' in the  
strete.

The neigheborēs, bothē smale and greet  
In ronnen for to gauren on this man,  
That yet aswownē lay, bothe pale and wan.  
For with the fal he brosten hadde his armē

But stonde he mooste unto his owene harm,  
 For whan he spak he was anon bore down  
 With hendé Nicholas and Alisoun. 3832  
 They tolden every man that he was wood,  
 He was agast so of Nowelis flood  
 Thurgh fantasie, that of his vanytee  
 He hadde y-boght hym knedyng-tubbés  
 thre,

And hadde hem hangéd in the rove above;  
 And that he preyde hem, for Goddés love,  
 To sitten in the roof, *par compaignye*.

The folk gan laughen at his fantasie;  
 Into the roof they kiken and they gape,  
 And turned al his harm unto a jape; 3842  
 For, what-so that this carpenter answerde,  
 It was for noight, no man his reson herde;  
 With othes grete he was so sworn adoun,  
 That he was holdé wood in al the toun;  
 For every clerk anonright heeld with  
 oother;

They seyde, 'The man was wood, my  
 leevé broother';

And every wight gan laughen of this stryf.  
 Thus swyved was this carpenteris wyf,  
 For al his kepyng and his jalouseye; 3852  
 And Absolon hath kist hir nether eye,  
 And Nicholas is scalded in the towte:  
 This tale is doon, and God save al the  
 rowte.

## REEVE'S TALE

### *The prologe of the Reeves Tale*

Whan folk hadde laughen at this nycé  
 cas

Of Absolon and hendé Nicholas,  
 Diversé folk diversely they seyde,  
 But for the mooré part they loughe and  
 pleyde;

He at this tale I saugh no man hym greve,  
 But it were oonly Oséwold the Reve. 3860  
 For cause he was of carpenteris craft  
 A litel ire is in his herte y-laft.

He gan to grucche and blaméd it a lite.  
 'So theek,' quod he, 'ful wel koude I  
 the quite,

With bleryng of a proud millérés eye,—

3838. *moore*, H. *moore*.

If that the listé speke of ribaudye,—  
 But ik am oold, me list not pley for age,  
 Gras tyme is doon, my fodder is now  
 forage;

This whit tope writeth myne oldé yeris;  
 Myn herte is also knowled as myne heris,  
 But if I fare as dooth an openers; 3872  
 That ilké fruyt is ever lenger the wers  
 Til it be roten in mullok, or in stree.

'We oldé men, I drede, so faré we;  
 Til we be roten kan we nat be rype.  
 We hoppen ay whil that the world wol  
 pype,

For in oure wyl ther stiketh ever a nayl,  
 To have an hoor heed and a grené tayl,  
 As hath a leek; for, thogh oure myght  
 be goon,

Oure wyl desireth folie ever in oon; 3880  
 For whan we may nat doon, than wol we  
 speke,

Yet in oure asshen olde is fyr y-reke.  
 Foure gleeedés han we, whiche I shal  
 devyse,

Avaunting, lying, anger, covetise.  
 These fouré sparkles longen unto eelde.  
 Oure oldé lemés mowe wel been unweelde,  
 But wyl ne shal nat failen, that is sooth;  
 And yet ik have alwey a coltés tooth,  
 As many a yeer as it is passed henne  
 Syn that my tappe of lif bigan to renne;  
 For sikerly, whan I was bore, anon 3892  
 Deeth drough the tappe of lyf and leet it  
 gon,

And ever sithe hath so the tappe y-ronne,  
 Til that almost al empty is the tonne.

The stream of lyf now droppeth on the  
 chymbe;

The sely tongé may wel rynge and chymbe  
 Of wrecchednesse that passéd is ful youre;  
 With oldé fólk, save dotage, is namoore.'

Whan that oure Hoost hadde herd this  
 sermonyng,

He gan to speke as lordly as a kyng. 3900  
 He seide: 'What amounteth al this wit?  
 What, shul we speke alday of hooly writ?  
 The devel made a Reve for to preche,  
 Or of a souter shipman or a leche.

3872. *But if*, H. *But yit*.

3887. *faillen*, H. *faile us*.

3904. *soutere*, 'a cobbler may as well turn

Seiyforth thy tale, and tarie nat thetyme, —  
Lo, Depéford, and it is half wey pryne.  
Lo, Grenéwyth, ther many a shrewe is  
inne,

It were al tyme thy talé to bigynne.'

'Now, sirés,' quod this Oséwold the  
Reve, 3909

'I pray yow allé that ye nat yow greve,  
Thogh I answére and somdeel sette his  
howve,

For leveful is, with forcé force of showve;  
This dronké Millere hath y-toold us heer  
How that bigyléd was a carpenteer,  
Peraventure in scorn for I am oon;  
And, byyouré leve, I shal him quite anon.  
Right in his cherlés termés wol I speke;  
I pray to God his nekké moté breke.  
He kan wel in myn eyé seen a stalke,  
But in his owene he kan nat seen a balke.'

### Heere bigynneth The Reves Tale

At Trumpyngtoun, nat fer fro Canté-  
brigge, 3921

Ther gooth a brook, and over that a brigge,  
Upon the whiché brook ther stant a melle;  
And this is verray sooth that I yow tell.  
A millere was ther dwellynge many a day,  
As eny pecok he was proud and gay.  
Pipen he koude and fissehe, and nettés beete,  
And turné coppés, and wel wrastle and  
sheete;

And by his belt he baar a long panade,  
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the  
blade. 3930

sailor or physician as a réleve take to preaching.'  
'Ex suture naulerus,' 'ex suture medicus,' were  
proverbial expressions.

3906. *Depéford*, Deptford.

3906. *half wey pryne*, 7.30 A.M.; H, *passed  
pryme*; Petworth, *almost prime*.

3910. *that ye nat yow greve*, H *that noon of  
yow him greve*.

3911. *howve*, cap; for the phrase cp. line 586.

3912. *of, i.e. off*; H *to*.

*The Reves Tale*: probably taken by Chaucer  
from the French fabliau, *De Gomberet et des Deux  
Clers*, by Jean de Boves, with hints also from  
another fabliau now in the library at Berne, in  
which the clerks lodge with a thieving miller and  
not with a 'vilein,' as in *Gomberet*. Cp. also  
Boccaccio, *Decameron*, D. ix. N. 6. All the  
local colour is of course supplied by Chaucer  
himself, who sets off the Cambridge clerks and  
their miller against the Oxford clerk and the  
carpenter.

A joly poppere baar he in his pouche,  
Ther was no man, for peril, dorste hym  
touche;

A Sheffield thwitel baar he in his hose.  
Round was his face, and camusé was his  
nose;

As piléd as an apé was his skulle;  
He was a market-betere atté fulle;  
Ther dorsté no wight hand upon hym  
legge,

That he ne swoor he sholde anon abegge.  
A thief he was, for sothe, of corn and  
mele,

And that a sly and usaunt for to stele. 3940  
His name was hooté, deynous, Symékyn.  
A wyf he hadde, y-comen of noble kyn,—  
The person of the toun hir fader was,—  
With hire he yaf ful many a panne of bru  
For that Symkyn sholde in his blood allye.  
She was y-fostred in a nonnerye,

For Symkyn woldé no wyf, as he sayde,  
But she were wel y-norissed and a mayde,  
To saven his estaat of yomanrye. 3948

And she was proud and peert as is a pye.  
A ful fair sighte was it upon hem two  
On haly dayes; biforn hire wolde he go  
With his typet y-bounde about his heed;  
And she cam after in a gyte of reed;  
And Symkyn haddé hosen of the same.  
Ther dorsté no wight clepen hire but  
'Dame';

Was noon so hardy that wente by the weye  
That with hire dorsté rage, or onés pleye,  
But if he wolde be slayn of Symékyn,  
With panade, or with knyf, or boidékyn;  
For jalous folk ben perilous evermo; 3961  
Algate they wolde hire wyvés wenden so.  
And eek, for she was somdel smoterlich,  
She was as digne as water in a dich,  
As ful of hoker, and of bisémare.  
Hir thoughté that a lady sholde hire spare,  
What for hire kynrede and hir nortelrie,  
That she hadde lernéd in the nonnerie.

3949. *of*, H *and*.

3953. *y-bounde*, H *bounde*, *bounden*; Heng,  
*wounden*.

3956. *clepen hire but 'Dame'*, H *clepe hir  
but 'Madame'*; cp. line 376.

3957. *that wente*, H *walkyng*.

3958. *ones*, H *elles*.

3966. *a lady sholde hire spare*, H *lady  
oughten hir to spare*, i.e. be considerate to.

A doghter haddé they bitwixe hem two,  
Of twenty year, withouten any mo, 3970  
Savyngé a child that was of half yeer age;  
In cradel it lay, and was a propre page.  
This weaché thikke and wel y-grown was,  
With kamuse noce, and eyen greye as glas;  
Buttokés brode, and brestés rounde and  
hye,

But right fair was hise heer, I wol nat lye.

This person of the toun, for she was feir,  
In purpos was to maken hire his heir,  
Both of his catel and his mesuage, 3979  
And straunge he made it of hir mariage.  
His purpos was for to bistowe hire hye  
Into som worthy blood of auncetrye;  
For hooly chirchés good moot been  
despended

On hooly chirchés blood that is descended;  
Therefore he wolde his hooly blood honourc,  
Though that he hooly chirché sholde  
devoure.

Gret sokene hath this millere, out of  
doute,

With whete and malt of al the land aboute;  
And naméliche, ther was a greet college,  
Men clepen the Soler Halle at Canté-  
bregge; 3990

Ther was hir whete and eek hir malt  
y-grounde.

And on a day it happed in a stounde,  
Sik lay the maunciple on a maladye—  
Men wenden wisly that he sholdé dye,—  
For which this millere stal bothe mele  
and corn

An hundred tymé mooré than biforn :  
For ther-biforn he stal but curteisly,  
But now he was a thief outrageously;  
For which the wardeyn chidde and madé  
fare; 3999

But ther-of sette the millere nat a tare;  
He craketh boost, and swoor it was nat so.  
Thanne were ther yongé, pouré clerkés  
two,

That dwelten in this halle of which I seye;

3980. *he*; om. H.

3985. *hooly*, H *joly*.

3990. *Soler Halle*, the hall with the solers, or sun-chambers, i.e. rooms with bay-windows, probably King's Hall, one of the predecessors of Trinity College.

3996. *An hundred tymes*, H *a thousand part*.

3998. *was*, H *is*.

Testif they were, and lusty for to pleye;  
And, oonly for hire myrthe and revelrye,  
Upon the wardeyn bisily they crye,  
To yeve hem levé, but a litel stounde,  
To goon to mille and seen hir corn  
y-grounde,

And hardily they dorsté leye hir nekke,  
The millere shold nat stele hem half a  
pekke 4020

Of corn, by sleighté, ne by force hem reve.  
And at the laste the wardeyn yaf hem leve.  
John highte that oon, and Aleyn highte  
that oother;

Of o toun were they born, that highté  
Strother,  
Fer in the North, I kan nat tellé where.

This Aleyn maketh redy al his gere,  
And on an hors the sak he caste anon:  
Forth goth Aleyn the clerk, and also John,  
With good swerd and with bokeler by  
hir side. 4019

John knew the wey, hem nededé no gyde;  
And at the mille the sak adoun he layth.  
Aleyn spak first, 'Al hayl, Symond,  
y-fayth!

How fares thy fairé doghter, and thy wyf?'  
'Aleyn, welcome,' quod Symkyn, 'by  
my lyf!

And John also, how now? what do ye  
heer?'

'Symond,' quod John, 'by God, nede  
has na peer,  
Hym boés serve hym-self that has na  
swayn,

Or elles he is a fool, as clerkés sayn. 4028  
Oure manciple, I hope he will be deed,  
Swa werkés ay the wangés in his heed;  
And forthy is I come, and eek Alayn,  
To grynde oure corn and carie it ham  
agayn.

I pray yow spede us heythen that ye may.'  
'It shal be doon,' quod Symkyn, 'by  
my fay!

Whatwol ye doon, whil that it is in hande?'  
'By God, right by the hopur wil I stande,'  
Quod John, 'and se how that the corn  
gas in.

4026. *na peer*. The two clerks speak through-  
out in northern dialect.

4027. *Hym boés*, behoves him; H, *salles*;  
Camb. *muste*; *rest bihovus, byhoveth*.

Yet saugh I never, by my fader kyn,  
How that the hopur waggés til and fra.'

Aleynanswérde, 'John, and wiltowsa?  
Thanne wil I be bynethé, by my croun!  
And se how that the melé fallés down  
Into the trough,—that sal be my disport;  
For John, y-faith, I may been of youre  
sort,

I is as ille a millere as are ye.'

This millere smyléd of hir nycétee,  
And thoghte, 'Al this nys doon but for  
a wyle;

They wené that no man may hem bigile;  
But by my thrift yet shal I blere hir eye,  
For al the sleighte in hir philosophye. 4050.  
The mooré queynté crekés that they  
make,

The mooré wol I stelé when I take.  
In stide of flour yet wol I yeve hem bren;  
The gretteste clerkés been noght wisest  
men,

As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare;  
Of al hir art ne counte I noght a tare.'

Out at the dore he gooth ful pryvély,  
Whan that he saugh his tymé softely.  
He looketh up and down til he hath founde  
The clerkés hors, ther as it stood y-bounde  
Bihynde the mille, under a levésel, 4061  
And to the hors he goth hym faire and  
wel;

He strepeth of the brydel right anon,  
And whan the hors was laus, he gynneth gon  
Toward the fen, ther wildé marés renne,—  
Forth with 'Wehee!' thurgh thikké and  
thurgh thenne.

This millere gooth agayn, no word he  
seyde,  
But dooth his note and with the clerkés  
pleyde,

4046. *smyled of, H smyleth for.*

4051. *crukes, H knakes.*

4053. *flour, H mele.*

4055. *As whilom, etc.* 'The story alluded to is told of a Mule in *Cent. Nov. Ant.* No. 91. The Mule pretends that his name is written upon the bottom of his hind-foot. The Wolf attempting to read it, the Mule gives him a kick on the forehead and kills him. Upon which the Fox, who was present, observes: *Ogni homo, che sa lettere, non è savio*' (Tyrwhitt). A variant of the story occurs in *Reynard the Fox*.

4061. *gynneith, H gan to.*

4066. *and, H and ech.*

Til that hir corn was faire and weel  
y-grounde;

And whan the mele is sakkéd and  
y-bounde, 4070

This John goth out, and fynt his hors away,  
And gan to crie, 'Harrow!' and, 'Weyl-  
away!

Oure hors is lorn; Alayn, for Goddés bane  
Stepe on thy feet; com out, man, al atanes!  
Allas, our wardeyn has his palfrey lorn!  
This Aleyn al forgat, bothe mele and corn;  
Al was out of his mynde his housbondrie.  
'What, whilk way is he geen?' he gan  
to crie.

The wyf cam lepyng in ward with a ren;  
She seyde, 'Allas, youre hors goth to  
the fen 4080

With wildé mares, as faste as he may go;  
Urththank come on his hand that boond  
hym so,

And he that bettré sholde han knyt the  
reyné!'

'Allas,' quod John, 'Aleyn, for Cristé  
peyne,

Lay down thy swerd, and I wil myn alway.  
I is ful wight, God swaat, as is a raa;  
By Goddés herté! he sal nat scape us  
bathe.

Why nadstow pit the capul in the lathe?  
Il-hayl, by God, Aleyn, thou is a fonne.'

Thise sely clerkés han ful faste y-ronne  
Toward the fen, bothe Aleyn and ek  
John; 4091

And whan the millere saugh that they  
were gon,

He half a busschel of hir flour hath take,  
And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake.  
He seyde, 'I trowe the clerkés were aferd;  
Yet kan a millere make a clerkés berd,  
For al his art; now lat hem goon hir weye!  
Lo wher they goon; ye, lat the children  
pleye;

They gete hym nat so lightly, by my  
croun!'

Thise sely clerkes rennen up and down  
With 'Keepe! keepe! stand! stand!  
Jossa warderere! 4101

4090. *han ful faste y-ronne, H speeden hem  
a noon.*

4093. *were, H ben.*

Ga wyghtly thou, and I shal kepe him  
heere.

But shortly, til that it was verray nyght,  
They koudé nat, though they dide al hir  
nyght,

Hir capul cacche, he ran alwey so faste,  
il in a dyche they caughte hym atté laste.

Wery and weet, as beest is in the reyn,  
somth sely John, and with him comth  
Aley.

Allas! quod John, 'the day that I was  
born!

Now are wedryve til hethyng and til scorn;  
Dure corn is stoln, men wil us foolés calle,  
sathé the wardeyn and oure felawes alle,  
and namely the millere, weylaway!

Thus pleyneth John, as he gooth by  
the way

Toward the mille, and Bayard in his hond.  
The millere sittynge by the fyr he fond,—  
For it was nyght and forther myghte they  
noght,—

But for the love of God they hym bisoght  
Of herberwe and of ese, as for hir peny.

The millere seyde agayn, "If ther be  
eny,

Swich as it is, yet shal ye have youre part;  
Myn hous is streit, but ye han lernéd art,  
Ye konne by argumentés make a place  
A mylé brood of twenty foot of space.  
Lat se now if this placé may suffice,  
Or make it rowm with speche, as is youre  
gise.

'Now, Symond,' seyde John, 'by Seint  
Cutberd,

Ay is thou myrie, and this is faire answeárd.  
I have herd seyde, "Man sal taa of twa  
thynges,

Slyk as he fyndes, or taa slyk as he  
brynges";

But specially I pray thee, hoosté deere,  
Get us som mete and drynke, and make  
us cheere,

And we wil payen trewely atté fulle;  
With empty hand men may none hauké  
tulle;

Loo, heere our silver, redy for to spende.'  
This millere into toun his doghter sende

4102. wyghtly, E<sup>6</sup> whistle.

4103. he ran alwey, H it ran away.

For ale and breed, and rosted hem a goos,  
And boond hire hors, it sholdé nat goon  
loos,

And in his owene chambre hem made a  
bed,

With sheetés and with chalons fairey-sprede,  
Noght from his owene bed ten foot or  
twelve.

His doghter hadde a bed al by hir-selve,  
Right in the samé chambre by and by;

It myghté be no bet, and causé why?  
Ther was no roumer herberwe in the place.

Theysoupen, and theyspeke hem to solace,  
And drynken ever strong ale atté beeste.  
Abouté mydnyght wenté they to reste.

Wel hath this millere vernysshéd his  
heed:

Ful palehe was for-dronken, and nat reed.  
He yexeth, and hespeketh thurgh thenose,  
As he were on the quakke or on the pose.  
To bedde he goth, and with hym goth  
his wyf,

As any jay she light was and jolyf;  
So was hir joly whistle wel y-wet;  
The cradel at hir beddés feet is set,  
Torokken, and to yeve the child to sowke:  
And whan that dronken al was in the  
crowke,

To beddéd wente the doghter right anon;  
To beddéd wente Aley, and also John;  
Thernasna moore; hem neededé no dwale.

This millere hath so wisely bibbéd ale  
That as an hors he snorteth in his sleepe;

Ne of his tayl bihynde he took no keepe;  
His wyf bar him a burdon, a ful strong,

Menmyghte hir rowtyng heeré two furlong;  
The wenché rowteth eek, *par compaignys*.

Aley, the clerk, that herd this melodye,  
He pokéd John, and seyde, 'Slepestow?

Herdistow ever slyk a sang er now?

Lo, whilk a compline is y-mel hem alle!  
A wilde fyr upon thair bodies falle!

Wha herked ever slyk a ferly thyng?  
Ye, they sal have the flour of il endyng!

This langé nyght ther tydés me na reste,  
But yet, naforis; al sal be for the beste,

For, John,' seyde he, 'als ever moot  
I thryve,

4138. it sholdé nat goon, H<sup>6</sup> he schold no more  
go.



If that I may, yon wenché wil I swyve.  
 Som esément has lawe y-shapen us ; 4179  
 For, John, ther is a lawé that says thus,  
 That gif a man in a point be y-greved,  
 That in another he sal be releved.  
 Oure corn is stolon, sothly, it is na nay,  
 And we han had an il fit al this day ;  
 And syn I sal have neen amèndement  
 Agayn my los, I wil have esément.  
 By Goddes sale ! it sal neen other bee.'

This John answerde, 'Alayn, avysé thee ;  
 The millere is a perilous man,' he seyde,  
 'And gif that he out of his sleepe abreyde,  
 He mighte doon us bathe a vileynye.' 4191  
 Aleyn answerde, 'I count hym nat a flye.'  
 And up he rist, and by the wenche he  
 crepte.

This wenché lay uprighte, and fasté slepte  
 Til he so ny was, er she myghte espie,  
 That it had been to laté for to crie ;  
 And, shortly for to seyn, they were at on.  
 Now play, Aleyn, for I wol speke of John.

This John lith stille a furlong wey or two,  
 And to hymself he maketh routhe and wo ;  
 'Allas !' quod he, 'this is a wikked jape ;  
 Now may I seyn that I is but an ape ;  
 Yet has my felawesdom what for his harm,—  
 He has the milleris doghter in his arm.  
 He aunted hym, and has his nedés sped,  
 And I lye as a draf sak in my bed ;  
 And when this jape is tald another day,  
 I sal been halde a daf, a cokénay.  
 I wil arise and aunte it, by my fayth ;  
 "Unhardy is unseely," thus men sayth.'  
 And up he roos and softely he wente 4211  
 Unto the cradel, and in his hand it hente,  
 And bear it softe unto his beddés feet.

Soone after this the wyf hir rowtyng leet,  
 And gan awake and wente hire out to pisse,  
 And cam agayn, and gan hir cradel mysse,  
 And gropéd heer and ther, but she found  
 noon.

'Allas !' quod she, 'I hadde almoost  
 myssoon ;  
 I hadde almoost goon to the clerkés bed.  
 Ey, *benedicite* ! thanne hadde I foule  
 y-sped.' 4230

4183. *sothly*, E<sup>2</sup> *shortly*.

4199. *wey*, H *while*.

4200. *he maketh routhe and wo*, H *complained*  
*of his wo*.

And forth she gooth til she the cradel fond ;  
 She gropeth alwey further with hir hond,  
 And found the bed and thoghté noght  
 but good,

By-causé that the cradel by it stood,  
 And nysté wher she was, for it was derk,  
 But faire and wel she creepe into the clerk ;  
 And lith ful stille and wolde han caught  
 a sleepe.

Withinne a while this John the clerk up  
 leepe, 4228

And on this goodé wyf he leith on soore ;  
 So myrie a fit ne hadde she nat ful yoores ;  
 He priketh harde and soore as he were mad.  
 This joly lyf han thise two clerkés lad,  
 Til that the thriddé cok bigan to synge.

Aleyn wax wery in the dawénynge,  
 For he had swonken al the longé nyght ;  
 And seyde, 'Fare weel, Malyne, sweeté  
 wight.

The day is come, I may no lenger byde ;  
 But evermo, wher so I go or ryde,  
 I is thyn awen clerk, swa have I seel.'

'Now, deeré lemman,' quod she, 'go,  
 fareweel !' 4240

But, er thou go, o thyng I wol thee telle ;  
 Whan that thou wendest homward by the  
 melle,

Right at the éntree of the dore bihynde,  
 Thou shalt a cake of half a busshel fynde,  
 That was y-maked of thyn owene mele,  
 Which that I heelpé my fader for to stele ;  
 And, goodé lemman, God thee save and  
 kepe !'

And with that word almoost she gan to  
 wepe.

Aleyn up rist and thoughte, 'Er that  
 it dawé,

I wol go crepen in by my felawe' ; 4250  
 And fond the cradel with his hand anon.  
 'By God !' thoughte he, 'al wrang I  
 have myssoon ;

Myn heed is toty of my swynk to nyght,  
 That maketh me that I go nat aright ;  
 I woot wel by the cradel I have mysso ;  
 Heere lith the millere and his wyf also.'  
 And forth he goth, a twenty devel way,  
 Unto the bed ther as the millere lay.

4225. *And nyste*, H *Nat knowing*.

4231. *soore*, H<sup>2</sup> *deeps*.

He wende have copen by his felawe John,  
And by the millere in he crepe anon, 4250  
And caughte hym by the nekke, and softe  
he spak ;

He seide, 'Thou John, thou swynés-  
heed, awak,

For Cristés saule, and heer a noble game ;  
For by that lord that calléd is seint Jame,  
As I have thris in this shorté nyght

Swyved the milleres doghter bolt upright,  
Whil thou hast as a coward been agast.

'Ye, false harlot,' quod the millere, 'hast ?  
A ! false traitour ! false clerk !' quod he,  
'Thow shalt be deed, by Goddés dignitee !  
Who dorsté be so boold to disparage 4271  
Mydoghter, that is come of swich lynage ?'  
And by the throté-bolle he caughte Alayn ;  
And he hente hym despitously agayn,  
And on the nose he smoot hym with his  
fest.

Doun ran the bloody streem upon his brest,  
And in the floor, with nose and mouth  
to-broke,

They walwe as doon two piggés in a poke ;  
And up they goon and doun agayn anon,  
Til that the millere spornéd at a stoon,  
And doun he fil bakward upon his wyf,  
That wisté no thyng of this nycté stryf ;  
For she was falle aslepe a lité wight  
With John the clerk, that wakéd hadde  
al nyght ;

And with the fal out of hir sleepe she  
breyde.

Help, hooly croys of Broméholm, 'she  
seyde,

*In manus tuas*, Lord, to thee I calle !  
Awak, Symond ! the feend is on us falle !  
My herte is broken ! help ! I nam but  
deed !

Her lyth oon upon my wombe and on  
myn heed. 4290

Helpe, Symkyn, for the false clerkés fight !'

This John stirte up, as soone as ever  
he myghte,

And graspeth by the wallés to and fro

4264. called, H *called*.

4272. swich, H *hit*.

4279. agayn, H *they goon*.

4280. sporned, H *stumbled*.

4286. Bromeholm, a Norfolk priory.

4288. is on us falle, H is in thi halle.

To fynde a staf, and she stirte up also,  
And knewe the estrés bet than dide this  
John, \*

And by the wal a staf she foond anon,  
And saugh a litel shymeryng of a light,  
For at an hole in shoon the mooné bright ;  
And by that light she saugh hem bothé two,  
But sikerly she nysté who was who ; 4300  
But as she saugh a whit thyng in hir eye ;  
And whan she gan the whité thyng espye,  
She wende the clerk hadde wered a  
volapeer,

And with the staf she drough ay neer  
and neer

And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle ;  
And smoot the millere on the pyléd skulle,  
And doun he gooth, and cride, 'Harrow !  
I dye !'

Thise clerkés beete hym weel and lete  
hym lye,

And greythen hem, and tooke hir horsanon,  
And eek hire mele, and on hir wey they  
gon, 4320

And at the millé yet they tooke hir cake  
Of half a busschel flour ful wel y-bake.

Thus is the proude millere wel y-bete,  
And hath y-lost the gryndyng of the whete,  
And payed for the soper everideel  
Of Aleyn and of John, that bette hym weel ;  
His wyf is swyved, and his doghter ala.  
Lo ! swich it is a millere to be fals ;  
And therfore this proverbe is seyde ful sooth,  
'Hym thar nat wené wel that yvele dooth,'  
A gylour shal hymself bigyléd be, — 4321  
And God, that sitteth heighe in Trinitee,  
Save al this compaignyé, grete and smale.  
Thus have I quyt the Millere in my tale.

## COOK'S TALE

### *The prologe of the Cokes Tale*

The Cook of Londoun, whil the Revé  
spak,

4296. a staf she foond, H *she took a staf*.

4297. shymeryng, H *glimeryng*.

4304. ay, H *hir*.

4309. greythen, equip ; H *greyth hem wel*.

4310. on hir wey, H *hoon anon*.

4311. at the millé yet, H *at the millen dore*.

4322. Trinitee, H *Magistee*.

For joye him thoughte, he clawed him on  
the bak ;

'Ha, ha!' quod he, 'for Cristès passioun  
This millere hadde a sharpe conclusioun  
Upon his argument of herbergage ;  
Wel seyde Salomon, in his langage, 4330  
"Ne brynge nat everyman into thyn hous,"  
For herberwyng by nyghte is perilous.  
Wel oghte a man avysed for to be  
Whom that he broghte into his pryvete.  
I pray to God, so yeve me sorwe and care,  
If ever, sithe I highte Hogge of Ware,  
Herde I a millere better y-set a werk ;  
He hadde a jape of malice in the derk.  
But God forbede that we stynté heere,  
And therefore if ye vouché-sauf to heere  
A tale of me, that am a pouré man, 4341  
I wol yow telle, as wel as ever I kan,  
A litel jape that fil in oure citee.'

Oure Hoost answerde and seide, 'I  
graunte it thee ;

Now telle on, Roger, looke that it be good ;  
For many a pastee hastow laten blood,  
And many a jakke of Dovere hastow soold,  
That hath been twihs hoot and twihs coold ;  
Of many a pilgrym hastow Cristès curs,  
For of thy percelly yet they fare the  
wors, 4350

That they han eten with thy stubbel goos ;  
For in thy shoppe is many a flyé loos.  
Now telle on, gentil Roger by thy name.  
But yet I pray thee be nat wroth for game,  
A man may seye ful sooth in game and  
pley.'

'Thou seist ful sooth,' quod Roger,  
'by my fey !

But "sooth pley quaad pley," as the  
Flemyng seith ;

And therefore, Herry Bailly, by thy feith,  
Be thou nat wrooth, er we departen heer  
Though that my tale be of an hostiler :  
But nathelees I wol nat telle it yit ; 4361  
But er we parte, y-wis, thou shalt be quit.  
And therewithal he lough and madé cheere,  
And seyde his tale, as ye shul after heere.

4335. so geve me sorwe, H so gyf my body.

4347. a jakke of Dovere, said to be 'a sea-  
fish,' but more probably a pudding.

4357. sooth pley quaad pley, true jest, bad  
jest. Cp. 'soth boud is no boud.'

### Heere bigynneth The Cookes Tale .

A prentys whilom dwelled in oure citee,  
And of a craft of vitailliers was hee.  
Gaillard he was as goldfynch in the shawe ;  
Broun as a berye, a propre short felawe,  
With lokkes blake, y-kempd ful fetisly.  
Dauncen he koude so wel and jolily, 4370  
That he was clepéd Perkyn Revelour.  
He was as ful of love and paramour  
As is the hyvé ful of hony sweete.  
Wel was the wenché with hym myght  
meete ;

At every bridale wolde he synge and hoppe,  
He loved bet the taverne than the shoppe.

For whan ther anyridding was in Chepe,  
Out of the shoppé thider wolde he lepe ;  
Til that he haddé al the sighte y-seyn,  
And daunced wel, he wolde nat come  
ageyn ; 4380

And gadered hym a meynnee of his sort,  
To hoppe and synge and maken swich  
disport ;

And ther they setten stevene for to  
meete,

To playen at the dys in swich a streete ;  
For in the toun ne was ther no prentys  
That fairer koudé caste a paire of dys  
Than Perkyn koude, and therto he was  
free

Of his dispense, in place of pryvete.  
That fond his maister wel in his chaffare,  
For often tyme he found his box ful bare ;  
For sikerly a prentys revelour, 4391  
That haunteth dys, riot, or paramour,  
His maister shal it in his shoppe abyde,  
Al have he no part of the mynstralcy ;  
For thefte and riot they been convertible,  
Al konne he pleye on gyterne or ribble  
Revel and trouthe, as in a lowe degree,  
They been ful wrothe al day, as men  
may see.

This joly prentys with his maister bood,  
Til he were ny out of his prentishood ;  
Al were he snybbéd bothe erly and late,  
And somtyme lad with revel to Newégate ;  
But atté laste his maister hym bihtoghte,

4370. jolily, H gratefully.

4373. hyve ful, H honey-combe.

4391. sikerly a, H such a joly.

4392. riot, H revel.

Upon a day, when he his papir soghte,  
 In a proverbe that seith this samé word,  
 Wel bet is roten appul out of hoord,  
 Than that it rotie al the reménaunt.  
 So farrith it by a riotous servaunt,  
 It is wel lassé harm to lete hym pace  
 Than he shende alle the servauntz in the  
 place.

Therefore his maister yaf hym acquittance,  
 And bad hym go with sorwe and with  
 meschance;  
 And thus this joly prentys hadde his leve.  
 Now lat him riote al the nyght or leve.  
 And for that is no theef withoute a  
 lowke,  
 That helpeth hym to wasten and to sowke,

Of that he brybéd kan or borwe may,  
 Anon<sup>4410</sup> he sente his bed and his array  
 Unto a compier of his owene sort, 4419  
 That lovéd dys, and revel and disport,  
 And hadde a wyf that heeld for contenance  
 A shoppe, and swyvd for hir suste-  
 nance . . .

*Of this Cokes Tale makéd Chaucer  
 na more*

4422. *Of this Cokes tale, etc.*, from Hengwrt MS. In many MSS. here follows the Tale of Gamelyn, which Chaucer probably meant to re-write and assign to the Yeoman; but the tale, as it stands, is none of Chaucer's, and is therefore not printed here. The rest of the tales supposed to be told on the first day of the Pilgrimage are lacking, and, almost certainly, were never written.

## \* TALES OF THE SECOND DAY

### GROUP B

*The wordes of the Hoost to the  
 compaignye*

OURE Hosté saugh wel that the  
 brighté sonne  
 The ark of his artificial day hath ronne  
 The ferthé part, and half an houre and  
 moore,  
 And though he were, nat depe experte in  
 loore,  
 He wiste it was the eightetethé day  
 Of Aprill, that is messenger to May;  
 And saugh wel that the shadwe of every  
 tree  
 Was, as in lengthe, the samé quantitee  
 That was the body erect that causéd it;  
 And therefore by the shadwe he took his  
 wit  
 That Phebus, which that shoon so clere  
 and brighte,

2. *his artificial day*, i.e. between sunrise and sunset as opposed to the day of 24 hours.

3. *The ferthé part*, etc. On April 18th (April 26th of the reformed calendar) the sun would have accomplished the fourth part of his day's journey at 9.20 A.M., leaving 40 minutes, or 'half-an-hour and more,' to 10 o'clock.

4. *experte*, *om. H*; *y-stert*, E<sup>2</sup>.

11. *clere*, *H fair*.

Degrees was fyve and fourty clombe on  
 highte;  
 And for that day, as in that latitude,  
 It was ten of the klokke, he gan conclude;  
 And sodeynly he plighte his hors aboute.  
 'Lordynges,' quod he, 'I warne yow,  
 al this route,  
 The fourthé party of this day is gon.  
 Now for the love of God and of Seint John,  
 Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye may.  
 Lordynges, the tymé wasteth nyght and  
 day  
 And steleth from us,—what 'pryvely  
 slepyng,  
 And what thurgh negligence in oure  
 wakýng,—  
 As dooth the stream that turneth never  
 agayn,  
 Descendyng from the montaigne into playn.  
 'Wel kan Senec, and many a philo-  
 sophre,  
 Biwailen tymé moore than gold in cofre;  
 For "losse of catel may recovered be,

12. *Degrees*, etc. The sun attained this altitude exactly at 9.38.

20. *the tyme*, etc. Imitated from the *Roman de la Rose*, cp. the English translation, ll. 369-399.

But losse of tyme shendeth us," quod he ;  
It wol nat come agayn, withouten t'rede,  
Namooré than wole Malkynes mayden-  
hede,

Whan she hath lost it in hir wantow-  
nesse ;

Lat us nat mowle.. thus in ydelnesse.

'Sire Man of La' quod he, 'so have  
ye blis,

Telle us a tale anon, as forward is ;

Ye been submytted thurgh youre free  
assent

To stonden in this cas at my juggement.  
Acquiteth yow and holdeth youre biheeste,  
Thanne have ye doon youre devoir atté  
leeste.'

'Hosté,' quod he, '*depardieu* ich  
assente ;

To breké forward is nat myn entente. 40

Biheeste is detté, and I wole holdé fayn

Al my biheste, I kan no bettré sayn ;

For swich lawe as man yeveth another  
wight

He sholde hym-selven usen it by right ;

Thus wole oure text ; but natheless certeyn

I kan right now no thrifty talé seyn,

But Chaucer, thogh he kan but lewedly,

On metres and on rymyng craftily,

Hath seyde hem, in swich English as he  
kan,

Of oldé tyme, as knoweth many a man. 50

And if he have noght seyde hem, levé  
brother,

In ð book, he hath seyde hem in another.

For he hath toold of loveris up and doun

Mo than Ovidé made of mencion

In his Epistellés, that been ful olde.

What sholde I tellen hem, syn they ben  
tolde ?

'In youthe he made of Ceyz and  
Alcione,

And sithen hath he spoken of everichone

Thise noble wyvés and thise loveris eke.

Who so that wole his largé volume seke,

59. of *Ceyz and Alcione*, the story of Ceyz and Alcione, from Ovid, *Metam.* bk. xi. It forms the subject of ll. 62-80 of Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess*, which may have been originally an independent poem. The *Book of the Duchess* was written in 1368, when Chaucer was nearly thirty.

Cleped the Seintés Legende of Cupide,  
Ther may he seen the largé wolden wyf  
Of Lucrese and of Babilan Tere ;  
The swerd of Dido for the false Trece ;  
The tree of Phillis for hire Democoon ;  
The pleinte of Dianire and of Hecuba  
Of Adriane and of Isphilee ;  
The bareyne yle stondyng in the see ;  
The dreynté Leandrè for his Erro ;  
The teiris of Eleyne ; and eek the wo  
Of Brixseyde, and of the Ladomya ;  
The crueltee of the, queene Médée !  
Thy litel children hangyng by the hals,  
For thy Jásón, that was in lye so fals !  
O Ypermystra, Penelopee, Alceste,  
Youré wifhede he comendeth with the  
beste !

'But certainly no word ne writeth he  
Of thilké wikke ensample of Canacee,  
That loved hir owenè brothes synfully ;  
(Of swiche curséd stories I sey fy !)  
Or ellis of Tyro Appollonius,  
How that the curséd kyng Antiochus  
Birafté his doghter of hir maydenhede,  
That is so horrible a talé for to rede,  
Whan he hir threw upon the pavément ;  
And therefore he, of ful avysément,  
Nolde nevere write in none of his sermons  
Of swiche unkynde abhomynacions,  
Ne I wol noon reherce, if that I may.

'But of my tale how shall I doon this  
day ?

Me weré looth be likned, doutélées,

62. the *Saintes Legende of Cupide* (H. Legende), the *Legend of Good Women*, i.e. of Cupid's Saints. In the list which follows, the Man of Law omits the names of Cleopatra and Philomela, of whom Chaucer wrote, while of Deianira, Hermione, Hero, Helen, Briseis, Laodameia, Penelope and Alcestis no legends remain.

63. *Babilan Tere*, Thise of Babylon.

67. *Adriane*, Ariadne.

67. *Isphilee*, Hippolyta.

68. *The bareyne yle*, Naxos.

74. *thy*, H. *thilke*.

74. *in*, H. *of*.

78. *Canacee*. 'This and the story of Appollonius of Tyre are told in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, whence it has been supposed that Chaucer intended here to blame that writer-a notion for which there appears to be no good foundation' (Wright).

80. *Of swiche*, H. *On swiche*.

84. *for so*, H. *as man may*.

## MAN OF LAW'S TALE

*Product of the Manner of Lawes Tale*

O hateful harm ! condition of poverté !  
With thirst, with cold, with hunger so  
confoundid !

to asken help thee shameth in thyn herte;  
if thou noon askes soore artowy-woundid,  
that verray nede unwrappeth w<sup>th</sup> thy  
wounde hid!

Maugree thy heed, thou most for indigence  
 In stele, or begge, or borwé thy despence

How blaimest Crist, and seist ful bitterly,  
 e mynede parth thy richesse temporal ;  
 by neighbothe thou wytest synfully,  
 and seist thou hast to lite and he hath al.  
*Parfay,* beistow, 'somtyme he rekened  
 shal, 113  
 than that his tayl shal brennen in the  
 gleede,  
 or he noȝht helpeþ needfulle in hir neede.'

Herkent dat is de sententie of the wise:  
Der sijn die die niet en hebben indigence';  
'My sake myn neighbor op thee despise,  
Thou shalt meere respect thy reverence!  
Ik wil niet dat men make this sentence:  
All die sijn van gode men been wikke';  
Ik wil niet dat men comen to that

110

For if thy brother hateth thee,  
And thou beest hated from thee, alas!

of the daughters of Pierus, that  
were changed  
(Tyrrhitt).  
The MSS. 173-4, 218, 220-1, are  
with chapter of Pope  
of the MSS. The two  
of the MSS. xi. 29 and

O riché marchauntz, ful of wele been yee,  
O noble, o prudent folk, as in this cas !  
Yours bagges been nat filld with *ambis as*,  
But with *sys cynk*, that ganneth for youre  
chaunce :

At Cristemasse we may ye daunce !

Ye seken lond see for yowre  
wynnynges.

As wise folk ye knowen all thestaat  
Of regniens; ye been sadrés of tidyinges  
And talés, bothe of pées and of debaat. 130  
I were right now of talés desolaaft,  
Nere that a marchant— goon is many a  
yeere—

Me taughten tale, which that yeshal heere.

*Heere      1<sup>st</sup> The Man, of Lawe his  
Tale*

## PART I

In Surrye whilom dwelte a compaignye  
Of chapmen riche, and theso sadde and  
trew:

That wyde where senten him spicerye,  
Clothes of gold, and satyn: riche of hewe.  
Hir chaffare was so thrifty and so newe  
That every wight hath deyntee to chaffare  
With hem, and eek to sellen hem hire ware.

Now fil it that the maistrés of that sort 142  
 Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende,  
 Were it for chapmanhode, or for disport,  
 Noon oother message wolde they thider  
 sende.

But comen hem-self to Rome, this is the  
 ende;  
 And in swich place as thoughte hem  
 advantage.

For hire entente, the take hir herbergage.

Sojourned here this merchantz in that town

A certain time, as to hire pleasure :

*Howe's Synthesis*, etc. The tale which follows is taken in the main from the Anglo-French Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet, an English Dominican who died some time after 1334. The translation is somewhere very close, and 'of the 1000 lines of which the tale consists, about 350 are Chaucer's additions' (Brock).

Nat Rome, for the harm thurgh Hanybal,  
That Romayns hath venquysshéd tyrnès  
thre,

Nas herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee,  
As in the chambré was for hire partynge;  
But forth she moot, wher so she wepe or  
syngre.

O firste moevyng, crueel firmament,  
With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest ay,  
And hurlest al from Est til Occident,  
That naturally wolde holde another way;  
Thy crowdyng set the levein in swich array  
At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage,  
That crueel Mars hath slayn this mariage!

Infortunat ascendent tortuous,  
Of which the lord is helpé alle, allas,  
Out of his angle into the de hous.  
O Mars, O atazir, as in this cas!  
O fieble Moone, unhappy been thy pas!  
Thou knytest thee ther thou art nat  
rectyved;  
Ther thou were weel, fro thennés artow  
weyvéd.

Imprudent emperour of Rome, allas!  
Was ther no philosopre in al thy toun?  
Is no tyme bet than oother in swich cas?  
Of viage is ther noon eleccioun,  
Namely to folk of heigh condicioun,  
Noght whan a roote is of a burthe y-knowe?  
Allas! we been to lewéd or to slowe!

To ship is brought this woful, fairé  
mayde,  
Solempnely, with every circumstance.

293. *partyng, E<sup>8</sup> departyng.*  
295. *O firste moevyng, etc.* The *Primum Mobile* is the outermost of the nine spheres, and revolves daily from east to west, carrying the inner spheres with it.

304. *Out of his angle.* The angles were the highest parts of the sphere, and Mars had fallen from his angle to the lowest house in the sphere.

305. *atazir, planetary influence.*

312. *Of viage is ther noon eleccioun?* Only rich people could pay for the calculation of their horoscope from its 'root'; but, when the horoscope was made, the choice of a time for any business became easy, because it was known which planets would be favourable to the undertaker.

316. *brought, E<sup>8</sup> come.*

'Now Jhesu Crist be with yow alle,'  
she seyde.

'Ther nys namore, but, 'Faswel, faire  
Custance!'

She peyneth hire to make good contenance;  
And forth I lete hire saille in this manere,  
And turne I wole agayn to my matere.

The mooder of the sowdan, welles  
vices,

Espied hath hir sonés pleyn entente,  
How he wol lete his oldé sacrifices;  
And right anon she for hir consell sente;  
And they been come, to knowé what she  
mente;

And whan assembled was this folk in-fecre,  
She sette hire doun and seyde as ye shal  
heere.

'I, lordes,' she seyde, 'ye knowen  
everichon,

How that my sone in point is for to lete  
The hooly lawés of oure Alkaron,  
Yeven by Goddés message Makomete;  
But oon avow to grété God I heete,  
The lyf shal rather out of my body sterte,  
Than Makometés lawe out of myn herte!

What sholde us tyden of this newé lawe,  
But thraldom to our bodies and penance,  
And afterward in hellé to be drawe,  
For we reneyed Mahoun oure creance?  
But, lordes, wol ye maken assurance?  
As I shal seyn, assentyng to my loore,  
And I shal make us sauf for everemoore.'

They sworn, and assenten every man  
To lyve with hire, and dye, and by hire  
stonde,

And everich, in the besté wise he kan,  
To strengthen hire shal alle his frendés  
fonde.

And she hath this emprise y-take on honde  
Which ye shal heren that I shal devyse;  
And to hem alle she spak right in this  
wyse:

323. *welle, H<sup>8</sup> full.*

325. *she seyde, H<sup>8</sup> good sache.* The speeches are Chaucer's.

336. *Then, H<sup>8</sup> Or.*

'We shal first feyne us cristendom to  
take,

colde water shal nat greve us but a lite),  
and I shal swiche a feeste and revel make,  
that asel trowe I shal the sowdan quite;  
for thogh his wyf be cristned never so  
white

he shal have ned to wasshe away the rede,  
thogh she a font-ful water with hire lede!

O sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee!  
Vrigo thou, Semyrame the secounde,  
serpent, under femynynytee,  
lik to the serpent dede in helle y-bounde!  
feyned womman, al that may confounde  
ferty and innocence thurgh thy malice  
s bred in thee, as nest of every vice!

Sathan, envious syn thilked day  
that thou wert chaced from oure heritage,  
Wel knowestow to wommen the oldé way!  
Thou madest Eva brynge us in servage,  
Thou wolt foordoon this cristen mariage.  
Thyn instrument so, weylaway the while!  
Makestow of wommen whan thou wolt  
bigile.

This sowdanesse, whom I thus blame  
and warye,  
leet privly hire conseil goon hire way.  
What sholde I in this tale lenger tarye?  
She rydeth to the sowdan on a day,  
And seyde hym that she wolde reneye  
hir lay,  
And cristendom of preestes handes fonge,  
Repentyng hire she both was so longe;

He chynge hym to doon hire that honour,  
that she myste han the cristen folk to  
feeste,—

To plesen hem, I wol do my labour.  
The sowdan seith, 'I wol doon at youre  
heere'  
And he seith, 'I wol hire of that  
requeste'

so glad he was he myght what to seye.  
The sowdan seith, 'I wol hire of that  
requeste'

The apostrophe  
Chaucer's  
woman's form.

PART II

Arryved been this cristen folk to londe  
In Surrye, with a greet solempné route;  
And hastily this sowdan sente his sonde,  
First to his mooder, and all the regne  
aboute,

And seyde his wyf was comen, oute of  
doute,

And preyde hire for to ryde agayn the  
queene,

The honour of his regne to sustene.

Greet was the prees, and riché was tharray  
Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere.

The mooder of the sowdan, riche and gay,  
Receveth hire, with al-so glad a cheere

As any fader myghte hir doghter deere,  
And to the seate citer ther layde,

A softe paas solempnly they ryde.

Noght trowe I the triumphe of Julius,—  
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a  
booke,—

Was roialler nor moore curius,  
Than was thassemble of this blisful hoost;  
But this scorpion, this wikked goost,  
The sowdanesse, for all hire flaterynge,  
Caste under this ful mortally to stynge.

The sowdan comth hym self soone after this  
so roially that wonder is to telle,  
And welcometh hire with alle joye and blis;  
And thus in murthe and joye I lete hem  
dwelle;

The fruyt of this matiere is that I telle.  
Whan tyme cam, men thoughte it for the  
beste,

That revel stynge and mengoon to hir reste.

The tyme cam this oldé sowdanesse  
Orleyned hath this feeste of which I tolde,  
And to the feeste cristen spik hem dresse  
In general, yé, bothé yonge and olde.  
Heere may men feeste and roialtee biholde,  
And deynthe mo than I kan yow devyse,  
But all to deere they boghte it, or they ryse.

the triumphe of Julius. The stanza is  
Chaucer's addition.



O sodeyn wo! that ever art succour  
To worldly blisse! Spreynd is with  
bitternesse

The ende of the joye of oure worldly  
labour!

Wo occupieth the fyn of oure gladnesse.  
Herke this conseil, for thy sikernesse,  
Upon thy gladd day have in thy mynde  
The unwar wo, or harm, that comth  
bihynde.

For shortly for to tellen, at o word,  
The sowdan and the cristen everichone <sup>439</sup>  
Been al to-hewe, and stikid at the bord,  
But it were only dame Custance allone.  
This oldé sowdanessé, curséd krone!  
Hath with hir freendés doon this curséd  
dede,  
For she hir-self wolde all th<sup>e</sup> lede.

Nether was Surryen noon, that was con-  
verted,

That of the conseil of the sowdan woot,  
That he nas al to-hewe er he asterted,  
And Custance han they tak<sup>e</sup> anon, foot-  
hoot,

And in a ship all steeréless, God woot,  
They han hir set and biddeth hire lerne  
saille <sup>440</sup>

Out of Surrye, agaynward to Ytaille.

A certein tresor that she thider ladde,  
And, sooth to seyn, vitaillé greet plentee,  
They han hire yeven, and clothés eek she  
hadde,

And forth she sailleth in the salté see!  
O my Custance, ful of benignytee,  
O emperours yongé doghter deere,  
He that is lord of fortune be thy steere!

She blessethu hire, and with ful pitous  
voys, <sup>449</sup>

Unto the croys of Crist thus seyde she:  
"O cleere, O weleful auter, hooly croys,

<sup>437.</sup> O sodeyn wo! The stanza is Chaucer's addition, taken from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, l. 23.

<sup>437.</sup> or harm that comth, H that cometh ay.

<sup>438.</sup> shortly, E soothly.

<sup>440.</sup> thider, E with hire.

<sup>449-50.</sup> Chaucer's addition.

Reed of the Lambés blood, ful of pitee,  
That wesshe the world fro the olde  
iniquitee,

Me fro the feend and fro his clayés kepe,  
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe!

Victorious tree, proteccoun of trewe,  
That oonly worthy weré for to bere  
The Kyng of Hevene with his woundés  
newe,

The whité Lamb that hurt was with the  
spere; <sup>459</sup>

Flemere of feendés out of hym and here,  
On which thy lymés feithfully extenden,  
Me helpe, and yif me myght my lyf  
tamenden.

Yerés and dayés fleteth this créature  
Thurghout thesee of Grece unto thestraye  
Of Marrok, as it was hire aventure.

On many a sory meel now may she  
bayte;

After hir deeth ful often may she wayte,  
Er that the wildé wawés wol hire dryve  
Unto the placé ther she shal arrive.

Men myghten asken why she was nat  
slayn? <sup>470</sup>

Eek at the feeste who myghte hir body save?  
And I answer to that demande agayn,  
Who savéd Danyel in the horrible cave,  
Ther every wight save he, maister and  
knave,

Was with the leoun frete, er he asterte?  
No wight but God, that he bar in his herte.

God liste to shewe his wonderful myracle  
In hire, for we sholde seen his myghty  
werkis.

Crist, which that is to every harm triacle,  
By certeine meenés ofte, as knowen clerkis,  
Dooth thyng for certein endé that ful derk is  
To mannés wit, that for oure ignorance  
Ne konne noght knowe his prudent  
purveiance.

Now sith she was nat at the feeste y-slawe,  
Who kepte hire fro the drenchyng in the  
see?

<sup>459.</sup> the spere, H<sup>2</sup> a spere.  
<sup>470-501.</sup> Chaucer's addition.

Who kepté Jonas in the fishés mawe,  
Til he was spouted up at Nynyvee?  
Wel may men knowe it was no wight  
but He  
That kepté peple Ebrayk from hir  
drenchynge, 489  
With dryé feet thurgh-out the see passynge.

Who had the four spirites of tempest,  
That power han tanoyen lond and see,  
'Bothe north and south, and also west  
and est.

Anoyeth neither see, ne land, ne tree '?  
Soothly the comandour of that was He  
That fro the tempest ay this womman kepte  
As wel when she awok as whan she slepte.

Where myghte this womman mete and  
drynké have,  
Thre yeer and moore? how lasteth hire  
vitaille?

Who fedde the Egepcien Marie in the cave,  
Or in desert? No wight but Crist, *sans*  
*faillie.* 501  
Fyve thousand folk it was as greet mervaille  
With lovés fyve, and fisshés two, to feede.  
God sente his fovyson at hir greté neede.

She dryveth forth into oure occian,  
Thurgh-out oure wildè see, til attè laste  
Under an hoold, that nempnen I ne kan,  
Fer in Northumberlond the wawe hire  
caste.

And in the sond hir ship stiked so faste  
That theennes wolde it noight of al a tyde.  
The wylle of Crist was that she sholde abyde.

The constable of the castel down is fare  
To seen this wrak, and al the ship he  
soughte.

And found this very womman, ful of care;  
He found also the tresor that she broghte.  
In his langage mercy she bisoghte,  
The lyf out of hire body for to twynne,  
Him to delivere of wo that she was inne.

493. *Sak. Rev.* vii. 2, 3.

497. *east*, *East* west, throwing stress on *As*.

5000. *The Egyptian Maria*, the Mary of Egypt, who lived thirty-seven years in the desert as a hermitess.

A maner Latyn corrupt was hir speche,  
But algates ther-by was she understonde.  
The constable, whan hym lyst no lenger  
seche,  
This woful womman broghte he to the  
londe;  
She kneleth down and thanketh Goddes  
sonde;  
But what she was she woldé no man seye,  
For foul ne fair, thogh that she sholdé  
deve.

She seyde she was so mazed in the see  
That she forgot hir myndé, by hir trouthe.  
The constable haile of hire so greet pitee,  
And ekche <sup>his</sup>wyf, that they wepen for routhe.  
She was so diligent, withouten slouthe,  
To serve - <sup>in</sup> ~~for~~ these everich in that place,  
That al <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ men, even that <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ looken in his face.

This constable and dame Hermengyld,  
his wyf; 533  
Were payens, and that contrec everywhere;  
But Hermengyld loved hir right as hir lyf,  
And Custaue hath so longe sojourned  
there.

In orisons, with many a bitter teere,  
Til Jhesu hath converted, thurgh his grace,  
Dame Hermengyld, constablesse of that  
place.

In al that lond no cristen domste route, 340  
 Allé cristen folk been fled fro that contree,  
 Thurgh payens, that conquereden al aboute  
 The plages of the North, by land and see.  
 To Walys fledde the cristen knyghte  
 Of oldé Britons dwellynge in this ile;  
 Ther was hit refut for the mēnē while.

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled  
That ther nere sopping that in air privetee  
Honoured Crist, and betwen folk bigiled ;  
And ny the castel swithe ther dwelten  
three.

That oon of hem was blynd and myghte  
nat see,  
But it were with thille even of his mynde,  
With whiche men seen what that they  
ben blynde.

Bright was the sonne, as in that  
someres day,  
For which the constable and his wyf also,  
And Custance, han y-take the righte way  
Toward the see, a furlong wey or two,  
To playen and to romen to and fro ; 558  
And in hir walk this blyndé man they mette,  
Crokéd and oold, with eyen faste y-shete.

'In name of Crist,' cridé this olde Britoun,  
'Dame Hermengyld, yif me my sighte  
agayn !'

This lady weex affrayed of the soun,  
Lest that hir housbonde, shortly for to sayn,  
Wolde hire for Jhesu Cristés love han  
alayn ;  
Til Custance made hire boold, and bad  
hire wirche  
The wyl of Crist, as doghtek<sup>561</sup> chirche.

The constable weex abashed of that sight,  
And seyde, 'What amountethall this fau-<sup>570</sup> !'  
Custance answerde, 'Sire, it is Cristés  
myght  
That helpeth folk out of the s<sup>570</sup>ndessnare':  
And so ferforth she gan oure lay declare,  
That she the constable, er that it were eve,  
Converteth, and on Crist maketh hym  
bileve.

This constable was no-thing lord of this  
place  
Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond,  
But kepte it strongly, many wyntres space,  
Under Alla, kyng of al Northumbrelond,  
That was ful wys and worthy of his hond,  
Agayn the Scottés, as men may wel heere ;  
But turne I wole agayn to my mateere.

Sathan, that ever us waiteth to pigile,  
Saugh of Custance al hire perfeccioun,  
And caste anon how he myghte quite hir  
while,  
And made a yong knyght, that dwelte  
in that toon,  
Love hire so hoot, be heil affeccioun,  
That verrailly hym thought he sholdé spillé  
But he of hire myghte onke have his wille.

567. *his*, H. *Arb*.

576. *Alla*, reigned A.D. 950-960.

He woweth hire, but it availleth noght,  
She woldé do no synné, by no weye ; 590  
And for despit he compassed in his thought  
To maken hire on shameful deeth to deye.  
He wayteth whan the constable was aweye,  
And pryvély upon a nyght he crepte  
In Hermengyldés chambre, whila she slepte.

Wary, for-wakéd in hire orisouns,  
Slepeth Custance, and Hermengyld also.  
This knyght, thurgh Sathanas tempta-  
ciouns,

All sofly is to the bed y-go,  
And kitte the throte of Hermengyld atwo,  
And leyde the bloody knyf by dame  
Custance, 601  
And wente his wey, ther God yeve hym  
meschance !

Soone after cometh this constable hoom  
agayn,  
And eek Alla, that kyng was of that lond,  
And saugh his wyf despitously y-alayn,  
For which ful ofte he weepe and wroong  
his hond,  
And in the bed the bloody knyf he fond  
By dame Custance ; alas ! what myghte  
she seye ?  
For verray wo, hir wit was al aweye.

To kyng Alla was toold al this meschance  
And eek the tyme, and where, and in  
what wise 611  
That in a ship was founden this Custance,  
As heer-biforn that ye han herd devyse.  
The kyng's herte of pitee gan agryse,  
Whan he saugh so benigne a créature  
Falle in disese, and in mysaventure :

For as the lomb toward his deeth is brough, t  
So stant this innocent before the kyng.  
This falsé knyght, that hath this tresoun  
wrought,  
Berth hire on hond that she hath doon  
thys thyng ; 620  
But nathelees, ther was greet moornynge

620-666. These eight stanzas are Chaucer's  
addition. In Trivet the king does not arrive till  
after the miracle.

621. *this*, E. *dame*.

Among the peple, and seyn they kan nat  
gense  
That she had doon so greet a wikkednesse:

For they han seyn hire ever so vertuous,  
And lovyng Hermengyld right as hir lyf.  
Of this bear witnesse everich in that hous,  
Save he that Hermengyld slow with his  
knyf.

This gentil kyng hath caught a greet motyf  
Of this witnesse, and thoghte he wolde  
enquere  
Depper in this, a trouthe for to lere. 630

Allas ! Custance, thou hast no cham-  
pioun,  
Ne fighte kanstow nocht, so weylaway !  
But be that starf for our redempcioun,  
And boond Sathan,—and yet lith ther  
he lay,—  
So be thy stronge champion this day ;  
For, but if Crist open myracle kithe,  
Withouten gilt thou shalt be slayn as  
swithe.

She sette hire doun on knees and thus she  
sayde

'Immortal God, that savedest Susanne  
Fro falsé blame, and thou, merciful mayde,  
Mary I meene, doghter to Seint Anne, 641  
Bifore whos child angelés syng Oianne,  
If I be giltyles of this felonye  
My socour be, for ellis shal I dye !'

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a palé face  
Among a prees, of hym that hath be lad  
Toward his deeth, wher-as hym gat no  
grace ?

And swich a colour in his face hath had,  
Men myghte knowe his face that was bistad,  
Amonges alle the faces in that route ; 650  
Sostant Custance, and looketh hireabout.

O queene, lyvyng in prosperitee !  
Duchesse, and ye ladyes everichone !  
Haveth you routhe on hire adversitee.  
An emperours doghter stant allone ;  
She hath no wight to whom to make hir

124. upon the, on the.

O blood roial, that stondest in this drede,  
Fer been thy freendés at thy greté nede !

This Alla, kyng, hath swich compas-  
sioun,  
As gentil herte is fulfid of pitee, 660  
That from his eyen ran the water doun.  
'Now hastily do fecche a book,' quod he,  
'And if this knyght wol sweren how  
that she  
This womman slow, yet wol we us avyse  
Whom that we wole that shal been our  
justise.'

A Briton book written with Evaungiles  
Was fet, and on this book he swoor anon  
She gilty was, and in the meene whiles  
An hand h' 700t upon the nekké boon,  
That dou . . . in stonés as a stoon ; 670  
And bothe his eyen broste out of his face  
In sighte of every body in that place !

A voys was herd in general audience  
And seyd, 'Thou hast desclaundred,  
giltéles,  
The doghter of hooly chirche in heigh  
presence ;  
Thus hastou doun, and yet holde I my  
pees !'  
Of this mervaille agast was al the prees,  
As mazéd folk they stoden everichone,  
For drede of wreche, save Custance allone.

'Greet was the drede, and eek the  
répenteance, 680  
Of hem that hadden wronge suspicioun  
Upon this sely, innocent Custance ;  
And for this miracle, in conclusioun,  
And by Custances mediacioun,  
The kyng, and many another in that place,  
Converted was,—thankéd be Cristés grace !

This falsé knyght was slayn for his  
untrouthe  
By juggément of Alla, hastify ;  
And yet Custance hadde of his deeth  
greet routhe ;  
And after this Ihesus, of his mercy, 690  
Made Alla wedden, ful solempnly,  
690. alone, H anon right.

This hooly mayden, that is so bright and sheene ;  
And thus hath Crist y-maad Custance a queene.

But who was woful—if I shal nat lye—  
Of this wedding but Donegild and na mo,  
The kynges mooder, ful of tyrannye ?  
Hir thoughte hir curséd herté brast atwo,—  
She woldé noght hir soné had do so.  
Hir thoughte a despit that he sholdé take  
So strange a créature unto his make. 700

Me list nat of the chaf, ne of the stree,  
Maken so long a tale as of the corn.  
What sholde I tellen of the roialtee  
At mariage, or which cours goth biforn,  
Who bloweth in the trumpe, or in an horn ?  
The fruyt of every tale is for to seye,  
They ete, and drynke, and daunce, and  
syng and pleye.

They goon to bedde, as it was skile and right,  
For thogh that wyvés be ful hooly thynges,  
They mosté take in pacience at nyght 710  
Swiche manere necessities as been  
plesynges  
To folk that han y-wedded hem with rynges,  
And leye a lite hir hoolynesse aside,  
for the tyme,—it may no bet bitide.

On hire he gat a knavé childe anon,  
And to a bisshop, and his constable eke,  
He took his wyf to kepe, whan he is gon  
To Scotlandward, his foomen for to seke.  
Now faire Custance, that is so humble  
and meke,  
So longe is goon with childé, til that stille  
She halt hire chambre, abiding Cristés  
wille. 721

The tyme is come a knavé child she beer,—  
Mauricius at the fontstoon they hym calle.  
This constable dooth forth come a  
messenger,  
And wroot unto his kyng, that cleped  
was Alle,  
How that this blisful tidying is bifalle,  
723. *H and halsundel hir holynesse ley aside.*

And othere tidynges spedful for to seye.  
He taketh the lettre and forth he gooth  
his weye. 726

This messenger, to doon his advantage,  
Unto the kynges mooder rideth swithe,  
And salueth hire ful faire in his langage :  
'Madame,' quod he, 'ye may be glad  
and blithe,  
And thanketh God an hundred thousand  
sithe,  
My lady queene hath child withouten doute,  
To joye and blisse of al this regne aboute.

Lo, heere the lettrés seléd of this thyng,  
That I moot bere with al the haste I may.  
If ye wol aught unto youre sone the kyng,  
I am youre servant bothé nyght and day.'  
Donegild answerde, 'As now, at this  
tyme, nay ; 740  
But heereal nyght I wol thou take thy reste.  
To-morwé wol I seye thee what me leste.'

This messenger drank sadly ale and wyn,  
And stolen were his lettrés pryvély,  
Out of his box whil he sleep as a swyn,  
And countrefeted was ful subtilly  
Another lettré, wrought ful synfully,  
Unto the kyng direct, of this mateere,  
Fro his constable, as ye shal after heere.

The lettré spak, the queene delivered was  
Of so horrible a feendly créature, 751  
That in the castel noon so hardy was  
That any whilé dorsté ther endure.  
The mooder was an elf, by aventure,  
Y-comen by charmes, or by sorcerie,  
And every wight hateth hir compaignye.

Wo was this kyng whan he this lettre  
had sayn,  
But to no wight he tolde his sorwés soore,  
But of his owene hand he wroot agayn :  
'Welcome the sonde of Crist for ever-  
moore, 760  
To me that am now lernéd in his loore !

727. *tidynges, H thynges.*  
746. *countrefeted was ful, H countrefet they were.*  
747. *Another lettre, wrought, H Another ich him wrote.*

Lord, welcōme be thy lust and thy  
pleassunce;  
My lust I putte al in thyn ordinaunce.

Kepe this child, al be it foul or feir,  
And eek my wyf unto myn hoom-comyng;  
Crist whan hym list may sende me an heir  
Moore agreable than this to my likyng.  
This lettre he selet, pryvely wepyng,  
Which to the messenger was takē soone,  
And forth he gooth; ther is na moore to  
doone. 770

O messenger, fulfild of dronkenesse!  
Strong is thy breeth, thy lymēs faltren ay,  
And thou biwreyst allē secree-nesse.  
Thy mynde is lorn, thou janglest as a jay;  
Thy face is turnēd in a newe array!  
Ther dronkenesse regnieth in any route,  
Ther is no conseil hyd, withouten doute.

O Donégild! I ne have noon English  
digne  
Unto thy malice and thy tyrannye,  
And therefore to the feend I thee resigne,  
Lat hym enditen of thy traitorie! 781  
Fy, mannysh, fy,—O nay, by God, I lye,—  
Fy, feendlych spirit, for I dar wel telle,  
Thogh thou heere walke, thy spirit is in  
helle.

This messenger comth fro the kyng agayn,  
And at the kyngēs moodrés court he lighte;  
And she was of this messenger ful fayn,  
And plesēd hym, in al that evers he myghte.  
He drank, and wel his girdel underpighte;  
He slepeth, and he snooth in his gyse 790  
All nyghtē, til the sonnē gan aryse.

Eft were his lettrēs stolen everychon,  
And countrefet lettrēs in this wyse:  
'The king comandeth his constable anon,  
Up peyne of hangyng, and on heigh juyse,  
That he ne sholdē suffren, in no wyse,  
Custance in-with his reawmē for tabyde  
Thre dayes and o quarter of a tyde;

771-784. The next two stanzas are Chaucer's  
addition from the *De Contemptu Mundi*, ii. 19.  
790. *Thre dayes and o quarter of a tyde*,  
'deux quatre jours' (Trivet); as soon as the  
tide began to rise on the fourth day.

But in the samē ship as he hire fond,  
Hire, and hir yongē sone, and al hir geere  
He sholdē putte, and croude hire fro the  
lond, 801  
And chargen hire she never eft coome  
there!' O my Custance, wel may thy goost have  
feere,  
And slepyng in thy drem been in pen-  
ance,  
Whan Donégild cast al this ordinaunce.

This messenger on morwē, whan he wook,  
Unto the castel halt the nextē way,  
And to the constable he the lettrē took;  
And whan that he this pitous lettrē saw,  
Ful ofte he seyde, 'Allas! and weylaway!'  
'Lord Crist,' quod he, 'how may this  
world endure?' 811  
So ful of synne is many a créature!

'O myghty God, if that it be thy wille,  
Sith thou art rightful juge, how may it be  
That thou wolt suffren innocents to spille,  
And wikked folk regne in prosperitee?  
O goode Custance! Allas, so wo is me,  
That I moot be thy tormentour, or deye  
On shames deeth; ther is noon oother  
weye.'

Wepen bothe yonge and olde in  
that place,  
Whan that the kyng this cursed lettrē  
sente,  
And Custance, with a deedly palē face,  
The ferthē day toward the ship she wente;  
But nathelees she taketh in good entente  
The wyl of Crist, and knelyng on the  
stronde,  
Sheseydē, 'Lord, ay welcōme be thy sonde;

He that me keptē fro the falsē blame,  
While I was on the lond amongēs yow,  
He kan me keptē from harm, and eek fro  
shame,  
In saltē see, al-though I se noht how. 830  
As strong as ever he was he is yet now.  
In hym triste I, and in his mooder deere,—  
That is to me my seyl, and eek my  
steere.'

Hir litel child lay wepyng in hir arm,  
And knelyng, pitously to hym she seyde,  
'Pees, litel sone, I wol do theenoon harm !'  
With that hir coverchief of hir heed she  
breyde,  
And over his litel eyen she it leyde,  
And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste,  
And into hevne hire eyen up she caste.

'Mooder,' quod she, 'and mayde,  
bright Marie,  
Sooth is that thurgh wommanes eggement <sup>841</sup>  
Mankynde was lorn, and damned ay to dye,  
For which thy child was on a croys y-  
rent,—

Thy blisful eyen sawe al his torment,—  
Thanne is ther no comparison bitwene  
Thy wo and any wo man may sustene.

Thow sawe thy child y-slayn bifore thyne  
eyen,

And yet now lyveth my litel child, *parfay* !  
Now, lady bright, to whom alle woful  
cryen,— <sup>850</sup>

Thow glorie of wommanhede, thow faire  
May,

Thow haven of refut, brighte sterre of  
day,—

Rewe on my child, that of thy gentillesse  
rest on every reweful in distresse.

O litel child, alas ! what is thy gilt,  
that never wroghtest synne as yet, *pardes* ?  
Why wil thyn hardé fader han thee spilt ?  
O mercy, deeré constable,' quod she,  
'As lat my litel child dwelle heer with thee ;  
And if thou darst nat saven hym for blame,  
Yet kys hym onés in his fadrés name !' <sup>861</sup>

Ther-with she lookéd bakward to the londe,  
And seyde, 'Farewel, housbonde routhé-  
lees !'

And up she rist, and walketh doun the  
stronde

Toward the ship,—hir folweth al the  
pees,—

And ever she preyeth hire child to hold  
his pees ;

And taketh his leve, and with an hooly  
entente,

She bliséd hire and into ship she wente.

Vitailléd was the ship, it is no drede,  
Habundantly for hire ful longé space ; <sup>870</sup>  
And othere necessities that sholdé nede  
She hadde ynogh, heryéd be Goddés grace !  
For wynd and weder, almyghthy God  
purchase !

And bryng hire hoom, I kan no bettre seye ;  
But in the see she dryveth forth hir weye.

PART III

Alla the kyng comth hoom soone after  
this

Unto his castel of the which I tolde,  
And asketh where his wyf and his child is ?  
The constable gan aboute his herté colde,  
And pleynly al the manere he hym tolde,  
As ye han herd,—I kan telle it no better,—  
And sheweth the kyng his seelé and his  
lettre ;

And seyde, 'Lord, as ye comanded me,  
Up peyne of deeth, so have I doon certein.'  
This messenger tormented was til he  
Mosté biknowe, and tellen, plat and pleyn,  
Fro nyght to nyght in what place he had  
leyn ;

And thus by wit and sobtil enquerynge  
Ymagined was by whom this harm gan  
sprynge.

The hand was knowé that the lettre  
wroot, <sup>890</sup>

And all the venym of this curséd dede ;  
But in what wisé certainly I noot.  
Theffect is this, that Alla, out of drede,  
His mooder slow,—that may men pleynly  
rede,—

For that she traitoure was to hire ligeance.  
Thus endeth oldé Donegild with mes-  
chance.

The sorwé that this Alla nyght and day  
Maketh for his wyf, and for his child also,  
Ther is no tongé that it tellé may ;  
But now wol I unto Custancé go, <sup>900</sup>  
That fleteth in the see, in peyne and wo,

<sup>870.</sup> *ful longe space*, five years according to  
Trivet.  
<sup>873.</sup> *weder*, H *water*.

Fyve yer and moore, as likéd Cristes  
sonde,  
Er that hir ship approched unto the lond.

Under an hethen castel atté laste—  
Of which the name in my text noght I  
fynde,—  
Custance, and eek hir child, the see up  
caste.

Almyghty God, that saveth al mankynde,  
Have on Custance and on hir child som  
mynde,  
That fallen is in hethen hand eft-soon,  
In point to spille, as I shal telle yow soone.

Down fro the castel comth ther many  
a wight, 911  
To gauren on this ship, and on Custance;  
But, shortly, from the castel on a nyght,  
The lordés styward,—God yeve him mes-  
chance!—

A thief, that hadde reneyed oure creance,  
Came into the ship allone, and seyde he  
sholde  
Hir lemman be, wher-so she wolde or  
nolde.

Wo was this wretched womman tho  
bigon;  
Hir childé cride, and she cride pitously;  
But blisful Marie heelp hire right anon,  
For with hir struglyng wel and myghtily,  
The thief fil over bord al sodeynly,  
And in the see he dreynté for vengeance;  
And thus hath Crist unwemmed kept  
Custance!

O foulé lust of luxurie, lo, thyn ende!  
Nat only that thou feyntest mannés mynde,  
But verraily thou wolt his body shende.  
Thende of thy werk, or of thy lustes blynde,  
Is compleynnyng. How many oon may  
men fynde  
That noght for werk somtyme, but for  
thentente 939  
To doon this synne, been outhr slayn or  
ahente!

923-945. The next three stanzas are Chancer's  
addition, again suggested by the *De Contemplan-  
tium*, II. 17.

How may this wayké womman han this  
strengthe

Hire to defende agayn this renegat?  
O Goliath, unmeasurable of lengthe,  
How myghté David maké thee so maat?  
So yong and of armure so desolaat,  
How dorste he looke upon thy dredful face?  
Wel may men seen it nas but Goddés grace.

Who yaf Judith coráge or hardynesse  
To sleen hym Olofernes in his tente, 940  
And to deliveren out of wrecchednesse  
The peple of God? I seye, for this  
entente,  
That right as God spirit of vigour sente  
To hem, and savéd hem out of mechance,  
So sente he myght and vigour to Custance.

Forth gooth hir ship thurgh-out the  
narwé mouth  
Of Jubaltare and Septé, dryvyng alway,  
Som-tyme West and som-tyme North  
and South,  
And som-tyme Est, ful many a wery day,  
Til Cristés mooder—blessed be she ay!—  
Hath shapen, thurgh hir endéless good-  
nesse, 951  
To make an ende of al hir hevynesse.

Now lat us stynte of Custance but a  
throwe,  
And speke we of the Romayn emperour,  
That out of Surrye hath by lettres knowe  
The slaughtre of cristen folk, and dis-  
honour  
Doon to his doghter by a fals traytour,—  
I mene the curséd wikked sowdanesse,  
That at the feeste leet sleen both moore  
and lease;

For which this emperour hath sent anon  
His senatour with roial ordinance, 961  
And othere lordés, God woot many oon,  
On Surryens to taken heigh vengeance.  
They brennen, sleen, and bryngge hem to  
meschance

947. *Jubaltare*, Gibraltar.

947. *Septé*, on the opposite coast. Trivet had  
made the 'hethen castel' (904) in Spain.

961. *senatour*. His name was Arsenius.



Ful many a day, but, shortly, this is thende,  
Homward to Rome they shapen hem to  
wende.

This senatour repaireth with victorie  
To Romé-ward, saillynge ful roially,  
And mette the ship dryvyng, as seith  
the storie,

In which Custancé sit ful pitously. 970  
No-thing ne knew he what she was, ne why  
She was in swich array; ne she nyl seye  
Of hire estaat, although she sholdé deye.

He bryngeth hire to Rome, and to his wyf  
He yaf hire, and hir yongé sone also;  
And with the senatour she ladde hir lyf.  
Thus kan oure lady bryngen out of wo  
Woful Custance and many another mo;  
And longé tymé dwelled she in that place,  
In hooley werkés ever, as was hir grace.

The senatourés wyf hir aunté was, 981  
But for all that she knew hire never the  
moore.

I wol no lenger tarien in this cas,  
But to kyng Alla, which I spake of yore,  
That wepeth for his wyf and siketh soore,  
I wol retourne, and lete I wol Custance  
Under the senatourés governance.

Kyng Alla, which that hadde his  
mooder slayn,

Upon a day fil in swich répentance, 989  
That, if I shortly tellen shal and playn,  
To Rome he comth to receyven his  
penance,

And putte hym in the popés ordinance,  
In heigh and logh; and Jhesu Crist bisoghte  
Foryeve his wikked werkés that he wroughte.

The fame anon thurghout the toun is  
born,

How Alla kyng shal comen on pilgrymage,  
By herbergeours that wenten hym biforn;  
For which the senatour, as was usage,  
Rood hym agayns, and many of his lynage,

981. *hir aunté*, really her cousin. Accord-  
ing to Trivet, Arsemius married Helen, daughter  
of Ballundin, Constance's uncle.

989. *thurghout the toun*, H<sup>o</sup> *thurgh Rome*  
*toun*.

As wel to shewen his heighé magnificence,  
As to doon any kyng a reverence. 1001

Greet cheeré dooth this noble senatour  
To kyng Alla, and he to hym also;  
Everich of hem dooth oother greet honour;  
And so bifel that in a day or two  
This senatour is to kyng Alla go  
To feste, and, shortly, if I shal nat lye,  
Custancés sone wente in his compaignye.

Som men wolde seyn at réqueste of  
Custance

This senatour hath lad this child to  
feeste,— 1010

I may nat tellen every circumstance;  
Be as be may, ther was he at the leeste;  
But sooth is this, that at his moodrés heeste  
Biforn Alla, duryng the metés space,  
The child stood, lookyng in the kyngés  
face.

This Alla kyng bath of this child greet  
wonder,

And to the senatour he seyde anon,  
'Whos is that fairé child, that stondeþ  
yonder?'

'I noot,' quod he, 'by God and by  
Saint John! 1019

A mooder he hath, but fader hath he noon,  
That I of woot'; but shortly, in a stounde  
He tolde Alla how that this child was  
founde;

'But God woot,' quod this senatour also,  
'So vertuous a lyvere in my lyf  
Ne saugh I never as she, ne herde of mo,  
Of worldly women, maydé, ne of wyf;  
I dar wel seyn hir haddé leveré a knyf  
Thurgh out hir brest, than ben a womman  
wikke;

There is no man koude bryngé hire to  
that prikke.' 1009

Now was this child as lyke unto Custance  
As possible is a créature to be.

1009. *Som men wolde seyn*, i.e. Trivet.  
1010. *this child*. With the usual mediæval  
prodigality of time-Trivet makes Maurice now  
seventeen.

1014. *Biforn Alla*, H *Biforn hem alle*.

This Alla hath the face in remembrance  
Of dame Custanee, and theron mused he,  
If that the childës mooder were aught she  
That is his wyf, and prively he sighte,  
And spedde hym fro the table that he  
myghte.

'Parfay!' thoughte he, 'fantome is in  
myn heed!

I oghte deme, of skilful juggement,  
That in the saltë see my wyf is deed';  
And afterward he made his argument, 1040  
'What woot I, if that Crist have hyder  
y-sent

My wyf by see, as wel as he hire sente  
To my contree fro thennës that she wente?'

'And after noon, hoom with the senatour  
Goth Alla, for to seen this wonderchaunce.  
This senatour dooth Alla greet honour,  
And hastify he sente after Custaunce;  
But trusteth weel hire listë nat to daunce,  
Whan that she wistë wherfore was that  
sonde; 1049

Unnethe upon hir feet she myghtë stonde.

Whan Alla saugh his wyf, faire he hire  
grette,

And weep, that it was routhë for to see;  
For at the firstë look he on hire sette,  
He knew wel verraily that it was she,  
And she for sorwe as doumbstant as a tree;  
So was hir hertë shet in hir distresse  
When she remembered his unkyndëesse.

Twyes she sownëd in his owene sighte.  
He weep, and hym excuseth pitously:  
'Now God,' quod he, 'and alle his  
halwes brighte, 1060

So wily on my soul as have mercy,  
That of youre harm as gyltëles am I,  
As is Maurice my sone, so lyk your face;  
Ellës the feend mefecche out of this place!'

Long was the sobbyng and the bitter  
peyne,

Er that hir woful hertës myghtë cesse;

1037. The stanza is Chaucer's addition.  
1038. *shifful*, *H. rightful*.  
1052-1076. Chaucer's addition.

Greet was the pitee for to heere hem playne,  
Thurgh whichë plaintës gan hir wo en-  
cresse.

I pray yow all my labour to release,  
I may nat tell hir wo until to-morwe, 1070  
I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.

But finally, whan that the sothe is wist,  
That Alla gyltëles was of hir wo,  
I trowe an hundred tymës been they kist;  
And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two,  
That, save the joye that lasteth evermo,  
Ther is noon lyk that any créature  
Hath seyn, or shal, whil that the world  
may dure.

Tho preyde she hir housbonde, mekely,  
In relief of hir longë pitous pyne, 1080  
That he wolde preye hir fader specially,  
That of his magestee he wolde enclyne  
To vouchë-sauf som day with hym to dyne.  
She preyde hym eek he woldë, by no weye,  
Unto hir fader no word of hire seye.

Som men wold seyn how that the child  
Maurice

Dooth this message unto the emperour,  
But, as I gesse, Alla was nat so nyce  
To hym, that was of so sovereyn honour  
As he that is of cristen folk the flour, 1090  
Sente any child; but it is bet to deeme  
He wente hymself, and so it may well  
seeme.

This emperour hath graunted gentilly  
To come to dyner, as he hym bisoughte,  
And wel rede I, he looked bisily  
Upon this child, and on his doghter thoughte.  
Alla goth to his in, and as him oghte,  
Arrayed for this feste in every wise,  
As ferforth as his konnyng may suffice.

The morwë cam, and Alla gan hym  
dresse, 1100  
And eek his wyf, this emperour to meete;  
And forth they ryde in joye and in  
gladnesse;  
And whan she saugh hir fader in the strete,  
She lightë down and falleth hym to feete;

1086. *Som men, i.e. Thivet.*

'Fader,' quod she, 'youre yongé child,  
Custance,  
Is now ful clene out of youre rémembrance.

I am youre doghter Custancé,' quod she,  
'That whilom ye han sent unto Surrye.  
It am I, fader, that in the salté see 1109  
Was put allone, and dampnéd for to dye.  
Now, goodé fader, mercy, I yow crye !  
Sende me namore unto noon hethénese,  
But thonketh my lord heere of his kyndé-  
nesse.'

Who kan the pitous joyé tellen al  
Bitwixe hem thre, syn they been thus  
y-mette ?

But of my talé make an ende I shal,—  
The day goth faste, I wol no lenger lette.  
This gladdé folk to dyner they hem sette.  
In joye and blisse at mete I lete hem dwelle,  
A thousand fould wel moore than I kan  
telle. 1120

This child Maurice was sithen emperour  
Maad by the pope and lyvéd cristenly.  
To Cristés chirché he dide greet honour ;  
But I lete all his storie passen by ;  
Of Custance is my talé specially.  
In the oldé Romane Geestés may men  
fynde  
Mauricés lyf, I bere it noght in mynde.

This kyng Alla, whan he his tymé say,  
With his Custance, his hooly wyf so sweete,  
To Engelond been they come the righté  
way, 1130

• Wher as they lyve in joye and in quiete ;  
But litel while it lasteth, I yow heete.  
Joye of this world for tyme wol nat abyde,  
Fro day to nyght it changeth as the tyde.

Who lyved ever in swich delit o day  
That hym ne moevéd outhér conscience,  
Or ire, or talent, or som kynnes affray,

1120. *Maad by the pope.* Trivet says by his grandfather 'par l'assent del pape Pelagie e de tout le senat de Rome.'

1126. *the oldé Romane Geestes, i.e. the Gesta Romanorum*; H om. *the*.

1135. From *De Conscriptis Mundi*, l. 25.

1137. *lyvede, H manner.*

Envy, or pride, or passion, or offence ?  
I ne seye but for this endé this sentence,  
That litel while in joye, or in plesance, 1140  
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance ;

For Deeth, that taketh of heigh and logh  
his rente,  
Whan passed was a year, evene as I gesse,  
Out of this world this kyng Alla he hente,  
For whom Custance hath ful greet hevyn-  
nesse.

Now lat us prayen God his soulé blesse !  
And dame Custancé, finally to seye,  
Toward the toun of Romé goth hir weye.

To Rome is come this hooly créature,  
And fyndeth hire freendés ther bothe  
hoole and sounde. 1150  
Nôw is she scapéd al hire aventure,  
And whan that she hir fader hath y-founde,  
Doun on hir kneés falleth she to grounde ;  
Wepynge for tendrenesse in herté blithe,  
She heryeth God an hundred thousand  
sihte.

In vertu and in hooly almus-dede  
They lyven alle, and nevere asonder wende.  
Til deeth departed hem this lyf they lede,  
And fareth now weel, my tale is at an ende.  
Now Jhesu Crist, that of his myght may  
sende 1160  
Joye after wo, governe us in his grace,  
And kepe us allé that been in this place.  
*Amen.*

[*Words of the Host, the Parson, and the Shipman*]

Oure Hoste upon his stiropes todeanon,  
And seyde, 'Good men, herkeneth,  
everichon !

This was a thrifty talé for the nones !  
Sir Parish Prest,' quod he, 'for Goddés  
bones,

1140. *hooly, H nobil.*

1163-1160. The text is taken from MS. Arch. Seld. B. 14, the only MS. which preserves the reading *Shipman* in line 1172.

1165. *a thrifty tale*, an allusion to the same phrase in B. 46, showing that the reference is to the Man of Law's Tale.

Tell us a tale, as was thy forward yore;  
I se wel that ye lerned men in lore  
Can moche good, by Goddés dignitee!

The Personehimanswérde, '*Benedicite!*  
What seyleth the man so sinfully to  
swere?' 1171

Our Hoste answerde, 'O Jankyn, be  
ye there?

I smelle a Loller in the wind,' quod he.  
'Nowe, good men,' quod our Hosté,  
'herkneth me,

Abydeth, for Goddés digné passioun,  
For we shul han a predicacioun;  
This Loller here wol prechen us somwhat.'

'Nay, by my fader soule! that shal  
he nat!'

Seyd the Shipman; 'here shal he nat  
preche; 1179

He shal no gospel glosen here, ne teche.  
We leven alle in the grete God,' quod he,  
'He woldé sowen som difficulte,

Or sprengen cokkel in our clené corn;  
And therefore, Hoste, I warné the biforn,  
My joly body shal a talé telle,

And I shal clynken yow so mery a belle  
That I shal wakyn al this companye;  
But it shal nat ben of philosophye,

Ne of phisyk, ne termes queint of lawe;  
There is but litel Latin in my mawe.' 1190

## SHIPMAN'S TALE

### Here bigynneth The Shipmannes Tale

A marchant whilom dwelled at Seint  
Denys,  
That riché was, for which men helde  
hym wys;  
A wyf he hadde of excellent beautee,

1173. a Loller, a Lollard. That Chaucer  
allowed this name to be given to his good parson  
does not prove that he sympathised with Wyclif's  
doctrines. Any priest who lived a strict life just  
then might incur the charge of Lollardy.

1174. Nowe, from H; rest Hous.

1176. my fader, Arch. Seld. godis.

1179. Shipman, Heng. Squire, H Semprour.

1189. cokkel, an allusion to the derivation of  
Lollard from *lollum*.

1186-1190. The Shipmannes Tale. In Heng.<sup>6</sup>  
here follows the Squire's Tale. No original of  
the Shipman's Tale has yet been found.

And compaignable and revelous was she,  
Which is a thyng that causeth more  
dispence

Than worth is al the chiere and reverence  
That men hem doon at festés and at  
daunces. 1197

Swiche salutaciouns and contenaunces  
Passen as dooth a shadwe upon the wal;  
But wo is hym that payen moot for al!

'Thesely housbonde algate he moste paye;  
He moot us clothe and he moot us arraye,  
Al for his owene worahip richely,

In which array we dauncé jolily.  
And if that he noght may, par aventure,  
Or ellis list no swich dispence endure,

But thynketh it is wasted and y-lost,  
Thanne moot another payen for oure cost,  
Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.'

This noblé marchaunt heeld a worthy  
hous, 1200

For which he hadde alday so greet repair  
For his largesse, and for his wyf was fair,  
That wonder is; but herkneth to my tale.

Amongés alle his gestés, grete and  
smale,

Ther was a monk, a fair man and a  
boold,—

I trowe of thrifty wynter he was coid,—  
That ever in oon was comynge to that  
place.

This yongé monk, that was so fair of face,  
Aqueynted was so with the goodé man  
Sith that hir firsté knoweliché bigan, 1200

That in his hous as famulier was he  
As it is possible any freend to be.

And for as muchel as this goodé man  
And eek this monk, of which that I bigan,  
Were bothé two y-born in o village,

The monk hym claymeth as for coynage;  
And he agayn he seith nat onés nay,  
But was as glad therof as fowel of day;

For to his herte it was a greet plesunce.  
Thus been they knyht with eterne alliaunce,  
And ech of hem gan oother for tassure 1201

Of bretherhede whil that hir lyf may dure.

1202. and he moot us, H in ful good.

1206. list no, H will not.

1210. worthy, H<sup>6</sup> noble.

1217. comynge, H<sup>6</sup> drawynge.

1222. is, om. E; H reads as it possible is a  
friend to be.

Free was Daun John, and namely of  
dispençe,

As in that hous, and ful of diligence  
To doon plesauce, and also greet costage:  
He noght forgot to yeve the leesté page  
In al the hous; but after hir degree  
He yaf the lord and sitthe al his meynce,  
Whan that he cam, som manere honest  
thyng,

For which they were as glad of his comyng  
As fowel is fayn whan that the sonne  
upriseth; 1241

Na moore of this as now, for it suffiseth.

But so bifel this marchant on a day  
Shoop hym to maké redy his array  
Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare,  
To byen there a porcioun of ware;  
For which he hath to Parys sent anon  
A messenger, and preyed hath Daun John  
That he sholde come to Seint Denys, to  
pleye 1249

With hym and with his wyf a day or tweye,  
Er he to Brugges wente, in allé wise.

This noblemonk, of which I yow devyse,  
Hath of his abbot, as hym list, licence,—  
By-cause he was a man of heigh prudence,  
And eek an officer,—out for to ryde,  
To seen hir graunges and hire bernés wyde,  
And unto Seint Denys he comth anon.  
Who was so welcome as my lord Daun

\* John,

Oure deeré cosyn, ful of curteisye?  
With hym broghte he a jubbe of malvesye  
And eek another, ful of fyn vernage, 1251  
And volatyl, as ay was his usage.

And thus I lete hem ete and drynke and  
pleye,

This marchant and this monk, a day or  
tweye.

The thridde day this marchant up  
ariseth,

And on his nedés sadly hym avyseth,  
And up into his countour-hous gooth he,  
To rekene with hymself, as wel may be,  
Of thilke yeer, how that it with hym stood,  
And how that he despended hadde his  
good, 1259

And if that he encreased were or noon.  
His bookés and his baggés, many oon,  
He leith biforn hym on his countyng-bord.

Ful riché was his tresor and his Nord,  
For which ful faste his countour dore he  
shette;

And eek he nolde that no man sholde  
hym lette

Of his accountés, for the meené tyme;  
And thus he sit til it was passed pryme.

Daun John was rysen in the morwe also  
And in the gardyn walketh to and fro, 1261  
And hath his thyngés seyde ful curteisly.

This goodé wyf cam walkyng prively  
Into the gardyn, there he walketh softe,  
And hym saleweth, as she hath doon ofte.  
A maydè child cam in hire compaignye,  
Which as hir list she may governe and gye,  
For yet under the yerdé was the mayde.  
'O deeré cosyn myn, Daun John,' she  
sayde,

'What eyleth yow, so rathé for to ryse?'

'Necé,' quod he, 'it oghte ynough suffise  
Fyve houres for to slepe upon a nyght, 1261  
But it were for an old appalléd wight,  
As been these wedded men that lye and  
dare,

As, in a fourmé, sit a wery hare  
Were al forstraught with houndés grete  
and smale;

But, deeré necé, why be ye so pale?  
I trowé certés that oure goodé man  
Hath yow labouréd sith the nyght bigan,  
That yow were nede to resten hastily';  
And with that word he lough ful murily  
And of his owene thought he wax al reed.

This fairé wyf gan for to shake hir heed,  
And seyde thus: 'Ye, God woot al,'  
quod she,

'Nay, cosyn myn, it stant nat so with me,  
For by that God that yaf me soule and lyf,  
In al the reawme of France is ther no wyf  
That lassé lust hath to that sory pleye;  
For I may synge allas and weylawey

That I was born; but to no wight,

quod she,  
'Dar I nat telle how that it stant with me;  
Wherfore I thynke out of this lande to  
wende, 1271

Or ellés of myself to make an ende,  
'So ful am I of drede and eek of care.'

This monk bigan upon this wyf to stare,  
And seyde, 'Allas, my necé, God forbode

That ye, for any sorwe or any drede,  
 Forde yourself; but tel me of youre grief;  
 Paraventure I may in youre meschief 1318  
 Conselle or helpe; and therfore telleth me  
 All youre any, for it shal been secree;  
 For on my porthors here I make an ooth  
 That never in my lyf, for lief ne looth,  
 Ne shal I of no consell yow biwreie.'

'The same agayn to yow,' quod she,  
 'I seye,

By God and by this porthors I yow swere,  
 Though men me wolde al into pieces tere,  
 Ne shal I never, for to goon to helle,  
 Biwreie a word of thyng that ye me telle,  
 Nat for no cosynage ne alliance,  
 But verrailly for love and affiance.' 1330  
 Thus been they sworn, and heer-upon  
 they kiste,  
 And ech of hem tolde oother what hem  
 liste.

'Cosyn,' quod she, 'if that I hadde  
 a space,

As I have noon, and namely in this place,  
 Thanne wolde I telle a legende of my lyf,  
 What I have suffrid sith I was a wyf  
 With myn housbonde, al be he of youre  
 kyn.'

'Nay,' quod this monk, 'by God,  
 and Seint Martyn!

He is na moore cosyn unto me 1339  
 Than is this lief that hangeth on the tree.  
 I clepe hym so, by Seint Denys of Fraunce!  
 To have the moore cause of aqueyntaunce  
 Of yow, which I have lovéd specially,  
 Aboven allé wommen sikerly;  
 This swere I yow on my professioun.  
 Telleth youre grief, lest that he come adoun,  
 And hasteth yow, and gooth youre wey  
 anon.'

'My deeré love,' quod she, 'O my  
 Daun John,

Ful lief were me this conseil for to hyde,  
 But out it moot, I may namooore abyde! 1350  
 Myn housbonde is to me the worsté man  
 That ever was sith that the world bigan,  
 But sith I am a wyf, it sit nat me

To tellen no wight of oure privetee,  
 Neither a-bedde ne in noon oother place—  
 God shilde I sholde it tellen for his grace!  
 A wyf ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde  
 But al honour, as I kan understonde,  
 Save unto yow, thus muche I tellen shal;  
 As helpe me God, he is noght worth at al!  
 In no degre the value of a flye; 1361  
 But yet me greveth moost his nygardiye.  
 And wel ye woot that wommen naturelly  
 Desiren thyngés sixe, as wel as I:  
 They woldé that hir housbondes sholdé be  
 Hardy and wise, and riche, and therto free,  
 And buxom unto his wyf, and fressch  
 abedde;

But by that liké Lord that for us bledde,  
 For his honour myself for to arraye,  
 A Sonday next, I mosté nedés paye 1370  
 An hundred frankes, or ellis I am lorn;  
 Yet were me levere that I were unborn  
 Than me were doon a' sclandre or  
 vileynye;

And if myn housbonde eek it myghte espye  
 I nere but lost, and therfore I yow preye,  
 Lene me this somme, or ellis moot I deye.  
 Daun John, I seye, lene me thise  
 hundred frankes;

Pardee, I wol nat faille yow my thanks,  
 If that yow list to doon that I yow praye,  
 For at a certeyn day I wol yow paye, 1380  
 And doon to yow what plesance and service  
 That I may doon, right as yow list devise,  
 And but I do, God take on me vengeance  
 As foul as ever hadde Genyloun of France!'

This gentil monk answerde in this  
 manere:

'Now trewely, myn owene lady deere,  
 I have,' quod he, 'on yow sogreet a routhé,  
 That I yow swere, and plighté yow my  
 trouthe,

That whan youre housbonde is to  
 flaundrés fare

I wol delyvere yow out of this care; 1390  
 For I wol bryngé yow an hundred frankes';

1368. H reads: *But by that lord that for us alle bledde.*

1370. H reads: *A sonday next comyng yit mooste I praye.*

1384. *Genyloun*, the betrayer of Roland.

1387. H reads: *I have on yow so greet pite and routhé.*

1317. *do*, H<sup>o</sup> *tellich*.

1331. *they kiste*, H<sup>a</sup> *i-kiste, kist*.

1337. *al be he of youre kyn*, H *though he be your cosyn*.

And with that word he caughte hire by  
the flanks

And hire embraceth harde and kiste hire  
ofte.

'Gooth now youre wey,' quod he, 'all  
stille and softe,

And lat us dyne as soone as that ye may,  
For by my chilyndre it is pryme of day.

Gooth now, and beeth as trewe as I shal  
be.'

'Now ellés God forbedé, sire,' quod  
she;

And forth she gooth as jolif as a pye,  
And bad the cookés that they sholde  
hem hye,

1400

So that men myghte dyne and that anon.  
Up to hir housbonde is this wyf y-gon,  
And knokketh at his countour boldély.

'Qy la?' quod he. 'Peter! it am I,'  
Quod she; 'what, sire, how longé wol  
ye fasté?

How longé tyme wol ye rekene and caste  
Youre sommés, and youre bookés, and  
youre thynges?

The devel have part on alle swiche  
rekenynges!

Ye have ynough, pardee, of Goddés sonde;  
Com doun to-day, and lat youre baggés  
stonde.

1410

Ne be ye nat ashaméd that Daun John  
Shal fasting al this day alengé goon?

What! lat us heere a messe, and go we  
dyne!

'Wyf,' quod this man, 'litel kanstow  
devyne

The curious biyenessé that we have;  
For of us chapmen,—al-so God me save,  
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve,—  
Scarly amongés twelvé two shuln thryve,  
Continuelly lastynge unto oure age.

1429

We may wel maké chiere and good visage,  
And dryvé forth the world as it may be,  
And kepen oure estaat in pryvétee  
Til we be deed; or ellés that we pleye  
A pilgrymage, or goon out of the weye;  
And therfore have I greet necessitee

1427. *Seint Yve*, Saint Ivo.  
1428. *two*, *H<sup>2</sup> two*, Corp.<sup>3</sup> *twys*.

1429. *we*, *H<sup>2</sup> we*. *A pilgrymage*, as a pretext  
for keeping out of the way of creditors.

1430. *shaltow*, *H<sup>2</sup> thou mayst*.

1431. *At*, *H<sup>2</sup> And*.

Upon this queynté world tavyssé me,  
For, evermooré we moote stonde in drede  
Of hap and fortune in oure chapmanhede.

'To Flaundrés wol I go to-morwe at  
day,

1429

And come agayn as soone as ever I may;  
For which, my deere wyf, I thee biseke  
As be to every wight buxom and meke,  
And for to kepe oure good be curious,  
And honestly governé wel oure hous.

Thou hast ynough in every maner wise,  
That to a thrifty household may suffise;  
Thee lakketh noon array ne no vitaille,  
Of silver in thy purs shaltow nat faille.'

And with that word his countour dore he  
shette,

And doun he gooth, no lenger wolde he  
lette;

1440

But hastily a messé was ther seyde,  
And spedily the tables were y-leyd,  
And to the dyner fasté they hem spedde,  
And richély this monk the chapman fedde.

At after dyner Daun John sobrély  
This chapman took apart and privély  
He seyde hym thus: 'Cosyn, it standeth  
so

That, wel I se, to Bruggés wol ye go.  
God and Seint Austyn spedé yow and gyde!  
I prey yow, cosyn, wisely that ye ryde;  
Governeth yow also of youre diete

1451

Atemprély, and namely in this hete.  
Bitwix us two nedeth no strangé fare;  
Fare wel, cosyn, God shildé yow fro care!

And if that any thyng, by day or nyght,  
If it lye in my power and my myght,  
That ye me wol comande in any wyse,  
It shal be doon, right as ye wol devyse.

'O thyng, er that ye goon, if it may be,  
I woldé prey yow for to lené me

1460

An hundred frankés for a wyke or tweye,  
For certein beestés that I mosté beye,  
To stoore with a placé that is oures,—  
God helpe me so, I wolde it weré yours!

I shal nat faille surely of my day,  
Nat for a thousand frankes a millé way!

But lat this thyng be secree, I yow prey,  
For yet to-nyght this beestés moot I beye;  
And fare now wel, myn owene cosyn deere,

*Grant mercy* of youre cost and of youre  
cheere !' 1470

This noble marchant gentilly anon  
Answerde and seyde, 'O cosyn myn,  
Daun John,

Now sikerly this is a smal requeste,  
My gold is yours whan that it yow leste,  
And nat only my gold, but my chaffare;  
Take what yow list, God shildé that ye  
spare !

'But o thyng is, ye knowe it wel ynogh,  
Of chapmen, that hir moneie is hir plogh;  
We may creasencé whil we have a name,  
But goldlees for to be, it is no game; 1480  
Paye it agayn whan it lith in youre ese;  
After my myght fulfayn wolde I yow plesse.'

Thise hundred frankes he fette hym  
forth anon

And prively he took hem to Daun John;  
No wight in all this world wiste of this  
loone,

Savyng this marchant and Daun John  
allone.

They drynke, and speke, and rome a  
while and pleye,

Til that Daun John rideth to his abbeye.

The morwé cam and forth this mar-  
chant rideth

To Flaunders-ward,—his prentys wel  
hym gydeth,— 1490

Til he cam into Bruggés murily.

Now gooth this marchant, faste and bisily  
Aboute his nede, and byeth and crean-  
ceth;

He neither pleyeth at the dees, ne daun-  
ceth,

But as a marchant, shortly for to telle,  
He lad his lyf, and there I lete him dwelle.

The Sonday next this marchant was  
agon,

To Seint Denys y-comen is Daun John,  
With crowne and berde all fresch and  
newe y-shave. 1499

In al the hous ther nas so litel a knave,  
He no wight ellés, that he nas ful fayn  
For that my lord Daun John was come  
agayn;

And shortly, to the point right for to gon,  
This faire wyf accorded with Daun John

1483. *hym*, em. H.

That for thise hundred frankes he sholde  
a nyght

Háve hire in his armés, bolt upright;  
And this acord parfournéd was, in dede.  
In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede  
Til it was day, that Daun John wente  
his way,

And bad the meynec, Fare wel, have  
good day ! 1510

For noon of hem, ne no wight in the toun,  
Hath of Daun John right no suspicioun;  
And forth he rydeth hoom to his abbeye,  
Or where hym list; namoore of hym I  
seye.

This marchant, whan that ended was  
the faire,

To Seint Denys he gan for to repaire,  
And with his wyf he maketh feeste and  
cheere,

And telleth hire that chaffare is so deere  
That nedés moste he make a chevyssaunce,  
For he was bounden in a reconyssaunce,  
To payé twenty thousand sheeld anon;  
For which this marchant is to Parys gon,  
To borwe of certeine freendés that he  
hadde

A certeyn frankes; and somme with him  
he ladde.

And whan that he was come into the toun,  
For greet chiertee, and greet affeccioun,  
Unto Daun John he gooth hym first, to  
pleye,—

Nat for to axe or borwe of hym moneye,—  
But for to wite and seen of his welfare,  
And for to tellen hym of his chaffare, 1530  
As freendés dpon whan they been met  
y-feere.

Daun John hym maketh feeste and murye  
cheere,

And he hym tolde agayn, ful specially,  
How he hadde wel y-boght and gra-  
ciously,—

Thankéd be God !—al hool his mar-  
chandise,

Save that he moste, in allé maner wise,  
Maken a chevyssaunce as for his beste,  
And thanne he sholdé been in joye and  
reste.

1538. H reads: *Nought for to borwe of hym  
no hym money, so Corp.<sup>s</sup> omitting hym.*



Daun John answerd, 'Certes I am  
sayn, 1539

That ye in heele ar comen hom agayn,  
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,  
Of twenty thousand sheeld shold ye nat  
myse,

For ye so kyndely this oother day  
Lenté me gold; and as I kan and may  
I thanké yow, by God and by Seint Jame!  
But nathelees I took unto oure dame,  
Youre wyf, at hom, the samé gold ageyn  
Upon youre bench; she woot it wel certeyn,  
By certeyn tokenes that I kan yow telle.  
Now by youre leve I may no lenger  
dwelle; 1530

Oure abbot wole out of this toun anon,  
And in his compaigny moot I goon.

Grete wel oure dame, myn owene necé  
sweete,

And fare wel, deeré cosyn, til we meete!'

This marchant, which that was ful war  
and wys,

Creanced hath and payd eek in Parys  
To certeyn Lumbardes, redy in hir hond,  
The somme of gold, and hadde of hem  
his bond;

And hoom he gooth, murie as a papejay,  
For wel he knew he stood in swich array  
That nedes moste he wyne in that viage  
A thousand frankes aboven al his costage.

His wyf ful redy mette hym atté gate,  
As she was wont of oold usage algate,  
And al that nyght in myrthé they bisette;  
For he was riche and cleerly out of dette.  
Whan it was day this marchant gan  
embrace

His wyfal newe, and kiste hire on hir face,  
And up he gooth and maketh it ful tough.

'Namore,' quod she, 'by God, ye  
have ynough! 1530

And wantownely agayn with hym she  
pleyde;

Til atté lasté thus this marchant seyde:  
'By God,' quod he, 'I am a litel wrooth  
With yow, my wyf, although it be me  
looth;

And woot ye why? By God, as that I  
gease

1549. *now, Ht Air.*

1537. *Lumbardes, Lombard money-dealers.*

That ye han maad a manere straungenes,  
Bitwixen me and my cosyn daun John,—  
Ye sholde han warnéd me, er I had gon,  
That he yow hadde an hundred frankes  
payd,

By redy tokene,—and heeld hym yvel  
apayed 1530

For that I to hym spak of chevyssaunce,  
Me seméd so, as by his contenaunce—  
But nathelees, by God, oure hevne kyng,  
I thoughté nat to axen hym no thyng.  
I prey thee, wyf, as do namooré so;  
Telle me alwey, er that I fro thee go,  
If any dettour hath in myn absence  
Y-payéd thee, lest thurgh thy negligence  
I myghte hym axe a thing that he hath  
payed.'

This wyf was nat aferéd nor affrayed,  
But boldely she seyde, and that anon, 1531  
'Marie, I defie the falsé monk, Daun  
John!

I kepe nat of his tokenes never a deel!  
He took me certeyn gold, that woot I weel.  
What, yvel thedam on his monkés snowte!  
For, God it thod, I wende withouten doute  
That he hadde yeve it me bycause of yow,  
To doon therwith myn honour and my  
prow,

For cosynage, and eek for beelé cheere,  
That he hath had ful ofté tymés heere.  
'But sith I se I stonde in this disjoynt, 1601  
I wol answeré yow shortly to the poynt.  
Ye han mo slakkere dettours than am I,  
For I wol paye yow wel and redily  
Fro day to day, and if so be I faille,  
I am youre wyf, score it upon my taille,  
And I shal paye as soone as ever I may;  
For by my trouthe, I have on myn array,  
And nat on wast, bistowéd every deel;  
And for I have bistowéd it so weel 1610  
For youre honour, for Goddés sake, I seye,  
As be nat wrooth, but lat us laughe and  
pleye.

Ye shal my joly body have to wedde;  
By God! I wol nat paye yow bat abedde.  
Foryve it me, myn owene spouse deere,  
Turne hiderward, and maketh bettri  
cheere!'

This marchant saugh ther was no  
remedie,

lad for to chide it nere but greet folie,  
 that that the thyng may nat amended be.  
 Now, wyf,' he seyde, 'and I foryeve  
 it thee, 1620  
 but by thy lyf ne be namoore so large;  
 I cepe bet oure good, this yeve I thee in  
 charge.'

Thus endeth now my tale, and God us  
 sende  
 Ialyng ynough unto oure lyves ende.  
*Amen.*

*Behoold the murie wordes of the Hoost to  
 the Shipman, and to the lady Prioress*

'Wel seyde I by *corpus dominus*,  
 quod our Hoost;  
 'Now longe moote thou saillè by the cost,  
 Sire gentil maister, gentil maryneer!  
 God yewe this monk a thousand last  
 quade yeer!

A ha, felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape!  
 The monk putte in the mannès hood an  
 ape, 1630  
 And in his wyvès eek, by Seint Austyn!  
 Draweth no monkès moore unto youre in.

'But now passe over, and lat us seke  
 aboute,  
 Who shal now tellè first of al this route  
 Another tale'; and with that word he sayde,  
 As curteisly as it had ben a mayde,  
 'My lady Prioressè, by youre leve,  
 So that I wiste I sholdè yow nat greve,  
 I woldè demen that ye tellen sholde  
 A talè next, if so were that ye wolde. 1640  
 Now wol ye vouchèsauf, my lady deere?'

'Gladly,' quod she, and seyde as ye  
 shal heere.

## PRIORESS'S TALE

### *The Prologe of the Prioresses Tale*

'O Lord, oure Lord, thy name how  
 mervellous

1618. *nere but greet*, H<sup>o</sup> om. *greet*, H *was for*  
*nere*.

1620. *oure*, H<sup>o</sup> *my*, Heng. *thy*.

1643. *O Lord, oure Lord*, etc., the beginning  
 of Pa. viii.

Is in this largè world y-sprad,' quod she;  
 'For noght oonly thy laudè precious  
 Parfournèd is by men of dignitee,  
 But by the mouth of children thy bountee  
 Parfournèd is; for on the brest soukyng  
 Somtyme shewen they thyn heriyinge.

Wherefore, in laude as I best kan or may,  
 Of thee, and of the whitè lylie flour, 1651  
 Which that the bar and is a mayde alway,  
 To telle a storie I wol do my labour;  
 Nat that I may encreessen hir honour,  
 For she herself is honour and the roote  
 Of bountee, next hir sone, and soulès  
 boote.

O mooder mayde! O maydè mooder fre!  
 O bussh unbrent, brennyng in Moyses  
 sighte!

That ravysedest down fro the Deltee,  
 Thurgh thyn humblesse, the Goost that in  
 thalighte; 1660  
 Of whos vertu, whan He thyn hertè lighte,  
 Conceyvd was the Fadèr's sapience,  
 Helpe me to telle it in thy reverence!

Lady, thy bountee, thy magnificence,  
 Thy vertu, and thy grete humylitee,  
 Ther may no tonge expresse in no sciènce;  
 For somtyme, lady, er men praye to thee,  
 Thou goost biforn of thy benygnytee,  
 And getest us the lyght, thurgh thy preyère,  
 To gyden us upto thy Sone so deere. 1670

My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful queene,  
 For to declare thy grete worthynesse,  
 That I ne may the weightè nat sustene;  
 But as a child of twelf monthe oold or lesse,  
 That kan unnethès any word expresse,  
 Right so fare I, and therfore I yow preyè,  
 Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye.'

### *Heere bigynneth The Prioresses Tale*

Ther was in Asye, in a greet citee,  
 Amongès cristene folk, a Jewerye,

1667-1669. Imitated from Dante, *Paradiso*  
 xxxiii. 16-18, a passage from which, or from some  
 Latin original, Chaucer had already borrowed in  
 the proem to the 'Tale of St. Cecilia,' assigned  
 in the *Canterbury Tales* to the second Nun.

*The Prioresses Tale*. A poem of a Paris baggar

Sustenéd by a lord of that contree, 1680  
 For foule usure and lucre of vileynye  
 Hateful to Crist and to his compaignye ;  
 And thurgh the strete men myghté ride  
 or wende,  
 For it was free, and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of cristen folk ther stood  
 Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther  
 were  
 Children an heepe, y-comen of Cristen  
 blood,  
 That lernéd in that scolé yeer by yere  
 Swich manere doctrine as men uséd  
 there,— 1689

This is to seyn, to syngen, and to rede,  
 As smale children doon in hire childhede.

Among thise children was a wydwe sone,  
 A litel clergeoun, seven yeer of age,  
 That day by day to scolé was his wone ;  
 And eek also, where as he saugh thymage  
 Of Cristés mooder, he hadde in usage,  
 As hym was taught, to knele adoun and  
 seye  
 His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this wydwe hir litel sone  
 y-taught 1699  
 Oure blisful lady, Cristés mooder deere,  
 To worshiþe ay, and he forgate it naught,  
 For sely child wol alday sooné leere,—  
 But ay whan I remembre on this mateere,  
 Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,  
 For he so yong to Crist dide reverence.

This litel child his litel book lernýnge,  
 As he sat in the scolé at his prymer,  
 He *Alma redemptoris* herdé syngé,

boy murdered by a Jew for singing the anthem  
 'Alma Redemptoris Mater,' is among the minor  
 poems of the Vernon MS. and has been printed  
 by the Chaucer and Early English Text Societies.  
 In a French analogue, also printed by the Chaucer  
 Society, the boy sings a 'Gaude, Maria.'  
 1681. *lucre of vileynye*, glossed 'turpe lucrum,'  
 E2: H *felows*.

1699. *sone*, H<sup>o</sup> *child*.

1700. The line quotes an old proverb.

1704. *Seint Nicholas*, who fasted on Wednes-  
 days and Fridays while at his mother's breast.  
 1708. *Alma redemptoris [mater]*. Two hymns  
 to the B. Virgin, beginning in this way, are still  
 extant.

As children lernéd hire antiphoner ;  
 And, as he dorste, he drough hym ner  
 and ner, 1710  
 And herked ay the wordés and the noote,  
 Til he the firsté vers koude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latyn was to  
 seye,  
 For he so yong and tendre was of age ;  
 But on a day his felawe gan he preye  
 Texpounden hym this song in his langage,  
 Or telle him why this song was in usage ;  
 This preyde he hym to construe and  
 declare  
 Ful often time upon his knowés bare.

His felawe, which that elder was than  
 he, 1720  
 Answerde hym thus : ' This song I have  
 herd seye  
 Was makéd of oure blisful lady free,  
 Hire to salue, and eek hire for to preye  
 To been oure help and socour whan we  
 deye ;  
 I kan na moore expounde in this mateere,  
 I lerné song, I kan but smal grammeere.'

' And is this song makéd in reverence  
 Of Cristés mooder ? ' seyde this innocent.  
 ' Now certés, I wol do my diligence  
 To konne it al, er Cristémasse is went, 1730  
 Though that I for my prymer shal be shent,  
 And shal be beten thrís in an houre,  
 I wol it konne oure lady for to honoure !'

His felawe taughte hym homward  
 prively  
 Fro day to day, til he koude it by rote,  
 And thanne he song it wel and boldely  
 Fro word to word, acordyng with the note.  
 Twiés a day it passéd thurgh his throte,  
 To scoléward and homward whan he  
 wente ; 1739  
 On Cristés mooder set was his entente.

As I have seyde, thurgh-out the Jewerik  
 This litel child, as he cam to and fro,  
 Ful murily than wolde he syngé and crie  
 O *Alma redemptoris* evermo.  
 The swetnesse hath his herté percéd so

Of Cristes mooder, that to hire to preye  
He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye.

Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanai,  
That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,  
Up swal, and seide, 'O Hebrayk peple,  
allas ! 1750

Is this to yow a thyng that is honest  
That swich a boy shal walken as hym lest  
In youre despit, and synge of swich  
sentence,

Which is agayn youre lawes reverence ?'

Fro thennes forth the Jewes han con-  
spired

This innocent out of this world to chace.  
An homycide ther-to han they hyred,  
That in an aleye hadde a privee place ;  
And as the child gan forby for to pace,  
This cursed Jew hym hente and heeld  
hym faste, 1760

And kitte his throte, and in a pit hym caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe they hym threwe  
Where as thise Jewes purgen hire entraille.

O cursed folk, O Herodes al newe !  
What may youre yvel entente yow availle ?  
Mordre wol out, certeyn, it wol nat faille,  
And namely ther thondour of God shal  
sprede.

The blood out-crieth on youre cursed dede.

O martir, sowded to virginitee ! 1769

Now maystowsyngen, folwyng everin oon  
The white Lamb celestial, quod she,  
Of which the grete Evangelist, Seint John,  
In Pathmos wroot, which seith that they  
that goon

Biforn this Lamb, and synge a song al  
newe,

That never fleshy women they ne knewe.

This poure wydweawaiteth al that nyght  
After hir litel child, but he cam noght,

1754. *yourre* EA *ours*.

1772. *quod she*. This is, I believe, the only  
instance in the *Canterbury Tales* in which  
Chaucer reminds us that we are reading the  
narrative of a narrative. The words show that  
the Tale was either written or revised after the  
idea of the *Canterbury Tales* had been conceived.

For which, as soone as it was dayes lyght,  
With face pale of drede and bisy thought,  
She hath at scole and ellës-where hym  
soght ; 1780

Til finally she gan so fer espie  
That he last seyn was in the Jewerie.

With moodres pitee in hir brest enclosed  
She gooth, as she were half out of hir  
mynde,

To every place where she hath supposed  
By liklihede hir litel child to fynde ;  
And ever on Cristes mooder, meeke and  
kynde,

She cride, and attē lastē thus she wroghte,  
Among the cursed Jewes she hym soghte.

She frayneth and she preyeth pitously, 1790  
To every Jew that dwelte in thilke place,  
To telle hire if hir child wente oght forby.  
Theyseyde ' Nay ' ; but Jhesu, of his grace,  
Yaf in hir thought inwith a litel space,  
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,  
Where he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O gretē God that parfournest thy laude  
By mouth of innocentz, lo, heere thy  
myght !

This gemme of chastite, this emeraude,  
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright, 1800  
Ther he, with throte y-korven, lay upright,  
He *Alma redemptoris* gan to syngre,  
So loude, that all the place gan to ryngre !

The cristene folk, that thurgh the stretē  
wente,

In comen, for to wondre upon this thyng ;  
And hastily they for the provost sente.

He cam anon, withouten tarrying,  
And herieth Crist that is of hevene kyng,  
And eek his mooder, honour of mankynde,  
And after that the Jewes leet he bynde.

This child, with pitous lamentacioun,  
Up-taken was, syngyng his song alway ;  
And with honour of greet processoun  
They carien hym unto the nexte abbay.  
His mooder swownyng by his beere lay ;  
Unnethē myghte the peple that was there  
This newē Rachel bryngē fro his bere.

With torment, and with shameful deeth  
echon,  
This provost dooth the Jewes for to sterve,  
That of this mordre wiste, and that anon;  
He noldé no swich cursednesse observe;  
'Yvele shal have that yvele wol deserve';  
Therefore with wildé hors he dide hem  
drawe,  
And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his beere ay lith this innocent  
Biforn the chief auter, whil massé laste,  
And after that the abbot with his covent  
Han sped hem for to burien hym ful faste;  
And when they hooly water on hym caste,  
Yet spak this child, whan spreynd was  
hooly water, 1830  
And song, *O Alma redemptoris mater!*

This abbot, which that was an hooly  
man,  
As monkés been, or ellés oghté be,  
This yongé child to conjure he bigan,  
And seyde, 'O deeré child, I halsé thee,  
In vertu of the hooly Trinitee,  
Tel me what is thy causé for to syngé,  
Sith that thy throte is kut, to my  
semyngé?'

'My throte is kut unto my nekké boon,'  
Seydé this child, 'and as by wey of kynde  
I sholde have dyed, ye, longé tyme agon;  
But Jhesu Crist, as ye in bookés fynde,  
Wil that his glorie laste and be in mynde,  
And, for the worship of his mooder deere,  
Yet may I syngé *O Alma* loude and cleere.

'This welle of mercy, Cristés mooder  
sweete,  
I loved alwey, as after my konnyngé,  
And whan that I my lyf sholdé forlete,  
To me she cam, and bad me for to syngé  
This antheme verrailly in my deyfngé,  
As ye han herd, and whan that I hadde  
songe 1851  
Me thoughte she leyde a greyn upon my  
tonge:

Wherefore I syngé, and syngé moot certeyn  
In honour of that blisful mayden free,

Til fro my tonge of-taken is the greyn;  
And after that thus seyde she to me,  
'My litel child, now wol I fecché thee  
Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge  
y-take;  
Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake.'

This hooly monk, this abbot, hym  
meene I, 1860  
His tonge out caughte and took away the  
greyn,  
And he yaf up the goost ful softely.  
And whan this abbot hadde this wonder  
seyen,  
His salté teeris trikléd down as reyn,  
And gruf he fil, al plat upon the grounde,  
And stille he lay as he had ben y-bounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavément,  
Wepyngé and heryng Cristés mooder  
deere,  
And after that they ryse and forth been  
went,  
And taken away this martir from his  
beere; 1870  
And in a tombe of marbul stonés cleere,  
Enclosen they his litel body sweete:  
Ther he is now, God lewé us for to meete!

O yongé Hugh of Lyncoln, alayn also  
With curséd Jewes, as it is notable,  
For it is but a litel while ago,  
Preye eek for us, we synful folk unstable,  
That of his mercy God, so merciable,  
On us his greté mercy multiplie  
For reverence of his mooder, Marie.  
*Amen.*

*Bihold the murye wordes of the Hoost to  
Chaucer*

Whan seyde was al this miracle, every  
man  
As sobre was that wonder was to se,  
Til that oure Hoosté japen the bigan,  
And thanne, at erst he lookéd upon me.

1868. *herying, E<sup>d</sup> heryng.*  
1871. *tombe, E<sup>d</sup> temple.*  
1874. *yonge Hugh of Lyncoln, said to have  
been crucified by the Jews in 1194.*

And seyde thus: 'What man artow?'  
 quod he;  
 'Thou lookest as thou woldest fynde an  
 hare;  
 For ever upon the ground I se thee stare.'

Approché neer, and looke up murily.  
 Now war yow, sires, and lat this man  
 have place; 1889  
 He in the waast is shape as wel as I;  
 This were a popet in an arm tenbrace  
 For any womman, smal and fair of face.  
 He semeth elvyssh by his contenance,  
 For unto no wight dooth he daliaunce.

Sey now somewhat, syn oother folk han  
 sayd;  
 Telle us a tale of myrthe, and that anon.'  
 'Hoosté,' quod I, 'ne beth nat yvele  
 apayd,  
 For oother talé certés kan I noon,  
 But of a rym I lernéd longe agoon.'  
 'Ye, that is good,' quod he, 'now  
 shul we heere 1900  
 Som deyntee thyng, me thynketh by his  
 cheere!'

## CHAUCER'S TALE OF SIR THOPAS

*Heere bigynneth Chaucers Tale of  
 Thopas*

### THE FIRST FIT

Listeth, lordes, in good entent,  
 And I wol tellé verrayment  
 Of myrthe and of solas;  
 Al of a knyght was fair and gent  
 In bataille and in tourneyment,  
 His name was sire Thopas.

*Chaucer's Tale of Sir Thopas.* 'The Rime of Sir Thopas was clearly intended to ridicule the "palpable gross" fictions of the common Rimer of that age, and still more, perhaps, the meanness of their language and versification. It is full of phrases taken from *Isumbras*, *Li Beaus Desconus*, and other romances in the same style, which are still extant' (Tyrrwhitt).

Y-born he was in fer contreg,  
 In Flaundres, al biyonde the see,  
 At Poperyng, in the place; 1910  
 His fader was a man ful free,  
 And lord he was of that contree,  
 As it was Goddés grace.

Sire Thopas wax a doghty swayn;  
 Whit was his face as payndemayn,  
 His lippes rede as rose;  
 His rode is lyk scarlet in grayn,  
 And I yow telle in good certayn  
 He hadde a semely nose.

His heer, his berd, was lyk saffroun,  
 That to his girdel raughte adoun; 1920  
 His shoon of cordéwane.  
 Of Bruggés were his hosen broun,  
 His robé was of syklatoun  
 That costé many a jane.

He koudé hunte at wildé deer,  
 And ride an haukyng for river  
 With grey goshawk on honde;  
 Ther-to he was a good archeer;  
 Of wrastlyng was ther noon his peer,  
 Ther any ram shal stonde. 1930

Ful many a maydé bright in bour  
 They moorné for hym, *paramour*,  
 Whan hem were bet to slepe;  
 But he was chaast, and no lechour,  
 And sweete as is the brembul flour  
 That bereth the redé hepe.

And so bifel upon a day,  
 For sothe, as I yow tellé may,  
 Sire Thopas wolde out ride; 1940  
 He worth upon his steedé gray,  
 And in his hand a launcégay,  
 A long swerd by his side.

He priketh thurgh a fair forést  
 Ther-inne is many a wildé best,  
 Ye, bothé bukke and hare;  
 And as he priketh north and east,  
 I telle it yow, hym hadde almost  
 Bitidde a sory care.

1910. *Poperyng*, not far from Ostend.  
 1927. *for river*, i.e. by the river-side.

Ther spryssen herbés grete and smale,  
The lycorys and cetewale

1951

And many a clowe-gylofre,  
And notémuge to putte in ale,  
Wheither it be moyste or stale,  
Or for to leye in cofre.

The briddés syng, it is no nay,  
The sparhawk and the papéjay,  
That joye it was to heere.  
The thrustelcock made eek hir lay,  
The wodédowve upon the spray

1960

She sang ful loude and cleere.

Sire Thopas fil in love-longynge,  
Al whan he herdé the thrustel syng,  
And pryked as he were wood ;  
His fairé steede in his prikyng  
So swatté that men myghte him wryng,  
His sydés were al blood.

Sire Thopas eek so wery was  
For prikyng, on the softé gras,—  
So fiers was his corage,—  
That doun he leyde him in that plas  
To make his steedé som solas,  
And yaf hym good forage.

1970

‘ O seinté Marie, *benedicite* !  
What eyleth this love at me  
To byndé me so soore ?  
Me dreméd al this nyght, *pardes*,  
An Elf-queene shal my lemman be  
And slepe under my goore.

‘ An Elf-queene wol I love, y-wis, 1980  
For in this world no womman is  
Worthy to be my make  
In towne.

Alle othere wommen I forsake,  
And to an Elf-queene I me take  
By dale and eek by downe.’

Into his sadel he clamb anon,  
And prikeþ over stile and stoon  
An Elf-queene for tespye ;  
Til he so longe hadde riden and goon 1990  
That he found in a pryvé woon  
The contree of Fairye,

1963, *thrustel*, H *briddes*.

So wilde ;

For in that contree was ther noon  
That to him dorsté ryde or goon,  
Neither wyf ne childe ;

‘ Til that ther cam a greet geaunt,  
His namé was sire Olifaunt,  
A perilous man of dede.  
He seyde, ‘ Child, by Termagaunt ! 2000  
But if thou prike out of myn haunt,  
Anon I sle thy steede  
With mace !

Heere is the queene of Fairye,  
With harpe, and pipe, and symphonie,  
Dwellynge in this place.’

The child seyde, ‘ Al-so moote I thee !  
Tomorwe wol I meete with thee,  
Whan I have myn armoure.  
And yet I hopé, *par ma fay*, 2010  
That thou shalt with this launcégay  
Abyen it ful soure ;

Thy mawe  
Shal I percen, if I may,  
Er it be fully prynde of day,  
For heere thou shalt be slawe.’

Sire Thopas drow abak, ful faste ;  
This geant at hym stonés caste  
Out of a fel staf-slyng ;  
But faire escapeth sire Thopas ; 2020  
And al it was thurgh Goddés gras,  
And thurgh his fair berynge.

Yet listeth, lordés, to my tale  
Murier than the nightyngale,  
For now I wol yow rowne  
How sir Thopas, with sydés smale,  
Prikyng óver hill and dale,  
Is comen agayn to towne.

His murie men comanded he  
To make hym bothé game and-glee, 2030  
For nedés moste he fighte  
With a geaunt, with hevedes three,  
For *paramour* and jolitee  
Of oon that shoon ful.brighte.

1993. *That to him*, etc., from H only ; F  
omit.

2003. *pipe*, H *lute*.

'Do come,' he seyde, 'my mynstrales,  
And geestours for to tellen tales,  
Anon in myn armyng; ;  
Of romances that been roiales,  
Of Papes and of Cardinales,  
And eek of love-lykyng.' 2040

They fette hym first the sweeté wyn  
And mede eek in a mazelyn,  
And roial spicerye ;  
And gyngébreed that was ful fyn,  
And lycorys, and eek comyn,  
With sugre that is so trye.

He didé next his whit leere  
Of clooth of laké, fyn and cleere,  
A breech and eek a sherte ;  
And next his sherte an akétoun, 2050  
And over that an haubergeoun  
For Percyng of his herte ;

And over that a fyn hawberk,  
Was al y-wroght of Jewés werk,  
Ful strong it was of plate ;  
And over that his cote-armour,  
As whit as is a lilye flour,  
In which he wol debate.

His sheeld was al of gold so reed,  
And ther-inne was a borés heed, 2060  
A charbocle bisyde ;  
And there he swoor, on ale and breed,  
How that the geaunt shal be deed,  
'Bitydé what bityde !'

Hise jambeux were of quyrboilly,  
His swerdés shethe of ivory,  
His helm of laton bright ;  
His sadel was of rewel boon ;  
His brydel as the sonnè shoon,  
Or as the mooné light. 2070

His spere it was of fyn ciprees,  
That bodeth werre, and no-thing pees,  
The heed ful sharpe y-grounde ;  
His steedé was al dappull-gray,  
It gooth an ambil in the way  
Ful softly and rounde

2041. *Atte*, E *atte*.  
2046. *as*, om. H<sup>2</sup>.

In londe.  
Loo, lordés myne, heere is a Fit ;  
If ye wol any moore of it  
To telle it wol I fonde. 2080

#### THE SECOND FIT

Now holde youre mouth, *par charitee*,  
Bothé knyght and lady free,  
And herkneth to my spelle ;  
Of batailles and of chivalry,  
And of ladyés love-drury,  
Anon I wol yow telle.

Men speken of romauns of prys,—  
Of Hornchild, and of Ypotys,  
Of Beves and of sir Gy,  
Of sir Lybeux and Pleyn-damour ; 2090  
But sir Thopas he bereth the flour  
Of roial chivalry !

His goodé steede al he bistrood,  
And forth upon his wey he rood,  
As sparcle out of the bronde ;  
Upon his creest he bar a tour,  
And ther-inne stiked a lillie flour,—  
God shilde his cors fro shonde !

And for he was a knyght auntrous,  
He noldé slepen in noon hous, 2100  
But ligen in his hooде ;  
His brighté helm was his wonger,  
And by hym baiteth his dextrer .  
Of herbés fyne and goode ;

Hym self drank water of the well,  
As dide the knyght sire Percyvell,  
So worthy under wede ;  
Til on a day—

*Heere the Hoost stynteth Chaucer of his  
Tale of Thopas*

'Na moore of this, for Goddés  
dignitee !' 2109

2085. *And of, etc.*, H reads *of ladys long and  
drawerys*.

2089. *of sir Gy*, H<sup>2</sup> om. *of*.

2090. *sir Lybeux*, L *libans desconnues*, or  
Libius Disconius, 'the fair unknown.'

2094. *rood*, H<sup>2</sup> *glood*.



Quod ouré Hosté, 'for thou makest me  
So wery of thy verray lewédnesse  
That, also wisely God my sould blesse,  
Min erés aken of thy drasty speche.  
Now swich a rym the devel I biteche!  
This may wel be rym dogerel,' quod he.

'Why so?' quod I; 'why wiltow  
letté me

Moore of my talé than another man,  
Syn that it is the besté ryme I kan?'

'By God,' quod he, 'for pleynty, at  
a word,

Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord;  
Thou doost noght ellés but despendest  
tyme;

Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger  
ryme.

Lat se wher thou kanst tellen aught in  
geeste,

Or telle in prosé somwhat, at the leeste,  
In which ther be som murthe, or some  
doctryne.'

'Gladly,' quod I, 'by Goddés sweeté  
pyne!

I wol yow telle a litel thyng in prose  
That oghté liken yow, as I suppose,  
Or elles, certés, ye been to daungerous.  
It is a moral talé vertuous,

Al be it told somtyme in sondry wyse  
Of sundry folk, as I shal yow devyse.

'As thus; ye woot that every  
Evaungelist

That telleth us the peyne of Jhesu Crist  
Ne seith nat alle thyng as hisfelawe dooth;  
But nathelees hir sentence is al sooth,  
And alle acorden as in hire sentence,  
Al be ther in hir tellyng difference;  
For somme of hem seyn moore, and  
sommé lesse,

Whan they his pitous passioun expresse,—  
I meene of Marké, Mathew, Luc and  
John,—

But doutlees hir sentence is all oon.

'Therefore, lordyngés alle, I yow biseche  
If that ye thynke I varie as in my speche,  
As thus, though that I tellé somwhat moore  
Of pfoverbés, than ye han herd bifoore

212. ryme, E tale.

213. told, E take.

213. lesse, E<sup>4</sup> seyn lesse.

Comprehended in this litel tretys heere,  
To enforcé with theffect of my mateere;  
And though I nat the samé wordés seye,  
As ye han herd, yet to yow alle I preye,  
Blameth me nat, for as in my sentence 2151  
Ye shul not fynden moché difference  
Fró the sentence of this tretys lyte  
After the which this murye tale I write;  
And therefore herketh what that I shal  
seye,  
And lat me tellen al my tale, I preye.'

## CHAUCER'S TALE OF MELIBEUS

### *Heere bigynneth Chaucer's Tale of Melibes*

A yong man called Melibeus, myghty  
and riche, bigat upon his wyf, that  
called was Prudence, a doghter which  
that called was Sophie.

Upon a day bifel, that he for his  
desport is went into the feeldes, hym  
to pleye; his wyf and eek his doghter  
hath he left inwith his hous, of which the  
dores weren fast y-shette. [2160] Thre of  
his olde foes han it espyed, and setten  
laddres to the walles of his hous, and by  
the wyndowes been entred, and betten his  
wyf, and wounded his doghter with fyve  
mortal woundes in fyve sondry places,—  
this is to seyn, in hir feet, in hir handes,  
in hir erys, in hir nose, and in hire mouth,  
—and leften hire for deed, and wenten  
away.

Whan Melibeus retourned was into his  
hous and saugh al this meschief, he, lyk a  
mad man, rentynge his clothes, gan to  
wepe and crie.

Prudence, his wyf, as ferforth as she  
dorsté, bisoghte hym of his wepyng for

2154. murye, H litel.

*Chaucer's Tale of Melibes.* This very dull  
dissertation is taken from Jean de Meung's  
French version of the *Liber Consolationis* of  
*Consiliis* of Albertano of Brescia, composed ca.  
1238.

2157. a doghter which that called was Sophie,  
the first of many decasyllabic cadences in the  
early pages of Chaucer's prose.

to stynte; [1165] but nat for-thy he gan to crie and wepen ever longer the moore.

This noble wyf Prudence remembre hire upon the sentence of Ovide, in his book that cleped is The Remedie of Love, where as he seith, 'He is a fool that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in the deeth of hire child, til she have wept hir fille, as for a certain tyme, and thanne shal man doon his diligence with ameyable wordes hire to reconforte, and preyen hire of hir wepyng for to stynte.' For which resoun this noble wyf Prudence suffred hir housbonde for to wepe and crie as for a certain space; [1170] and whan she saugh hir tyme, she seyde hym in this wise: 'Allas, my lord,' quod she, 'why make ye youreself for to be lyk a fool! For sothe it aperteneth nat to a wys man to maken swiche a sorwe. Yourre doghter with the grace of God shal warisshe and escape; and, al were it so that she right now were deed, ye ne oughte nat, as for hir deeth, youreself to destroye. Senek seith, "The wise man shal nat take to greet discomfort for the deeth of his children, [1175] but, certes, he sholde suffren it in pacience as wel as he abideth the deeth of his owene propre persone."'

This Melibeus answerde anon, and eyde, 'What man,' quod he, 'sholde I his wepyng stente that hath so greet a zuse for to wepe? Jhesu Crist, oure Lord, hymself wepte for the deeth of Lazarus hys freend.'

Prudence answerde, 'Certes, wel I root attemptee wepyng is no thyng leffended to hym that sorweful is amonges folk in sorwe, but it is rather graunted hym to wepe.

'The Apostle Paul unto the Romayns writeth, "Man shal rejoyse with hem that maken joye, and wepen with swich folk as wepen"; [1180] but though attemptee wepyng be y-graunted, outrageous wepyng certes is deffended. Mesure of

wepyng sholde be conserved, after the loore that techeth us Senek: "Whan that thy frend is deed," quod he, "lat nat thyne eyen to moyste becn of teeris, ne to muche drye; although the teeris come to thyne eyen, lat hem nat falle, and whan thou hast for-goon thy freend, do diligence to gete another freend, and this is moore wysdom than for to wepe for thy freend which that thou hast lorn, for ther-inne is no boote"; and therefore, if ye governe yow by sapience, put away sorwe out of youre herte. [1185] Remembre yow that Jhesus Syrak seith, "A man that is joyous, and glad in herte, it hym conserveth florissynge in his age, but soothly sorweful herte maketh hys bones drye." He seith eek thus, that sorwe in herte sleeth ful many a man. Salomon seith that "right as motthes in the shepes flees anoyeth to the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte"; wherefore us oughte, as wel in the deeth of oure children as in the losse of othere goodes temporels, have pacience.

'Remembre yow up on the pacient Job. Whan he hadde lost his children and his temporel substance, and in his body endured and receyved ful many a grevous tribulacion, yet seyde he thus: [1190] "Oure Lord hath yeve it me; oure Lord hath biraft it me; right as oure Lord hath wold, right so it is doon; blessed be the name of oure Lord!"

To thise foreseide thynges answerde Melibeus unto his wyf Prudence: 'Alle thy wordes,' quod he, 'been sothe, and therwith profitable, but trewely myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously that I noot what to doone.'

'Lat calle,' quod Prudence, 'thy trewe freendes alle, and thy lynage whiche that been wise. Telleth youre cas and

1180. *conserved*, E<sup>8</sup> *considered*, but the Latin text has *servandus*.

1180. *Senek*, E<sup>8</sup>, lxxiii. 1 and 9.

1185. *Jhesus Syrak*. A quotation from Eccles. xxx. 25 is here omitted. The text occurs in Prov. xvii. 22.

1190. *Telleth youre cas*, H *telleth hem your grevounce*.

1165. *Ovide*, in his book: *De Rem. Am.* l. 17-20.

1170. *Senek* seith: E<sup>8</sup>, lxxiv. 29. This and other references are taken from Dr. Thor Sundby's edition of the Latin text (Chauc. Soc. 1873).

happeth what they seye in conseilnyng, and yow governe after hire sentence. Salomon seith, "Werk alle thy thynges by conseil, and thou shalt never repente."

Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence this Melibeus leet callen a greet congregacioun of folk, [2195] as surgiens, phisiciens, olde folk and yonge, and somme of his olde enemys reconciled, as by hir semblaunt, to his love and into his grace, and therewithal ther comen somme of his neighbores that diden hym reverence moore for drede than for love, as it happeth ofte. Ther comen also ful many subtille flatereres, and wise advocatz, lerned in the lawe.

And when this folk togidre assembled weren, this Melibeus in sorweful wise shewed hem his cas, and by the manere of his speche it semed wel that in herte he baar a cruell ire, redy to doon vengeance upon his foes, and sodeynly desired that the werre sholde bigynne, [2200] but natheles, yet axed he hire conseil upon this matiere.

A surgien, by licence and assent of swiche as weren wise, up roos and to Melibeus seyde as ye may heere: 'Sire,' quod he, 'as to us surgiens aperteneth that we do to every wight the beste that we kan, where as we been withholde, and to oure pacientz that we do no damage; wherefore it happeth many tyme and ofte that whan twey men han everich wounded oother, oon same surgien heeleth hem bothe; wherefore unto oure art it is nat pertinent to norice werre, no parties to supporte. [2205] But certes, as to the warisshynge of youre doghter, al be it so that she perilously be wounded, we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to nyght that with the grace of God she shal be hool and sound as soone as is possible.'

Almoost right in the same wise the phisiciens answerden, save that they seyden a fewe woordes moore; that right

2195. they shall never repente, H the ther never roos.

2196. of folk, H of people.

as maladies begetured by hir contraries, right so shul men warisshen werre by vengeance.

His neighbores ful of envye, his feyned freendes that semeden reconciled, and his flatereres maden semblant of wepyng, and empeireden and aggregated muchel of this matiere, in preisyng greetly Melibee, of myght, of power, of richesse, and of freendes, desapisynge the power of his adversaries, [2210] and seiden outrelly that he anon sholde wreken hym on his foes, and bigynne werre.

Up roos thanne an advocat that was wys, by leve and by conseil of othere that were wise, and seide, 'Lordynges, the nede for which we been assembled in this place is a ful hevvy thyng, and an heigh matiere, by cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath be doon, and eek by resoun of the grete damages that in tyme comynge been possible to fallen for this same cause, and eek by resoun of the grete richesse and power of the parties bothe, [2215] for the whiche resouns it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matiere; wherefore, Melibeus, this is our sentence; we conseilte yow aboven alle thyng, that right anon thou do thy diligence in keypyng of thy propre persone, in swich a wise that thou wante noon espie, ne wacche, thy body for to save; and after that we conseilte that in thy hous thou sette sufficient garnisoun, so that they may as wel thy body as thy hous defende; but certes, for to moeve werre, or sodeynly for to doon vengeance, we may nat demen in so litel tyme that it were profitable. Wherefore we axen leysur and espace to have deliberacioun in this cas to deme, [2220] for the commune proverbe seith thus: "He that soone deemeth, soone shal repente"; and eek men seyn that thilke juge is wys that soone understandeth a matiere and juggeth by leysur; for, al be it so that alle taryng be anoyful, algates it is nat to repreve in yevynge of juggement, ne

2205. empeireden, H appeared.  
2210. foes, and bigynne, H adversaries is in keypyng of.

vengeance taking, whiche it is sufficient and reasonable; and that shewed oure Lord Jhesu Crist by ensample, for whan that the woman that was taken in adoultre was brought in his presence to knowen what sholde be doon with hire person, — al be it so that he wiste wel hymself what that he wolde answer, — yet he wolde he nat answer sodeynly, but he wolde have deliberacioun, and in the ground he wroot twis; and by thise causes we axen deliberacioun, and we shal thanne, by the grace of God, conseilliche the thing that shal be profitable.'

[2235] Up stirten thanne the yonge folk stones, and the mooste partie of that compaignye, scorned the wise olde men, and bigonnen to make-noyse, and seyden that 'Right so as, whil that iren is hoot, men sholden smyte, right so men sholde wreken hir wronges while that they been freshe and newe'; and with loud voys they criden, 'Werre! werre!'

Thanne the oon of thise olde wise, and with his hand made contenance that men sholde holden hem stille, and yeven him audience.

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'ther is ful many a man that crieth "Werre! werre!" that woot ful litel what werre amounteth. Werre at his bigynnyng hath so greet an entryng and so large, that every wight may entre whan hym liketh and lightly fynde werre; [2230] but certes, what ende that shal ther-of bifalle it is nat light to knowe; for soothly, whan that werre is ones bigonne ther is ful many a child unborn of his mooder that shal sterve yong by cause of that ilke werre, or elles live in sorwe, and dye in wrecchednesse; and therefore, er that any werre bigynne, men mooste have greet conseil and greet deliberacioun.'

And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resons, wel ny alle stones bigonne they to rise for to breken his tale, and beden hym ful ofte his wordes for to abregge; for soothly, he that precheth to hem that listen nat heeren his wordes, his sermon hem

anoieth; [2235] for Jhesu Syrak seith, that 'musik in wepyng is a noyous thyng'; this is to seyn, as muche availleth to speken bfore folk to whiche his speche anoyeth, as doth to syng bifore hym that wepeth. And this wise man saugh that hym wanted audience, and al shamefast he sette hym doun agayn; for Salomon seith, 'Ther as thou ne mayst have noon audience, enforce thee nat to speke.'

'I see wel,' quod this wise man, 'that the commune proverbe is sooth, "That good conseil wanteth whan it is moost nede."

Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil many folk that prively in his cere conseilled hym certeyn thyng, and conseilled hym the contrarie in general audience.

[2240] Whan Melibeus hadde herd that the gretteste partie of his conseil weren accorded that he sholde maken werre, anon, he consented to hir conseilliche and fully affermed hire sentence.

Thanne dame Prudence, whan that she saugh how that hir housbonde shoope hym for to wreken hym on his foes, and to bigynne werre, she in ful humble wise, whan she saugh hir tyme, seide to hym thise wordes.

'My lord,' quod she, 'I yow biseche, as hertely as I dar and kan, ne haste yow nat to faste, and for alle gerdons, as yeveth me audience; for Piers Alfonse seith, "Who so that dooth to that oother good or harm, haste thee nat to quiten it; for in this wise thy freend wole abyde, and thyn enemy shal the lenger live in drede." The proverbe seith, "He hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde, and in wikked haste is no profit."

[2245] This Melibee answerde unto his wyf Prudence, 'I purpose nat,' quod he, 'to werke by thy conseil, for many causes and resouns; for certes, every wight wolde holde me thanne a fool.

2235. *is a noyous thyng*: 'Musica in luctu est importuna narratio' (Ecclesi. xxii. 6).

2240. *on his foes*, H of his enemies.

2240. *Piers Alfonse seith*: *Disciplina Clericali*, xxv. 15.

This is to seyn, if I, for thy conseillying, wolde chaungen thynges that been ordeyned and affermed by so many wyse. Secoundly, I seye that alle wommen been wikke, and noon good of hem alle; for, "Of a thousand men," seith Salomon, "I foond a good man, but certes, of alle wommen, good womman foond I nevere"; and also, certes, if I governed me by thy conseil, it sholde seme that I hadde yeve to thee over me the maistrie, and God forbode that it so were! for Jhesus Syrak seith, that if the wyf have maistrie she is contrarious to hir housbonde; [2250] and Salomon seith, "Never in thy lyf, to thy wyf, ne to thy child, ne to thy freend, ne yeve no power over thyself, for better it were that thy children aske of thy persone thynges that hem nedeth than thou be thyself in the handes of thy children"; and if I wolde werke by thy conseillying, certes, my conseillying moste som tyme be secree til it were tyme that it moste be knowe, and this ne may noght be. For it is written, "The janglerie of women can hide thyngis that they wet nought"; furthermore, the philosophre saith, "In wykke conseyl women venquysse men"; and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy counsel.'

Whanne dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with greet pacience, hadde herd al that hir housbonde liked for to seye, thanne axed she of hym licence for to speke, and seyde in this wise: [2255] 'My lord,' quod she, 'as to youre firste resoun, certes it may lightly been answered; for I seye that it is no folie to chaunge conseil when the thyng is chaunged, or elles when the thyng semeth ootherweyes than it was biforn; and mooreover, I seye that though ye han sworn and bihight to perfourne youre emprise, and natheles ye weyve to perfourne thilke same emprise by juste cause, men sholde nat seyn therfore that

ye were a lier ne forsworn, for the book seith that the wise man maketh no lesyng when he turneth his corage to the better, and al be it so that youre emprise be established and ordeyned by greet multitude of folk, yet thar ye nat accomplice thilke ordinaunce but yow like; for the trouthe of thynges and the profit been rather founden in fewe folk that been wise and ful of resoun, than by greet multitude of folk ther every man crieth and clatereth what that hym liketh; soothly, swich multitude is nat honeste.

[2260] 'As to the seconde resoun, whereas ye seyn that alle wommen been wikke; save youre grace, certes ye despisen alle wommen in this wyse, and "he that al despiseth al displeaseth," as seith the book; and Senec seith, that who so wole have sapience shal no man despise, but he shal gladly techen the science that he kan withouten presumcioun or pride, and swiche thynges as he nought ne kan he shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquire of lasse folk than hymself; and, sire, that ther hath been many a good womman may lightly be preved, for certes, sire, oure Lord Jhesu Crist wolde never have descended to be born of a womman, if alle wommen hadden ben wikke; [2265] and after that, for the grete bountee that is in wommen, oure Lord Jhesu Crist, when he was risen fro deeth to lyve, appeared rather to a womman than to his Apostles; and though that Salomon seith that he ne foond never womman good, it folweth nat therfore that alle womman ben wikke, for though that he ne foond no good womman, certes, ful many another man hath founden many a womman ful good and trewe; or elles, per aventure, the entente of Salomon was this, that, as in sovereyn bounte, he foond no womman;

2255. the book seith: Chaucer's translation of the 'Scriptum est' or 'Il est escript' with which the Latin and French texts introduce an unassigned quotation.

2260. Senec seith: in the supposititious *De Quat. Virtutibus*, cap. liii.

2260. despise, R<sup>2</sup> despraye.

2250. For it is written . . . thy counsel, om. EH<sup>2</sup>, supplied from Camb. MS. in accordance with Latin and French. The quotations are from Seneca, *Centrov.* ii. 13. 12, and Publilius Syrus, *Sent.* 324.

that is to seyn that ther is no wight that hath sovereyn bountee, save God allone, —as he hymself recordeth in hys evaungellie, —[2270] for ther nys no creature so good that hym ne wanteth somwhat of the perfeccioun of God, that is his maker.

‘Youre thridde resoun is this,—ye seyn if ye governe yow by my conseil it sholde seme that ye hadde yewe me the maistrie and the lordshipe over youre persone. Sire, save youre grace, it is nat so, for if it were so that no man sholde be conseilled but oonly of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his persone, men wolden nat be conseilled so ofte, for soothly thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos, yet hath he free choys whether he wole werke by that conseil or noon.

‘And as to youre fourthe resoun; ther ye seyn that the janglerie of women hath byd thynges that they wiste noght, as who seith that a womman kan nat telle that she woot, [2275] sire, these wodes been understonde of wommen that been jangleresses and wikked, of whiche wommen men seyn that thre thynges dryven a man out of his hous,—that is to seyn, smoke, droppying of reyn, and wikked wyves; and of swiche wommen seith Salomon, that it were better dwelle in desert than with a womman that is riotous, and, sire, by youre leve, that am nat I; for ye han ful ofte assayed my grete silence and my gret patience, and eek how wel that I kan hyde and hele thynges that men oghte secreely to hyde.

[2280] ‘And soothly, as to youre fifthe resoun, where as ye seyn that in wikked conseil wommen venquisshe men, God woot thilke resoun stant heere in no stede; for, understood now, ye asken conseil to do wikkednesse, and if ye wole werken wikkednesse, and youre wif restrēyneth thilke wikked purpos and overcometh yow by resoun and by good conseil, certes youre wyf oghte rather to be preised than blamed. Thus sholde ye understonde he philosophe that seith, “In wikked

conseil wommen venquisshe hir housbondes.”

[2285] ‘And ther as ye blamen alle wommen and hir resouns, I shal shewe yow by manye ensamples, that many a womman hath ben ful good, and yet been, and hir counsils ful hoolsome and profitable. Eek som men han seyde that the conseillynge of wommen is outhur to deere, or elles to litel of pris; but, al be it so that ful many a womman is badde and hir conseil vile and noght worth, yet han men founde ful many a good womman, and ful discrete and wise in conseillynge.

‘Loo, Jacob, by good conseil of his mooder Rebekka, wan the benysoun of Yssak his fader, and the lordshipe over alle his bretheren: Judith, by hire good conseil, delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelled, out of the handes of Olofernus, that hadde it biseged and wolde have al destroyed it: [2290] Abygail delivered Nabal hir housbonde fro David the kyng that wolde have slayn hym, and apayed the ire of the kyng by hir wit and by hir good conseillyng: Hester enhaunced gretly by hir good conseil the peple of God in the regne of Assuerus the kyng: and the same bountee in good conseillyng of many a good womman may men telle, and moore over, whan oure Lord hadde creat Adam oure forme fader, he seyde in this wise: “It is nat good to been a man alloone; make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym self.”

[2295] ‘Heere may ye se that if that wommen were nat goode and hir counsils goode and profitable, oure Lord God of hevene wolde never han wrought hem, ne called hem “help” of man, but rather confusioun of man. And ther sayde oones a clerk in two vers, “What is bettre than Gold? Jaspre. What is bettre than Jaspre? Wisdom. And what is bettre than Wisdom? Wom-

2285. *ensamples, H resons and ensamples.*

2285. *benysoun, H blessing.*

2295. *in two vers:*

‘Gold makest sure? Jaspre. Gold jaspre? None.  
Gold comen? Malice. Gold Malice? Witte.’

man. And what is better than a good Womman? No thyng." And, sire, by manye of thre resouns may ye seen that manye wommen been goode, and hir conseilis goode and profitable, [2300] and therefore, sire, if ye wol triste to my conseil, I shal restoore yow youre doghter hool and sound, and eek I wol do to yow so muche that ye shul have honour in this cause.'

Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his wyf Prudence, he seyde thus: 'I see wel that the word of Salomon is sooth. He seith that wordes that been spoken discreetly, by ordinaunce, been honycombes, for they yeven swetnesse to the soule and hoolsomnesse to the body; and, wyf, by-cause of thy sweete wordes, and eek for I have assayed and preved thy grete sapience and thy grete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thyng.'

[2305] 'Now, sire,' quod dame Prudence, 'and syn ye vouchesauf to been governed by my conseil, I wol enforme yow how ye shul governe yourself in chesyng of youre conseilours. Ye shul first in alle youre werkes mekely biscken to the heighe God that he wol be youre conseilour, and shapeth yow to swich entente that he yeve yow conseil and confort, as taughte Thobie his sone: "At alle tymes thou shalt blesse God and praye hym to dresse thy weyes, and looke that alle thy conseilis been in hym for everemoore." Seint Jame eek seith, "If any of yow have nede of sapience, axe it of God." [2310] And afterward, thanne shul ye taken conseil of youre self and examyne wel youre thoughtes of swich thyng as yow thynketh that is best for youre profit, and thanne shul ye dryve fro youre herte thre thynges that been contrariouse to good conseil,—that is to seyn, ire, covetise, and hastifnesse.

'First, he that axeth conseil of hymself, certes he moste been withouten ire, for manye causes. The firste is this: he that hath greet ire and wratthe in hym self, he weneth alwey that he may do thyng that he may nat do. [2315] And

secondely, he that is irous and wrooth, he ne may nat wel deme, and he that may nat wel deme, may nat wel conseilise. The thridde is this, that he that is irous and wrooth, as seith Senec, ne may nat speke but blameful thynges, and with his vicious wordes he stireth oother folk to angre and to ire. And eek, sire, ye moste dryve covetise out of youre herte, [2320] for the Apostle seith that covetise is roote of alle harmes; and trust wel that a covetous man ne kan noght deme, ne thynke, but oonly to fulfille the ende of his covetise, and certes, that ne may never been accompliced, for ever the moore habundaunce that he hath of richesse the moore he desireth. And, sire, ye moste also dryve out of youre herte hastifnesse, for certes, ye ne may nat deeme for the beste a sodeyn thought that falleth in youre herte, but ye moste avyse yow on it ful ofte, [2325] for as ye herde bifore, the commune proverbe is this, that "he that soone deemeth, soone repenteth." Sire, ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicioun, for certes som thyng that somtyme semeth to yow that it is good for to do, another tyme it semeth to yow the contrarie.

'Whan ye han taken conseil of youre self and han deemed by good deliberacioun swich thyng as you semeth best, thanne rede I yow that ye kepe it secree. [2330] Biwrey nat youre conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen sikerly that thurgh youre biwreyng youre condicioun shal be to yow the moore profitable; for Jhesus Syrak seith, "Neither to thy foo, ne to thy frend, discovere nat thy secree, ne thy folie, for they wol yeve yow audience and lookyng and supportacioun in thy presence, and scorne thee in thy absence." Another clerk seith, that scarsly shaltou fynden any persone that may kepe conseil sikerly.

2315. *as seith Senec, rather Publil. Syrus, Sent. 281.*

2315. *but blameful, E. but he blame.*

2325. *as you semeth, E. as you list.*

2330. *Another clerk: pseudo-Seneca, De Moribus, Sent. 16.*

'The book seith, "Whil that thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte, thou kepest it in thy prisoun, [2335] and whan thou biwreiest thy conseil to any wight he holdeth thee in his snare"; and therefore yow is better to hyde youre conseil in youre herte than praye him to whom ye han biwreied youre conseil that he wole kepen it cloos and stille; for Seneca seith, "If so be that thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde, how darstou prayen any oother wight thy conseil sikerly to kepe?"

'But natheles, if thou wene sikerly that the biwreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condicioun to stonden in the better plyn, thanne shaltou tellen hym thy conseil in this wise: first, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were levere pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe hym nat thy wille and thyn entente,—[2340] for trust wel, that comunly thise conseilours been flatereres, namelye the conseilours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alwey rather to speken plesante wordes, enclynynge to the lordes lust, than wordes that been trewe or profitable; and therefore men seyn, that the riche man hath seeld good conseil, but if he have it of hym self.

'And after that thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys; [2345] and as touchynge thy freendes thou shalt considere whiche of hem been moost feithful and moost wise, and oldest, and most approved in conseillynge, and of hem shalt thou aske thy conseil as the caas requireth.

'I seye that first ye shul clepe to youre conseil youre freendes that been trewe, for Salomon seith that "Right as the berté of a man deliteth in savour that is soote, right so the conseil of trewe freendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule"; he seith also, "Ther may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend, [2350] for certes

gold ne silver beth nat so muche worth as the goode wyl of a trewe freend"; and eek, he seith that "A trewe freend is a strong deffense; whoso that it fyndeth, certes, he fyndeth a greet tresour."

'Thanne shul ye eek considere if that youre trewe freendes been discrete and wise, for the book seith, "Axe alwey thy conseil of hem that been wise"; and by this same reson shul ye clepen to youre conseil of youre freendes that been of age, swiche as han seyn and been expert in manye thynges, and been approved in conseillynge; for the book seith that in the olde men is the sapience, and in longe tyme the prudence; [2355] and Tullius seith, that grete thynges ne been nat ay accompliced by strengthe, ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science; the whiche thre thynges ne been nat sieble by age, but certes they enforcen and encreescen day by day. And thanne shul ye kepe this for a general reule; first, shul ye clepen to youre conseil a fewe of youre freendes that been especiale; for Salomon seith, "Manye freendes have thou, but among a thousand, chese thee oon to be thy conseilour," for, al be it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayst afterward telle it to mo folk if it be nede. But looke alwey that thy conseilours have thilke thre condiciouns that I have seyde bifore, that is to seyn, that they be trewe, wise, and of oold experience. [2360] And werke nat alwey in every nede by oon counseillour allone, for somtyme bihooveth it to been consailed by manye, for Salomon seith, "Salvacioun of thynges is where as ther been manye conseilours."

'Now, sith I have toold yow of which folk ye sholde been consailed, now wol I teche yow which conseil ye oghte to eschewe. First, ye shul eschue the conseillynge of fooles, for Salomon seith, "Taak no conseil of a fool, for he ne kan noght consaille but after his owene lust

2330. *The book seith*: Petrus Alfonsi, *Discip.* cl. iv. 3.

2335. *Seneca seith*: pseudo-Seneca, *De Mori-* bus, sent. 16.

2355. *Tullius*: Cicero, *De Senect.* vi. 17.



and his affeccioun." The book seith that the proprete of a fool is this, "He troweth lightly harm of every wight, and lightly troweth alle bountee in hym self." [2365] Thou shalt eek eschue the conseillynge of flatereres, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preise youre persone by flaterye, than for to telle yow the sooth-fastnesse of thynges.

'Wherefore Tullius seith, "Amonges alle the pestilences that been in freendshipe the gretteste is flaterie"; and therefore is it moore nede that thou eschue and drede flatereres than any oother peple. The book seith, "Thou shalt rather drede and flee fro the sweete wordes of flaterynge preiseres than fro the egre wordes of thy freend that seith thee thy sothes." Salomon seith that "The wordes of a flaterere is a snare to cacche with innocentz." He seith also that "He that speketh to his freend wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce, setteth a net bifrom his feet to cacche hym"; [2370] and therefore, seith Tullius, "Enclayne nat thyne eres to flatereres, ne taketh no conseil of the wordes of flaterye"; and Caton seith, "Avyse thee wel, and eschue the wordes of swetnesse and of plesaunce."

'And eek thou shalt eschue the conseillynge of thyne olde cnemys that been reconciled. The book seith that no wight retourneth sauffy into the grace of his olde enemy; and Isope seith, "Ne trust nat to hem to whiche thou hast had som tyme werre or eniemytee, ne telle hem nat thy conseil"; [2375] and Seneca

2360. *The book seith: Cicero, Tusc. D. iiii. 30. 37.*

2365. *Tullius seith: De Amicitia, xxv. 91.*

2365. *The book seith: pseudo-Seneca, De Qual. Viri. cap. iiii.: 'Non acerba verba, sed blanda, timebilia.'*

2370. *Tullius: De Offic. i. 26. 91.*

2370. *Caton: Dionysius Cato, De Morib. iiii. 5.*

2370. *The book seith: Publil. Syrus, Sent. 91.*

2370. *Isope seith. In the Latin text the lines are quoted as:*

"Ne confidite secreta nec his delegatis  
Cum quibus egitis pagnas discrimina tristis."

2375. *Seneca: rather Publil. Syrus, Sent. 389: 'Numquam ubi diu fuit ignis deficit vapor.'*

telleth the cause why: "It may nat be," seith he, "that where greet fyr hath longe tyme endured, that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse"; and therefore seith Salomon, "In thyn olde foo trust never"; for sikerly though thyn enemy be reconciled and maketh thee chiere of humylitee, and lowteth to thee with his heed, ne trust hym never; for certes he maketh thilke feyned humilitee moore for his profit than for any love of thy person, by-cause that he deemeth to have victorie over thy persone by swich feyned contenance, the which victorie he myghte nat wynne by strif or werre. And Peter Alfonce seith, "Make no felawshipe with thyne olde cnemys, for if thou do hem bountee they wol perverten it into wikkednesse."

[2380] 'And eek thou most eschue the conseillynge of hem that been thy servantz and beren thee greet reverence, for peradventure they doon it moore for drede than for love. And therefore seith a philosophre in this wise: "Ther is no wight parfity trewe to hym that he to soore dredeth"; and Tullius seith, "Ther nys no myght so greet of any emperour that longe may endure, but if he have moore love of the peple than drede."

'Thou shalt also eschue the conseillynge of folk that been dronkelewe, for they ne kan no conseil hyde; for Salomon seith, "Ther is no privetee ther as regneth dronkenesse." [2385] Ye shul also han in suspect the conseillynge of swich folk as conseilte yow a thyng prively and conseilte yow the contrarie openly; for Cassidorie seith that "It is a manere sleighte to hyndre, whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly and werketh prively the contrarie."

'Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseillynge of wikked folk, for the book seith, "The conseillynge of wikked folk is alway ful of fraude"; and David seith,

2375. *Peter Alfons: Disc. Cler. iv. 4.*

2380. *doon. H<sup>2</sup> say.*

2380. *Tullius seith: De Off. ii. 7. 25.*

2385. *Cassidorie: Variar. Ep. Lib. x. Ep. 18*

2385. *have in suspect, H<sup>2</sup> Achisme.*

"Blisful is that man that hath nat folwed the conseilnyng of shrewes." Thou shalt also eschue the conseilnyng of yong folk, for hir conseil is nat rype.

[3390] "Now, sire, sith I have shewed yow of which folk ye shul take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shul folwe the conseil, now wol I teche yow how ye shal examyne youre conseil, after the doctrine of Tullius.

"In the examynynge thanne of youre conseilour ye shul considere manye thynges. Alderfirst thou shalt considere, that in thilke thyng that thou purposest and upon what thyng thou wolt have conseil, that verray trouthe be seyde and conserved; this is to seyn, telle trewely thy tale; for he that seith fals may nat wel be counselled in that cas of which he lieth.

[3395] "And after this thou shalt considere the thynges that acorden to that thou purposest for to do by thy conseilours, if resoun accorde therto, and eek if thy myght may atteine therto; and if the moore part and the bettre part of thy conseilours acorde therto or noon. Thanne shaltow considere what thyng shal folwe after hir conseilnyng, as hate, pees, werre, grace, profit, or damage, and manye othere thynges. Thanne, of alle thise thynges, thou shalt chese the beste, and weye alle othere thynges. Thanne shaltow considere of what roote is engendred the matiere of thy conseil, and what fruyt it may conceive and engendre. [2400] Thou shalt eek considere alle thise causes for whennes they been sprongen.

"And whan ye han examyned youre conseil as I have seyde, and which partie is the bettre and moore profitable, and last approved it by manye wise folk, and olde, thanne shaltow considere if thou mayst parfourn it and maken of it a good ende; for certes, resoun wol nat that any man sholde bigynne a thyng, but if he myghte parfourn it as hym oghte, ne no

wight sholde take upon hym so hevy a charge that he myghte nat bere it; [2405] for the proverbe seith, "He that to muche embraceth, distreyneth litel"; and Catoun seith, "Assay to do swich thyng as thou hast power to doon, lest that the charge oppresse thee so soore that thee bihoveth to weye thyng that thou hast bigonne." And, if so be that thou be in doute whether thou mayst parfourn a thing or noon, chese rather to suffre than bigynne. And Piers Alphonse seith, "If thou hast myght to doon a thyng of which thou most repente thee, it is bettre 'nay' than 'ye'"; this is to seyn, that thee is bettre holde thy tonge stille than for to speke. [2410] Thanne may ye understonde by strengere resons that if thou hast power to parfourn a werk of which thou shalt repente, thanne is it bettre that thou suffre than bigynne. Wel seyn they that defenden every wight to assaye any thyng of which he is in doute whether he may parfourn it or noon. And after, whan ye han examyned youre conseil, as I have seyde bifore, and knowen wel that ye may parfourn youre emprise, conferme it thanne sady til it be at an ende.

"Now is it resoun and tyme that I shewe yow whanne and wherfore that ye may change youre conseil withouten youre repreve. Sootlily a man may chaungen his purpos and his conseil if the cause cesseth, or whan a newe caas bitydeth; [2415] for the lawe seith that upon thynges that newly bityden bihoveth newe conseil; and Senec seith, "If thy conseil is comen to the ceris of thyn enemy, change thy conseil." Thou mayst also change thy conseil if so be that thou mayst fynde that by error, or by oother

2405. *the proverbe* 'qui nimis capit, parum stringit.'

2405. *Catoun, De Mor. iii. 15:*

'Good pates id tempta, operis no pondere premus  
Succumbat labor, et frustra temptata reliquas'

2405. *Piers Alphonse, Disc. Cler. vi. 12.* The Latin 'si dicere metuas unde peniteas semper est melius non quam sic' is much clearer than the English.

2410. *conceit, E<sup>a</sup> consillora.*

2415. *oother cause, H other process.*

2395. *conceive, E conserve.*

2400. *as hym oghte, H and make thereof a good*

*ende.*

cause, harm or damage may bityde. Also if thy conseil be dishonest, or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil, for the lawes seyn that alle bihestes that been dishoneste been of no value, [2430] and eek if so be that it be impossible or may nat goodly be parfourned or kept.

'And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affermed so strongly that it may nat be chaunged for no condicioun that may bityde, I seye that thilke conseil is wikked.'

This Melibeus, whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of his wif, dame Prudence, answerde in this wyse: 'Dame,' quod he, 'as yet into this tyme ye han wel and covenabely taught me as in general how I shal governe me in the chesyng and in the witholdyng of my conseilours, but now wolde I fain that ye wolde condescende in especial, [2435] and telle me howliketh yow, or what semeth yow by oure conseilours that we han chosen in oure present nede.'

'My lord,' quod she, 'I biseke yow in al humblesse that ye wol nat wilfully replie agayn my resouns, ne distempe youre herte, thogh I speke thyng that yow displese; for God woot that as in myn entente I speke it for youre beste, for youre honour, and for youre profite eke; and soothly I hope that youre benyngnytee wol taken it in pacience. Trusteth me wel,' quod she, 'that youre conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat, as to speke properly, be called a conseillyng, but a moccioun or a moevyng of folye, [2430] in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.'

'First and forward ye han erred in thassemblyng of youre conseilours; for ye sholde first have cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil, and after ye myghte han shewed it to mo folk, if it hadde been nede; but certes, ye han sodeynly cleped to youre conseil a greet multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful anyous for to heere. Also, ye han erred, for there

as ye sholden oonly have cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise, [2435] ye han y-cleped straunge folk, and yong folk, false flatereres and enemyes reconciled, and folk that ddon yow reverence withouten love. And eek also ye have erred for ye han broght with yow to youre conseil ire, covetise, and hastifnesse; the whiche thre thinges been contrarious to every conseil honeste and profitable, the whiche thre ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem, neither in youre self ne in youre conseilours, as yow oghte. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseilours youre talent and youre affecioun to make werre anon, and for to do vengeance. [2440] They han espied by youre wordes to what thyng ye been enclyned, and therefore han they rather counselled yow to youre talent than to youre profit.

'Ye han erred also, for it semeth that it suffiseth to han been counselled by these conseilours oonly, and with liel avys, where-as in so greet and so heigh a nede it hadde been necessarie mo conseilours and moore deliberacioun to parfourne youre emprise.

'Ye han erred also, for ye han nat examyned youre conseil in the forseyde manere, ne in due manere as the caas requireth. [2445] Ye han erred also, for ye han nat maked no divisioun bitwixen youre conseilours, this is to seyn, bitwixen youre trewe frendes and youre feyned conseilours; ne ye han nat knowe the wil of youre trewe frendes, olde and wise; but ye han cast alle hire wordes in an hochepot, and enclyned youre herte to the moore partie and to the gretter nombre, and there been ye condescended. And, sith ye woot wel that men shal alwey fynde a gretter nombre of foolles than of wise men, and therefore the conseils that been at congregaciouns and multitudes of folk, there as men take moore reward to the nombre than to the sapience of persones, [2450] ye se wel that in swiche conseillynges foolles han the maistrie.'

2415. *Also if, etc.*, H *Also then chaunge thy conseil if that it be dishoneste.*

2430. *thassemblyngs*, H *the gaderyng.*

Melibeus answerde agayn, and seyde, 'I graunte wel that I have erred, but there as thou hast toold me heerbiforn that he nys nat to blame that chaungeth his conseilours in certain caas, and for certene juste causes, I am al redy to chaunge my conseilours right as thou wolt devyse. The proverbe seith, that for to do synne is mannyssh, but certes, for to persevere longe in synne is werk of the devel.'

[2435] To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and seyde, 'Examineth,' quod she, 'youre conseil and lat us see the whiche of hem han spoken most resonably, and taught yow best conseil; and for as muche as that the examynacioun is necessarie, lat us bigynne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens that first speeken in this matiere. I sey yow that the surgiens and phisiciens han seyd yow in youre conseil discretly as hem oughte, and in hir speche seyd ful wisely that to the office of hem aperteneth, to doon to every wight honour and profit, and no wight for to anoye, [2460] and in hir craft to doon greet diligence unto the cure of hem whiche that they han in hir governance. And, sire, right as they han answered wisely and discretly, right so rede I that they been heighly and sovereynly gerdoned for hir noble speche, and eek, for they sholde do the moore ententif bisynesse in the curacioun of youre doghter deere; for, al be it so that they been youre frendes, therfore shal ye nat suffren that they serve yow for noght, [2465] but ye oghte the rather gerdone hem and shewe hem youre largesse.

'And as touchynge the proposicioun which that the phisiciens encreesceden in this caas; this is to seyn, that in maladies that oon contrarie is warished by another contrarie; I wolde fayn knowe how ye

<sup>2450.</sup> *The proverbe seith, S. Chrysost. Adhortatio ad Theod. lapsus, l. 14: 'Humanum enim est peccare, diabolicum vero perseverare.'*

<sup>2455.</sup> *apertineth, H<sup>3</sup> appendith.*

<sup>2465.</sup> *encreesceden, enlarged on; H had shewed you.*

<sup>2465.</sup> *how ye understonde this text, H thilke text and how they understonde it.*

understonde this text, and what is youre sentence.'

'Certes,' quod Melibeus, 'I understonde it in this wise: [2470] that right as they han doon me a contrarie, right so sholde I doon hem another; for right as they han venged hem on me and doon me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem, and doon hem wrong, and thanne have I cured oon contrarie by another.'

'Lo, lo,' quod dame Prudence, 'how lightly is every man enclined to his owene desir and to his owene pleaseunce! Certes,' quod she, 'the wordes of the phisiciens ne sholde nat han been understonden in thys wise, [2475] for certes, wikkednesse is nat contrarie to wikkednesse, ne vengeance to vengeance, ne wrong to wrong, but they been semblable; and therfore, o vengeance is nat warished by another vengeance, ne o wroong by another wroong, but everich of hem encreesceth and aggreggeth oother.

'But certes, the wordes of the phisiciens sholde been understonden in this wise; for good and wikkednesse been two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeance and suffraunce, discord and accord, and manye othere thynges; [2480] but certes, wikkednesse shal be warished by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of othere thynges; and heer-to accordeth Seint Paul the Apostle in manye places.

'He seith, "Ne yeldeth nat harm for harm, ne wikked speche for wikked speche; but do wel to hym that dooth thee harm, and blesse hym that seith to thee harm." And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and accord.

[2485] 'But now wol I speke to yow of the conseil which that was yeven to yow by the men of lawe, and the wise folk, that seyden alle by oon accord, as ye han herd bifore, that over alle thynges ye sholde doon youre diligence to kepen youre persone and to warnestoore youre hous; and seyden also, that in this caas yow oghten for to werken ful avysely

<sup>2485.</sup> *sentence, H entente.*

and with greet deliberacioun. And, sire, as to the firste point that toucheth to the keepyng of youre persone, [2490] ye shul understonde that he that hath werre shal evermoore mekely and devoutly preyen, bifore alle thynges, that Jhesus Crist of his grete mercy wol han hym in his proteccioun and been his sovereyn, helpyng at his nede; for certes, in this world ther is no wight that may be conselled ne kept sufficently withouten the keepyng of oure Lord Jhesu Crist.

'To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that seith, "If God ne kepe the citee, in ydel waketh he that it kepeth." [2495] Now, sire, thanne shul ye committe the keepyng of youre persone to youre trewe freendes that been approved and knowe, and of hem shul ye axen helpe, youre persone for to kepe, for Catoun seith, "If thou hast nede of help, axe it of thy freendes, for ther nys noon so good a phisicien as thy trewe freend."

'And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle straunge folk, and fro lyeres, and have alwey in suspect hire compaignye, for Piers Alfonse seith, "Ne task no compaignye by the weye of straunge men, but if so be that thou have knowe hym of a lenger tyme. [2500] And if so be, that he be falle into thy compaignye, paraventure, withouten thyn assent, enquire thanne, as subtilly as thou mayst, of his conversacioun, and of his lyf bifore, and feyne thy wey,—seye that thou goost thider as thou wolt nat go,—and if he bereth a spere, hoold thee on the right syde, and if he bere a swerd, hoold thee on his left syde." And after this thanne shul ye kepe yow wisely from all swich manere peple as I have seyde bifore, and hem and hir conseil eschewe.

'And after this, thanne shul ye kepe yow in swich manere [2505] that for any presumpcioun of youre strengthe, that ye ne dispise nat ne accounte nat the myght

of youre adversarie so litel that ye lete the keepyng of youre persone for youre presumpcioun; for every wys man dredeth his enemy, and Salomon seith, "Weleful is he that of alle hath drede, for certes, he that thurgh the hardynes of his herte and thurgh the hardynes of hymself hath to greet presumpcioun, hym shal yvel bityde." Thanne shul ye evermoore countrewayte embusshementz and alle espaille. [2510] For Senec seith, that the wise man that dredeth harmes escheweth harmes, ne he ne falleth into perils that perils escheweth. And, al be it so that it seme that thou art in siker place, yet shaltow alwey do thy diligence in keepyng of thy persone; this is to seyn, ne be nat negligent to kepe thy persone, nat oonly fro thy gretteste enemys, but fro thy leeste enemy. Senec seith, "A man that is wel avysed, he dredeth his leste enemye." [2515] Ovyde seith that the litel wesele wol see the grete bole and the wilde hert. And the book seith, "A litel thorn may prikke a greet kyng ful soore, and an hound wol holde the wilde boor."

'But natheles, I sey nat thou shalt be coward, that thou doute ther wher as is no drede. The book seith that somme folk han greet lust to deceyve, but yet they dreden hem to be deceyved. Yet shaltow drede to been empoisoned, and kepe yow from the compaignye of scorneres, [2520] for the book seith, "With scorneres make no compaignye, but flee hire wordes as venym."

'Now as to the seconde point; where as youre wise conseilours counselled yow to warnestoore youre hous with greet dili gence, I wolde fayn knowe how that ye understonde thilke wordes, and what is youre sentence.'

Melibeus answerde and seyde, 'Certes, I understande it in this wise: That I

2495. Catoun, *De Moribus*, iv. 13:

'Auxilium a nobis petito, si forte laboras.

Nec quisquam melior medicus quam fidus amicus.'

2495. Piers Alfonse, *Disc. Cler.* xviii. 20.

2510. Senec seith, *Publius Syrus*, Sent. 542.

2510. *that dredeth, E he dredeth.*

2510. Senec seith, *Publius Syrus*, Sentent

255: om. E.

2515. Ovyde, *De Rem. Am. B.* 25, 26.

2520. *counselled, H warned.*

shal warnestoore myn hous with toures,  
swiche as han castelles, and othere  
manere edifices, and armure and artelries,  
by whiche thynges I may my persone and  
myn hous so kepen and defenden, that  
myne enemyis shul been in drede myn  
hous for to approche.'

[2525] To this sentence answerde anon  
Prudence. 'Warnestooring,' quod she,  
'of heighe toures and of grete edifices  
appertyneth somtyme to pryde and eek  
men make heihe toures with grete cō-  
tages and with greet travaille, and whan  
that they been accomplied yet be they  
nat worth a stree, but if they be defended  
by trewe freendes that been olde and  
wise. And understood wel that the  
gretteste and strongeste garnyson that a  
riche man may have, as wel to kepen his  
persone as his goodes, is that he be  
biloved amonges his subgetz and with  
his neighebores; for thus seith Tullius,  
that ther is a manere garnysoun that no  
man may venquysse ne disconfite, and  
that is [2530] a lord to be biloved of his  
citeizins and of his peple.

'Now, sire, as to the thridde point,  
where as youre olde and wise conseilours  
seyden that yow ne oghte nat sodeynly  
ne hastily proceden in this nede, but that  
yow oghte purveyen and apparailen yow  
in this caas with greet diligence and greet  
deliberacioun, trewely, I trow that they  
seyden right wisely and right sooth, for  
Tullius seith, "In every nede er thou  
bigynne it, apparaille thee with greet  
diligence." [2535] Thanne seye I that in  
vengeance takyng, in werre, in bataille,  
and in warnestooring, er thou bigynne,  
I rede that thou apparaille thee therto  
and do it with greet deliberacioun, for  
Tullius seith, "The longe apparaillyng  
bifore the bataille maketh short victorie,"

2520. *hepen*, H *hepen and edifen*.

2525. *appertyneth* . . . *toures*, text from  
Corpus; KH<sup>6</sup> om.

2525. *and strongeste*, H *strength or*.

2525. *Tullius*, rather Seneca, *De Clementia*,  
l. 19. 5: 'Unum est inexpugnabile munimentum,  
amor civium.'

2530. *Tullius*, *De Offic.* l. 11. 73.

and Cassidorus seith, "The garnyson is  
stronger whan it is longe tyme avysed."

'But now lat us speken of the conseil  
that was accorded by youre neighebores,  
swiche as doon yow reverence withouten  
love, [2540] youre olde enemyis reconciled,  
youre flatereres, that conseilled yow  
certeyne thynges prively, and openly  
conseilleden yow the contrarie, the yonge  
folk also, that conseilleden yow to venge  
yow, and make werre anon. And certes,  
sire, as I have seyde bifore, ye han greetly  
erred to han cleped swich manere folk to  
youre conseil, which conseilours been  
ynogh reprieved by the resouns aforesayd.

[2545] 'But natheles, lat us now  
descende to the special. Ye shuln first  
procede after the doctrine of Tullius.  
Certes, the trouthe of this matiere, or of  
this conseil, nedeth nat diligently enquire,  
for it is wel wist whiche they been that  
han doon to yow this trespas and vileynye,  
and how manye trespassours and in what  
manere they han to yow doon all this  
wrong and all this vileynye. And after  
this thanne shul ye examyne the seconde  
condicioun which that the same Tullius  
addeth in this matiere; [2550] for Tullius  
put a thyng which that he clepeth con-  
sentyng, this is to seyn, who been they,  
and how manye and whiche been they,  
that consenten to thy conseil, in thy  
wilfulnesse to doon hastif vengeance.  
And lat us considere also who been they,  
and how manye been they, and whiche  
been they, that consenteden to youre  
adversaries. And certes, as to the firste  
poynt, it is wel known whiche folk been  
they that consenteden to youre hastif  
wilfulnesse; for trewely, alle tho that  
conseilleden yow to maken sodeyn werre  
ne been nat youre freendes.

[2555] 'Lat us now considere whiche  
been they that ye holde so greetly youre  
freendes as to youre persone; for al be  
it so that ye be myghty and riche, certes,  
ye ne been nat but allone; for certes, ye  
ne han no child but a doghter, ne ye ne

2535. *Cassidorus*, *Varianus*. Lib. I. Ep. 17.

2545. *Tullius*, cp. *De Offic.* li. 5. 18.

'A!' quod Melibee, 'this vengeance liketh me no thyng. [2635] I bithenke me now, and take heede how Fortune hath norissed me fro my childhede, and hath holpen me to passe many a stroong paas. Now wol I assayen hire, trowynge with Goddes helpe that she shal helpe me my shame for to venge.'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'if ye wol werke by my conseil ye shul nat asseye Fortune by no wey, ne ye shul nat lene or bowe unto hire after the word of Senec, for thynges that been folly doon and that been in hope of Fortune shullen never come to goode ende. [2640] And, as the same Senec seith, "The moore cleer and the moore shynynge that Fortune is, the moore brotil and the sonner broken she is; trusteth nat in hire, for she nys nat stidefaste, ne stable, for whan thou trowest to be moost seur and siker of hire helpe, she wol faille thee and deceyve thee." And where as ye seyn that Fortune hath norissed yow fro youre childhede, I seye, that in so muchel shul ye the lasse truste in hire and in hir wit; [2645] for Senec seith, "What man that is norissed by Fortune she maketh hym a greet fool." Now thanne, syn ye desire and axe vengeance, and the vengeance that is doon after the lawe and before the juge ne liketh yow nat, and the vengeance that is doon in hope of Fortune is perilous and uncertein, thanne have ye noon oother remedie, but for to have youre recours unto the sovereyn juge that vengeth alle vileynyes and wronges, and he shal venge yow after that hym-self witnesseth, where as he seith, [2650] "Leveth the vengeance to me, and I shal do it."

Melibee answerde, 'If I ne venge me nat of the vileynye that men han doon to me, I sompne or warne hem that han doon to me that vileynye, and alle

othere, to do me another vileynye. For it is writen, "If thou take no vengeance of an oold vileynye, thou sompnest thyne adversaries to do thee a newe vileynye." And also for my suffraunce men wolden do to me so muchel vileynye that I myghte neither bere it ne susteine, [2655] and so sholde I been put and holden over lowe. For men seyn, "In muchel suffrynge shul manye thynges falle unto thee whiche thou shalt nat mowe suffre."

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'I graunte yow that over muchel suffraunce nys nat good, but yet ne folweth it nat ther-of that every persone to whom men doon vileynye take of it vengeance; for that aperteneth and longeth al oonly to the juges, for they shul venge the vileynyes and injuries; [2660] and therfore tho two auctoritees that ye han seyde above been oonly understanden in the juges, for whan they suffren over muchel the wronges and the vileynyes to be doon withouten punysshynge, they sompne nat a man al oonly for to do newe wronges, but they comanden it. Also a wys man seith that the juge that correcteth nat the synnere comandeth and biddeth hym do synne; and the juges and sovereyns myghten in hir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and mysdoeres, [2665] that they sholden, by swick suffraunce, by proces of tyme wexen of swich power and myght that they sholden putte out the juges and the sovereyns from hir places, and atte laste maken hem lesen hire lordshipes.

'But lat us now putte that ye have leve to venge yow. I seye ye been nat of myght and power as now to venge yow; for if ye wole maken comparisoun unto the myght of youre adversaries, ye shul fynde in manye thynges that I have shewed yow er this that hire condicioun is bettre than youre; [2670] and therfore seye I that it is good as now that ye suffre and be pacient.

'Forthermoore, ye knowen wel that

2635. *stroong paas*, H. *strayt passage*.  
2635. *Senec*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 320.  
2640. *broken she is*, JH *brekeeth she*: for the quotation see Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 189: 'Fortuna vitrea est et cum splendet, fragitur.'  
2645. *Senec*, Publil. Syrus, Sentent. 173.

2660. *a wys man*, Cic. Balbus, *De Nati. Phil.*: 'Qui non corrigit peccantem peccant imperat.'

after the comune sawe, it is a woodnesse a man to stryve with a strenger, or a moore myghty man, than he is hymself; and for to stryve with a man of evene strength, that is to seyn, with as stronge a man as he, it is peril; and for to stryve with a weyker man, it is folie; and therefore sholde a man flee stryvynge as muchel as he myghte; [2675] for Salomon seith, "It is a greet worshippe to a man to kepen hym fro noyse and stryf." And if it so bifalle or happe that a man of gretter myght and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, studie and bisye thee rather to stille the same grevaunce, than for to venge thee; for Senec seith, that "He putteth hym in greet peril that stryveth with a gretter man than he is hymself"; and Catoun seith, "If a man of hyer estaat or degree, or moore myghty than thou, do thee any or grevaunce, suffre hym, [2680] for he that oones hath greved thee, another tyme may relieve thee and helpe."

'Yet sette I caas ye have bothe myght and licence for to venge yow, I seye that ther be ful manye thynges that shul restreyn yow of vengeance-takinge, and make yow for to encline to suffre and for to han pacience in the thynges that han been doon to yow. First and forward, if ye wole considere the defautes that been in your owene persone, [2685] for whiche defautes God hath suffred yow have this tribulacioun, as I have seyd yow heer bifore; for the poete seith, that we oghte paciently taken the tribulacions that comen to us when we thynken and consideren that we han disserved to have hem; and Saint Gregorie seith, that whan a man considereth wel the nombre of his defautes and of his synnes, the peynes and the tribulaciouns that he suffreth semen the lease unto hym; and in as muche as hym thynketh his synnes moore hevvy and grevous, [2690] in so

muche semeth his peyne the lighter, and the esier unto hym.

'Also ye owen to encline and bowe youre herte to take the pacience of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, as seith Saint Peter in his Epistles: "Jhesu Crist," he seith, "hath suffred for us and yeven ensample to every man to folwe and sewe hym; for he dide never synne, ne never cam ther a vileynous word out of his mouth; whan men cursed hym he cursed hem noght, and whan men betten hym he manaced hem noght." [2695] Also the grete pacience which the seintes that been in paradys han had in tribulaciouns that they han y-suffred withouten hir desert or gilt oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience. Forthermoore, ye sholde enforce yow to have pacience, considerynge that the tribulaciouns of this world but litel while endure, and soone passed been and goone, and the joye that a man seketh to have by pacience in tribulaciouns is perdurable, after that, the Apostle seith in his Epistle, [2700] "The joye of God," he seith, "is perdurable," that is to seyn, everelastyng.

'Also trowe and bileveth stedefastly that he nys nat wel y-norised, ne wel y-taught, that kan nat have pacience, or wol nat receyve pacience; for Salomon seith that the doctrine and the wit of a man is knowen by pacience. And in another place he seith that he that is pacient governeth hym by greet prudence. And the same Salomon seith, "The angry and wrathful man maketh noyses, and the pacient man atempreth hem and stilleth." [2705] He seith also, "It is moore worth to be pacient, than for to be right strong," and he that may have the lordshipe of his owene herte is moore to preye than he that by his force or strengthe taketh grete cites; and therefore seith Saint Jame in his Epistle, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun.'

'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow, dame Prudence, that pacience is a greet vertu of perfeccioun, but every man may nat have the perfeccioun that ye

2670. the comune sawe, from Seneca, *De Ira*, 34. 2.

2675. Senec, Publilius Syrus, Sent. 483.

2675. Catoun, *De Moribus*, iv. 39.

2680. greved thee, *Et don the a grevaunce.*



seken, [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre of right parfite men, for myn herte may never been in pees unto the tyme it be venged; and al be it so that it was greet peril to myne enemyes to do me a vileynye in takynge vengeance upon me, yet tooken they noon heede of the peril, but fulfilleden hir wikked wyl, and hir corage; and therefore, me thynketh, men oghten nat repreve me, though I putte me in a litel peril for to venge me, [2715] and though I do a greet excesse, that is to seyn, that I venge oon outrage by another.'

'A!' quod dame Prudence, 'ye seyn youre wyl and as yow liketh, but in no caas of the world a man sholde nat doon outrage, ne excesse, for to vengen hym; for Cassidore seith that as yvele dooth he that vengeth hym by outrage as he that dooth the outrage; and therefore, ye shul venge yow after the ordre of right, that is to seyn, by the lawe, and noght by excesse ne by outrage. [2720] And also, if ye wol venge yow of the outrage of youre adversaries in oother manere than right comandeth, ye synnen; and therefore seith Senec, that a man shal never vengen shrewednesse by shrewednesse. And if ye seye that right axeth a man to defenden violence by violence, and fightyng by fightyng, certes ye seye sooth, whan the defense is doon anon withouten intervale or withouten taryng or delay, for to defenden hym and nat for to vengen hym. [2725] And it bihoveth that a man putte swich attemperance in his defense that men have no cause ne matiere to repreven hym that defendeth hym of excesse and outrage, for ellis were it agayn resoun. *Pardes* ye knowen wel that ye maken no defense as now for to defende yow, but for to venge yow; and so sheweth it that ye han no wyl to do youre dede attemprely, and therefore me thynketh that pacience is good, for Salomon seith that he that is nat pacient shal have greet harm.'

<sup>2715.</sup> *Cassidore, Varior. l. 20.*

<sup>2720.</sup> *Senec, the pseudo-Seneca, De Moribus,*

<sup>2725.</sup>

<sup>2725.</sup> *sheweth, H. semeth, Camb. s. semeth.*

[2730] 'Certes,' quod Melibee, 'I graunte yow that whan a man is impacient and wrooth, of that that toucheth hym noght and that aperteneth nat unto hym, though it harme hym, it is no wonder; for the lawe seith that he is culpable that entremetteth or medleth with swych thyng as aperteneth nat unto hym. And Salomon seith, that he that entremetteth hym of the noyse or strif of another man is lyk to hym that taketh an hound by the eris; for right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eris is outhwhile biten with the hound, right in the same wise is it resoun that he have harm that by his impacience medleth hym of the noyse of another man whereas it aperteneth nat unto hym. [2735] But ye knowen wel that this dede, that is to seyn, my grief and my disese, toucheth me right ny, and therefore, though I be wrooth and impacient, it is no merveille; and, savyngge youre grace, I kan nat seen that it myghte greetly harme me though I tooke vengcaunce, for I am richer and moore myghty than myne enemyes been. And wel knowen ye that by moneye and by havynge grete possessions been alle the thynges of this world governed; [2740] and Salomon seith, that alle thynges obeyen to moneye.'

Whan Prudence hadde herd hir hous bonde avanten hym of his richesse and of his moneye, dispreisynge the power of his adversaries, she spak, and seyde in this wise: 'Certes, deere sire, I graunte yow that ye been riche and myghty, and that the richesces been goode to hem that han wel y-geten hem and wel konne usen hem; for, right as the body of a man may nat lyven withoute the soule, namoore may it lyve withouten temporeel goodes; [2745] and for richesces may a man gete hym grete freendes. And therefore seith Pamphilus, "If a netherdes doghter," seith he, "be riche, she may chesen of a thousand men which she wol take to het

<sup>2745.</sup> *Pamphilus, Pamphilus, De Amoris:*

'Dummodo sit dives cuiusdam nati beuolui  
Eligit a mille quolibet ipse viro.'

housebonde," for of a thousand men oon wol nat forsaken hire ne refusen hire. And this Pamphilles seith also, "If thou be right happy, that is to seyn, if thou be right riche, thou shalt fynde a greet nombre of felawes and freendes; and if thy fortune change that thou wexe poure, farewell freendshipe and felaweshipe, [2750] for thou shalt be al alloone withouten any compaignye, but if it be the compaignye of poure folk." And yet seith this Pamphilles moreover, that they that been thralle and bonde of lynage shullen been maad worthy and noble by the riches. And right so as by riches the comen manye goodes, right so by poverté come ther manye harmes and yveles; for greet poverté constreyneth a man to do manye yveles, and therefore clepeth Cassidore poverté the mooder of ruyne,—[2755] that is to seyn, the mooder of overthrowng or fallynge down. And therefore seith Piers Alfonso, "Oon of the gretteste adversites of this world is whan a free man, by kynde or by burthe, is constreyned by poverté to eten the almesse of his enemy"; and the same seith Innocent in oon of his bookes; he seith that sorweful and myshappy is the condicioun of a poure beggere, for if he axe nat his mete he dyeth for hunger, [2760] and if he axe, he dyeth for shame; and algates necessite constreyneth hym to axe. And therefore seith Salomon that bet it is to dye than for to have swich poverté. And as the same Salomon seith, "Betre it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to lyven in swich wise." By this resons that I have seid unto yow, and by manye othere resons that I koude seye, I graunte yow that riches been goode to hem that geten hem wel and to hem that wel usen tho riches. [2765] And therefore wol I shewe yow how ye

shul have yow, and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of riches, and in what manere ye shul usen hem.

'First, ye shul geten hem wjthouten greet desir, by good leyser, sokyngly, and nat over hastily; for a man that is to desiryng to gete riches abaundoneth hym first to thefte, and to alle other yveles; and therefore seith Salomon, "He that hasteth hym to bisily to wexe riche shal be noon innocent." He seith also, that the riches that hastily cometh to a man soone and lightly gooth and passeth fro a man; [2770] but that riches that cometh litel and litel wexeth alwey and multiplieth. And, sirc, ye shul geten riches by youre wit and by youre travaille unto youre profit, and that withouten wrong or harm-doyng to any oother persone; for the lawe seith that ther maketh no man himselven riche if he do harm to another wight: this is to seyn, that nature defendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make hymself riche unto the harm of another persone. [2775] And Tullius seith that no sorwe, ne no drede of deeth, ne no thyng that may falle unto a man, is so muchel agayns nature as a man to encressen his owene profit to the harm of another man. And though the grete men and the myghty men geten riches moore lightly than thou, yet shaltou nat been ydel ne slow to do thy profit; for thou shalt in alle wise flee ydelnesse; for Salomon seith that ydelnesse techeth a man to do manye yveles. [2780] And the same Salomon seith that he that travailleth and bisieth hym to tilien his land shal eten breed, but he that is ydel and casteth hym to no bisynesse ne occupacioun shal falle into poverté, and dye for hunger. And he that is ydel and slow kan never fynde covenable tyme for to doon his profit; for ther is a versifiour seith that the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter by cause of

2750. *Cassidore, Variar.* ix. 13: 'mater criminum necessitas.

2755. *Piers Alfonso, Discip.* cliv. 5.

2755. *Innocent* [III.], *De Contemptu Mundi*, i. 14; the passage verified by Chaucer in the Prologue to the Man of Law's Tale.

2765. *wol I shewe yow*, etc. The substance of the next seventy paragraphs is not given by

Albertanus Brixiensis in his *Liber Consolationis*, but he refers to a section of his own work *De Amori Dei et Proximi*, whence the French translator, whom Chaucer follows, doubtless took them.

the grete coold, and in somer by enchesoun of the heete. For thise causes seith Caton, "Waketh and enclyneth nat yow over muchel for to slepe, for over muchel reste norisseth and causeth manye vices." [2785] And therfore seith Seint Jerome, "Dooth somme goode deedes, that the devel, which is oure enemy, ne fynde yow nat unoccupied. For the devel ne taketh nat lightly unto his werkynge swiche as he fyndeth occupied in goode werkes."

'Thanne thus in getynge richesces ye mosten flee ydelnesse; and afterward ye shul use the richesces whiche ye have geten by youre wit and by youre travaille, in swich a manere that men holde nat yow to scars, ne to sparynge, ne to fool large, —that is to seyn, over large a spendere; [2790] for right as men blamen an avaricious man by cause of his scarsetee and chyngerie, in the same wise is he to blame that spendeth over largely. And therfore seith Caton, "Use," he seith, "thy richesces that thou hast geten in swich a manere that men have no matiere ne cause to calle thee neither wrecche ne chynche; for it is a greet shame to a man to have a povere herte and a riche purs." [2795] He seith also, "The goodes that thou hast y-geten, use hem by mesure, that is to seyn, spende hem mesurably; for they that folily wasten and despenden the goodes that they han, when they han namoore propre of hir owene, they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man."

'I seye thanne that ye shul fleen avarice, usynge youre richesces in swich manere that men seye nat that youre richesces been y-buried, [2800] but that ye have hem in youre myght and in youre weeldynge; for a wys man repreveith the avaricious man and seith thus in two vers: "Wherto and why burieth a man his goodes by his grete avarice, and knoweth wel that nedes moste he dye, for deeth is the ende of every man, as in this present lyf; and for what cause or enchesoun joyneith he hym or knytteth he hym so faste unto his goodes [2805] that alle his wittes mogren nat disseveren hym or

departen hym from his goodes; and knoweth wel, or oghte knowe, that whan he is deed he shal no thyng bere with hym out of this world?" And therfore seith Seint Augustyn, that the avaricious man is likned unto helle, that the moore it swelweth the moore desir it hath to swelwe and devoure. And as wel as ye wolde eschewe to be called an avaricious man or thynche, [2810] as wel sholde ye kepe yow and governe yow in swich a wise that men calle yow nat fool-large. Therfore seith Tullius, "The goodes," he seith, "of thyn hous ne sholde nat been hyd, ne kept so cloos but that they myghte been opened by pitee and debonairetee," —that is to seyn, to yeven part to hem that han greet neede, —"ne thy goodes shullen nat been so opene to been every mannes goodes."

'Afterward, in getynge of youre richesces and in usynge hem, ye shul alwey have thre thynges in youre herte, [2815] that is to seyn, oure Lord God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shul have God in youre herte, and for no richesce ye shullen do no thyng which may in any manere displese God, that is youre creatour and makere; for after the word of Salomon, "It is better to have a litel good with the love of God, than to have muchel good and tresour and lese the love of his Lord God." [2820] And the prophete seith that better it is to been a good man and have litel good and tresour, than to been holden a shrew, and have grete richesces. And yet seye I ferthermoore, that ye sholde alwey donn youre bisynesse to gete yow richesces, so that ye gete hem with good conscience; and thaпostle seith that ther nys thyng in this world of which we sholden have so greet joye as whan oure conscience bereth us good witnesse; [2825] and the wise man seith, "The substance of a man is ful good whan synne is pat in mannes conscience."

'Afterward, in getynge of youre richesces and in usynge of hem, ye moste have greet bisynesse and greet

diligence that youre goode name be alwey kept and conservyd, for Salomon seith that better it is and moore it availleth a man to have a good name than for to have grette richesses. And therefore he seith in another place, "Do greet diligence," seith Salomon, "in kepyng of thy frend and of thy goode name, [2830] for it shal lenger abide with thee than any resour, be it never so precious." And xetes, he sholde nat be called a gentil nan that after God and good conscience, alle thynges left, ne dooth his diligence and bysynesse to kepen his good name. And Cassidore seith that it is signe of gentil herte whan a man loveth and desireth to han a good name. And therefore seith Seint Augustyn, that ther been two thynges that are necessarie and nedefulle, and that is, good conscience and good loos; [2835] that is to seyn, good conscience to thyn owene persone inward, and good loos for thy neighebores outward. And he that trusteth hym so muchel in his goode conscience that he displeth and setteth at noght his goode name or loos, and rekketh noght though he kepe nat his goode name, nys but a cruel cherl.

'Sire, now have I shewed yow how ye shul do in getyng richesses, and how ye shullen usen hem, and I se wel that for the trust that ye han in youre richesses ye wole move werre and bataille. [2840] I conselle yow that ye bigynne no werre in trust of youre richesses, for they ne suffisen noght werres to mayntene. And therefore seith a philosopre, "That man that desireth and wole algaes han werre shal never have suffisaunce, for the richer that he is, the gretter despenses moste he make if he wole have worshippe and victorie." And Salomon seith that the gretter richesses that a man hath, the moore despendours he hath. And, deere sire, al be it so that for youre richesses ye mowe have muchel folk, [2845] yet bihoveth it nat, ne it is nat good to bigynne werre where as ye mowe in oother manere have pees unto yowre worshippe and profit. For

the victories of batailles that been in this world lyen nat in greet nombre or multitude of the peple, ne in the vertu of man, but it lith in the wyl and in the hand of oure Lord God Almyghty.

'And therefore Judas Machabeus, which was Goddes knyght, whan he sholde fighte agayn his adversarie that hadde a greet nombre and a gretter multitude of folk and stronger than was this peple of Machabee, [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye, and seyde right in this wise: "Als lightly," quod he, "may oure Lord God Almyghty yewe victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk, for the victorie of a bataille comth nat by the grette nombre of peple, but it come from oure Lord God of hevene."

'And, deere sire, for as muchel as ther is no man certain if he be worthy that God yewe hym victorie [no more than he is sure whether he is worthy of the love of God] or naught, after that Salomon seith, [2855] therefore every man sholde greetly drede werres to bigynne. And by cause that in batailles fallen manye perils, and happeth outhur while that as soone is the grette man slayn as the litel man; and as it is written in the seconde book of Kynges, "The dedes of batailles been aventureuse and no thyng certeyne, for as lightly is oon hurt with a spere as another"; [2860] and for ther is gret peril in werre, therefore sholde a man flee and eschue werre, in as muchel as a man may goodly, for Salomon seith, "He that loveth peril shal falle in peril."

After that dame Prudence hadde spoken in this manere, Melibee answerde and seyde, 'I see wel, dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes, and by youre resouns that ye han shewed me, that the werre liketh yow no thyng; but I have nat yet herd youre conseil, how I shal do in this nede.'

2845. *greet nombre*, H<sup>2</sup> *gretter for greet*.

2850. *compaignye*, H *peple*.

2860. [*no more*, etc.] The words bracketed are supplied from the French.

2855. *manye perils*, H *many mervayles and periles*.

[2865] 'Certes,' quod she, 'I conseilliche yow that ye accorde with youre adversaries and that ye have pees with nem; for Seint Jame seith, in his Epistles, that by concord and pees the smale richesses wexen grete, and by debaat and discord the grete richesses fallen down; and ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and moost sovereyn thyng that is in this world is unytee and pees. And therefore seyde oure Lord Jhesu Crist to his Apostles in this wise, [2870] "Wel happy and blessed been they that loven and purchacen pees, for they been called children of God."'

A! quod Melibee, 'now se I wel that ye loven nat myn honour ne myn worships. Ye knowen wel that myne adversaries han bigonnen this debaat and bryge by hire outrage, and ye se wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees, ne they asken nat to be reconciled. Wol ye thanne that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem and crie hem mercy? [2875] For sothe that were nat my worships; for right as men seyn that over greet hoomlynnesse engendreth dispreisyng, so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse.'

Thanne bigan dame Prudence to maken semblant of wratthe, and seyde, 'Certes, sire, sauf youre grace, I love youre honour and youre profit as I do myn owene, and ever have doon; ne ye, ne noon oother, syen never the contraire! [2880] And yif if I hadde seyde that ye sholde han purchaced the pees and the reconciliacioun, I ne hadde nat muchel mystaken me, ne seyde amys; for the wise man seith, "the dissensioun bigynneth by another man and the reconciling bygynneth by thy self"; and the prophete seith, "Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse, seke pees and folwe it, as muchel as in thee is." Yet seye I nat that ye shul rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees than they shuln to yow; [2885] for I knowe wel that ye been so

hard-herted that ye wol do no thyng for me; and Salomon seith, "He that hath over hard an herte atte laste he shal myshappe and mystyde."'

Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe, he seyde in this wise: 'Dame, I prey yow that ye be nat displeased of thynges that I seye, for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth, and that is no wonder, [2890] and they that been wrothe witen nat wel what they don, ne what they seyn; therefore the prophete seith that troubled eyen han no cleer sighte. But seyeth and conseilthe me as yow liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire, and if ye repreve me of my folye I am the moore holden to love yow and preyse yow; for Salomon seith that he that repreveth hym that dooth folye [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace than he that deceyveth hym by sweete wordes.'

Thanne seide dame Prudence, 'I make no semblant of wratthe ne anger but for youre grete profit; for Salomon seith, "He is moore worth that repreveth or chideth a fool for his folye, shewynge hym semblant of wratthe, than he that supporteth hym and preyseth hym in his mysdoynge, and laugheth at his folye." And this same Salomon seith afterward that by the sorweful visage of a man, that is to seyn, by the sory and hevy countenance of a man, [2900] the fool correcteth and amendeth hymself.'

Thanne seyde Melibee, 'I shal nat konne answeere to so manye faire resouns as ye putten to me and shewen; seyeth shortly youre wyl and youre conseil, and I am al redy to fulfille and parfoune it.'

Thanne dame Prudence discovered al hir wyl to hym, and seyde, 'I conseilliche yow,' quod she, 'aboven alle thynges, that ye make pees bitwene God and yow, [2905] and beth reconciled unto hym and to his grace; for as I have seyde yow heer bifore, God hath suffred yow to have this tribulacioun and disese for youre synnes, and if ye do as I sey yow, God

2880. shrewednesse, H schams and schrewednesse.

2900. hir wyl, H hire counsaill and hire will.

wol sende youre adversaries unto yow  
and maken hem fallen at youre feet redy  
to do youre wyl and youre comande-  
mentz; for Salomon seith, "Whan the  
condicio[n] of man is plesant and likynge  
to God, [2910] he chaungeth the hertes  
of the mannes adversaries and constreyneth  
hem to biseken hym of pees and of grace."  
And I prey yow, lat me speke with youre  
adversaries in pryvee place; for they shul  
nat knowe that it be of youre wyl or  
yours assent; and thanne, whan I knowe  
hir wil and hire entente, I may conseil-  
le yow the moore seurely.

'Dame,' quod Melibee, 'dooth youre  
wil and youre likynge, [2915] for I putte  
me hoolly in youre disposicioun and or-  
dinaunce.'

Thanne dame Prudence, whan she  
saugh the goode wyl of hir housbonde,  
delibered and took avys in herself, think-  
inge how she myghte brynge this nede  
into a good conclusioun and to a good  
shede. And whan she saugh hir tyme  
she sente for thise adversaries to come  
into hire into a pryvee place, and shewed  
wisely unto hem the grete goodes that  
comen of pees, [2920] and the grete  
harmes and perils that been in werre;  
and seyde to hem in a goodly manere  
how that hem oughten have greet repent-  
aunce of the injurie and wrong that they  
hadden doon to Melibee, hir lord, and  
to hire, and to hire doghter.

And whan they herden the goodliche  
wordes of dame Prudence, they weren so  
surprised and ravyshed, and hadden so  
greet joye of hire, that wonder was to  
telle. [2925] 'A! lady,' quod they, 'ye  
han shewed unto us the blessynge of  
swetnesse after the sawe of David the  
prophete; for the reconсылlynge which we  
been nat worthy to have in no manere,  
but we oghte requeren it with greet con-  
tricioun and humylitee, ye, of youre grete  
goodnesse, have presented unto us.  
Now se we wel that the science and the  
konnyng of Salomon is ful trewe, [2930]  
for he seith that sweete wordes mul-  
tiplen and encreasen freendes, and

maken shrewes to be debonaire and  
meeke.

'Certes,' quod they, 'we putten oure  
dede and al oure matere and cause  
al hoolly in youre goode wyl, and been  
redy to obeye to the speche and com-  
mandement of my lord Melibee. And  
therefore, deere and benygne lady, we  
preien yow and biseke yow as mekely as  
we konne and mowen, that it lyke unto  
yours grete goodnesse to fulfillen in dede  
yours goodliche wordes, [2935] for we con-  
sideren and knowelichen that we han  
offended and greved my lord Melibee out  
of mesure, so ferforth that we be nat of  
power to maken his amendes; and there-  
fore we oblige and bynden us and oure  
freendes to doon al his wyl and his  
comandementz. But peraventure he hath  
swich hevynesse and swich wratthe to us-  
ward by cause of oure offense, that he  
wole enjoyne us swich a peyne as we  
mowe nat bere ne sustene, [2940] and  
therefore, noble lady, we biseke to youre  
wommanly pitce to taken swich avyse-  
ment in this nede that we, ne oure freendes,  
be nat desherited, ne destroyed, thurgh  
oure folye.'

'Certes,' quod Prudence, 'it is an  
hard thyng and right perilous that a man  
putte hym al outrely in the arbitracioun  
and juggement, and in the myght and  
power of his enemys, for Salomon seith,  
"Leeveth me, and yeveth credence to  
that I shal seyn; I seye," quod he, "ye  
peple, folk and governours of hooly  
chirche, [2945] to thy sone, to thy wyf,  
to thy freend, ne to thy broother, ne yeve  
thou never myght ne maistrise of thy  
body whil thou lyvest."

'Now sithen he defendeth that man  
shal nat yeven to his broother, ne to his  
freend, the myght of his body, by streng-  
er resoun he defendeth and forbedeth a man  
to yeven hymself to his enemy. And  
natheles I conseilte you that ye mystruste  
nat my lord; [2950] for I woot wel and  
knowe verraily that he is debonaire and  
meeke, large, curteys, and no thyng  
desirous, ne covetous of good ne richesse;

for ther nys nothyng in this world that he desirith, save oonly worshiþe and honour. Forthermoore I knowe wel and am right seur that he shal no thyng doon in this nede withouten my conseil, and I shal so werken in this cause that, by grace of oure Lord God, ye shul been reconciled unto us.'

[2955] Thanne seyden they with o voys, 'Worshipful lady, we putten us and oure goodes al fully in youre wil and disposicioun, and been redy to comen what day that it like unto youre noblesse to lymyte us or assigne us, for to maken oure obligacioun and boond as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we mowe fulfille the wille of yow and of my lord Melibee.'

Whan dame Prudence hadde herd the answeres of thise men, she bad hem goon agayn prively, [2960] and she retourned to hir lord Melibee, and tolde hym how she foond his adversaries ful repentant, knowelechyng ful lowly hir synnes and trespas, and how they were redy to suffren all payne, requyringe and preyinge hym of mercy and pitee.

Thanne seyde Melibee, 'He is wel worthy to have pardoun and foryiffnesse of his syane that excuseth nat his synne, but knowlecheth it and repenteth hym, axinge indulgence. [2965] For Senec seith, "Ther is the remissioun and foryiffnesse, where as confessioun is"; for confessioun is neighbere to innocence. And he saith in another place that he that hath shame of his synne, and knowlecheth it, is worthi remysioun. And therefore I assente and conforme me to have pees; but it is good that we do it nat withouten the assent and wyl of oure freendes.'

Thanne was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and seyde, [2970] 'Certes, sire,' quod she, 'ye han wel and goodly

answered, for right as by the conseil, assent and helpe of youre freendes, ye han been stired to venge yow and maken werre, right so withouten hire conseil shul ye nat accorden yow, ne have pees with youre adversaries; for the lawe seith, "Ther nys no thyng so good by wey of kynde as a thyng to been unbounde by hym that it was y-bounde."

And thanne dame Prudence, withouten delay or tarynge, sente anon hire messages for hire kyn and for hire olde freendes, whiche that were trewe and wyse, [2975] and tolde hem by ordre, in the presence of Melibee, al this mateere as it is aboven expressed and declared, and preyden that they wolde yeven hire avys and conseil, what best were to doon in this nede. And whan Melibees freendes hadde taken hire avys and deliberacioun of the forsaide mateere, and hadden examyned it by greet bisynesse and greet diligence, they yave ful conseil for to have pees and reste, [2980] and that Melibee sholde receyve with good herte hise adversaries to foryiffnesse and mercy.

And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the assent of hir lord Melibee, and the conseil of his freendes accorde with hire wille and hire entencioun, she was wonderly glad in hire herte and seyde, 'Ther is an old proverbe,' quod she, 'seith that the goodnesse that thou mayst do this day, do it, [2985] and abide nat, ne delaye it nat til to morwe. And therfore I conseilte that ye sende youre messages, swiche as been discrete and wise, unto youre adversaries, tellynge hem on youre bihalve, that if they wole trete of pees and of accord, [2990] that they shape hem, withouten delay or taryng, to comen unto us.' Which thyng parfourned was in dede; and whanne thise trespassours and repentynge folk of hire folies,—that is to seyn, the adversaries of Melibee,—hadden herd what thise messagers seyden unto hem, they weren right glad and joyeful, and answereden ful mekely and benignely, yeldynge graces and thankynge to hir lord Melibee and to al his com-

2965. Senec, the pseudo-Seneca, *De Meritis*, 94.

2965. And he saith . . . remysioun, text from *Pekworth and Lansdowne* (the latter reading *mercy* for *remysioun*); other MSS. omit wholly or in part.

paignye, [2995] and shopen hem with-outen delay to go with the messagers, and obeie to the comandement of hir lord Melibee.

And right anon they taken hire wey to the court of Melibee, and taken with hem somme of hire trewe freendes to maken feith for hem and for to been hire borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee, he seyde hem thise wordes: 'It standeth thus,' quod Melibee, 'and sooth it is, that ye, [3000] causeless and withouten skile and rescoun, han doon grete injuries and wronges to me and to my wyf Prudence, and to my doghter also; for ye han entred in to myn hous by violence, and have doon swich outrage that alle men knowen wel that ye have disserved the deeth, and therefore wol I knowe and wite of yow [3005] whether ye wol putte the punyssement and the chastisyng and the vengeance of this outrage in the wyl of me and of my wyf Prudence, or ye wol nat?'

Thanne the wiseste of hem thre answerde for hem alle, and seyde, 'Sire,' quod he, 'we knowen wel that we been unworthy to comen unto the court of so greet a lord, and so worthy as ye been, for we han so greetly mystaken us, and han offended and agilt in swich a wise agayn youre heigh lordshipe that trewely we han disserved the deeth; [3010] but yet for the grete goodnesse and debonairetee that al the world witnesseth in youre persone, we submytten us to the excellence and benigntee of youre gracious lordshipe, and been redy to obeie to alle youre comandementz, bisekynge yow that of youre merciable pitee ye wol considere oure grete repentaunce and lough submyssioun, and graunten us foryevenesse of oure outrageous trespas and offense; [3015] for wel we knowe that youre liberal grace and mercy stretchen hem farther into goodnesse than doon oure outrageouse giltes and trespas into wikkednesse; al be it that cursedly and dampnably we han agilt agayn youre heigh lordshipe.'

Thanne Melibee took hem up fro the ground ful benignely, and receyved hir obligaciouns and hir boondes by hire othes upon hire plegges and borwes, and assigned hem a certeyn day to retourne unto his court, [3020] for to accepte and receyve the sentence and juggement that Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem by the causes aforesayd; whiche thynges ordeyned, every man returned to his hous.

And whan that dame Prudence saugh hir tyme, she freyned and axed hir lord Melibee what vengeance he thoughte to taken of his adversaries.

To which Melibee answerde and seyde, 'Certes,' quod he, 'I thynke and purpose me fully [3025] to desherite hem of al that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exil for ever.'

'Certes,' quod dame Prudence, 'this were a cruel sentence and muchel agayn rescoun; for ye been riche ynough and han no neede of oother mennes good, and ye myghte lightly in this wise gete yow a coveitous name, which is a vicious thyng and oghte been eschued of every good man; [3030] for after the sawe of the word of the Apostle, "Coveitise is roote of alle harmes." And therefore it were better for yow to lese so muchel good of youre owene than for to taken of hir good in this manere; for better it is to lesen with worshipe, than it is to wyinne with vileynye and shame; and everi man oghte to doon his diligence and his bisynesse to geten hym a good name. And yet shal he nat oonly bisie hym in keypyng of his good name, [3035] but he shal also enforcen hym alwey to do som thyng by which he may renouvelle his good name; for it is written "that the olde good loos and good name of a man is soone goon and passed whan it is nat newed ne renovelled."

'And as touchynge that ye seyn ye wole exile youre adversaries, that thynketh me muchel agayn rescoun, and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yewe yow upon himself. [3040] And



it is writen that he is worthy to lesen his privilege that mysuseth the myght and the power that is yeven hym. And I sette cas, ye myghte enioyne hem that peyne by right and by lawe, which I trowe ye mowe nat do; I seye ye mighte nat putten it to execucioun peraventure, and thanne were it likly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn; [3045] and therefore if ye wole that men do yow obeisance, ye moste deemen moore curteisly, this is to seyn, ye moste yeven moore esy sentences and juggementz. For it is writen that he that moost curteisly comandeth, to hym men moost obeyen. And therfore I prei yow that in this necessitee and in this nede ye caste yow to overcome youre herte. For Senec seith that he that overcometh his herte overcometh twies; [3050] and Tullius seith, "Ther is no thyng so comendable in a greet lord as when he is debonaire and meeke, and appeseth lightly." And I prei yow that ye wole forbere now to do vengeance in swich a manere, that youre goode name may be kept and conserved, and that men mowe have cause and mateere to preyse yow of pitee and of mercy, [3055] and that ye have no cause to repente yow of thyng that ye doon; for Senec seith, "He overcometh in an yvel manere that repenteth hym of his victorie." Wherefore, I pray yow, lat mercy been in youre mynde and in youre herte, to theeffect and entente that God Almyghty have mercy on yow in his laste juggement; for Seint Jame seith in his Epistle, "Juggement withouten mercy shal be doon to hym that hath no mercy of another wight!"

[3060] Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles and resouns of dame Prudence, and hire wise informaciouns and techynges, his herte gan enclyne to the wil of his wyf, considerynge hir trewe entente, and conformed hym anon and

3045. *Senec seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 64: 'His vincit qui se in victoris vincit.'

3050. *Tullius, De Offic. i. 25. 38.*

3055. *Senec seith*, Publil. Syrus, Sent. 366.

3055. *mercy, I mercy and pite.*

assented fully to werken after hir conseil; and thonked God, of whom procedeth al vertu and alle goodness, that hym sente a wyf of so greet discrecioun.

And whan the day cam that his adversaries sholde appieren in his presence, [3065] he spak unto hem ful goodly, and seyde in this wyse: 'Al be it so that of youre pride and presumpcioun and folie, and of youre negligence and unkonnyng, ye have mysborn yow and trespassed unto me; yet, for as muche as I see and biholde youre grete humylite, [3070] and that ye been sory and repentant of youre giltes, it constreyneth me to doon yow grace and mercy. Therefore. I receyve yow to my grace and foryeve yow outrely alle the offenses, injuries and wronges that ye have doon agayn me and myne; to this effect and to this ende, that God of his endeles mercy wole at the tyme of oure dyngge foryeven us oure giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wretched world; [3075] for douteles if we be sory and repentant of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the sighte of oure Lord God, he is so free and so merciable that he wole foryeven us oure giltes, and bryngen us to his blisse that never hath ende.' Amen.

*The murie wordes of the Host to the Monk*

Whan ended was my tale of Melibee, And of Prudence and hire benignytee, Oure Host seyde, 'As I am feithful man, And by that precious corpus Madrian, I haddé levere than a bare ale <sup>3083</sup> That goodé lief my wyf hadde herd this tale! For she nys no thyng of swich pacience As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence. By Goddés bonés! whan I bete my knaves, She bryngeth me forth the greté clobbéd staves

And crieth, "Slee the doggés everichoon,

3060. *conseil, I raad and counsaill.*

3082. *corpus Madrian*, the body of S. Mathurin, which would not accept burial except in France and then worked miracles.

And brek hem, bothe bak and every  
boon ! " 3090

'And if that any neighebore of myne  
Vol nat in chirche to my wyf enclyne,  
Or be so hardy to hire to trespase,  
Nhan she comth home she rampeth in  
my face,

And crieth, "False coward ! wrek thy wyf !  
By corpus bonés ! I wol have thy knyf,  
And thou shalt have my distaf and go  
spynne ! "

Fro day to nyght, right thus she wol  
bigynne, — 3098

"Allas !" she seith, "that ever I was shape  
To wedden a milksope or a coward ape,  
That wol been overlad with every wight !  
Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyvés  
right ! "

'This is my lif, but if that I wol fighte ;  
And out at dore anon I moot me dighte,  
Or elles I am but lost, but if that I  
Be lik a wildé leoun, fool-hardy.

I woot wel she wol do me sleece som day  
Som neighebore, and thanné go my way ;  
For I am perilous with knyf in honde ;  
Al be it that I dar hire nat withstonde,  
For she is byg in armés, by my feith, 3111  
That shal he fynde that hire mysdooth  
or seith.

But lat us passe away fro this mateere.

'My lord the Monk,' quod he, 'be  
myrie of cheere,

For ye shul telle a talé trewely.  
Ló ! Rouchestre stant heer fasté by !  
Ryde forth, myn owené lord, brek nat  
oure game,

But by my trouthe I knowé nat youre  
name, — 3128

Wher shal I callé you my lord daun John,  
Or daun Thomás, or ellés daun 'Albon ?  
Of what hous be ye, by youre fader kyn ?  
I vowe to God, thou hast a ful fair skyn !

It is a gentil pasture ther thou goost ;  
Thou art nat lyk a penant, or a goost.  
Upon my feith, thou art som officer,  
Som worthy sexteyn, or som celerer,  
For by my fader soule, as to my doom  
Thou art a maister, whan thou art at hoom ;  
No pious cloysterer, ne no novys,

3123. *son, H an.*

Bút a governour, wily and wys, 3130  
And therwithal of brawnés and of bones,  
A wel-farynge personé, for the nones.  
I pray to God, yeve hym confusioun  
That first thee broghte unto religioun.  
Thou woldest han been a tredé fowel a right ;  
Haddestow as greet a leeve as thou hast  
myght

To parfourne al thy lust in engendrure,  
Thou haddest bigeten ful many a créature.  
Allas ! why wercestow so wyd a cope ? 3139  
God yeve me sorwe ! but and I were a pope,  
Nat oonly thou, but every myghty man,  
Though he wereshorn ful hyc upon his pan,  
Sholde have a wyf, — for al the world is  
lorn ;

Religioun hath take up al the corn  
Of tredyng, and we borel men been  
shrympes ;

Of fieble trees ther comen wrecched ympes.  
This maketh that oure hcires beth so  
sklendre

And feble that they may nat wel engendre ;  
This maketh that oure wyvés wole assaye  
Religious folk, for ye mowe better paye  
Of Venus paiementz than mowé we. 3151  
God woot, no Lusshéburghes payen ye !  
But be nat wrooth, my lord, for that I  
pleye.

Ful ofte in game a soothe I have herd seye !'

This worthy Monk took al in pacience  
And seyde, 'I wol doon al my diligence,  
As fer as sowneth into honestee,  
To tellé yow a tale, or two, or three ;  
And if yow list to herkne hyderward,  
I wol yow seyn the lyf of Seint Edward,  
Or ellis, first, tragédies wol I telle, 3161  
Of whiche I have an hundred in my celle.

'Tragédie is to seyn a certeyn storie,  
As oldé bookés maken us mémorie,  
Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee,  
And is y-fallen out of heigh degree  
Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly ;  
And they ben versified communely  
Of six feet, which men clepen exametron.  
In prose eek been endited many oon, 3170

3137. *lust, H wil.*  
3138. *ful, om. H.*  
3152. *Lusshéburghes*, base coins imported  
from Luxemburg.

And eek in meetre in many a sondry wyse ;  
 Lo, this declaryng oghte ynogh suffice.  
 Now herkeneth, if yow liketh for to heere ;  
 But first, I yow bisecke in this mateere,  
 Though I by ordre tellé nat this thynges  
 Be it of popés, emperours, or kynges,  
 After hir agés as men writen fynde,  
 But tellen hem, som bifore and som  
 bihynde,  
 As it now comth unto my remembraunce,  
 Have me excuséd of myn ignoraunce.' 3180

### MONK'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Monkes Tale, de  
 Casibus Virorum Illustrium*

I wol biwaille, in manere of tragédie,  
 The harm of hem that stode in heigh  
 degree,  
 And fillen so that ther nas no remédie  
 To brynge hem out of hir adversitee ;  
 For certein, whan that Fortune list to flee,  
 Ther may no man the cours of hire with-  
 holde.

Lat no man truste on blynd prosperitee ;  
 Be war by thise ensamplés trewe and olde.

At LUCIFER,—though heanangel were,  
 And nat a man,—at hym wol I bigynne,  
 For though Fortuné may noon angel dere,  
 From heigh degree yet fel he for his synne  
 Down into hellé, where he yet is inne.  
 O Lucifer ! brightest of angels alle,  
 Now artow Sathanas, that mayst nat  
 twynne  
 Out of miserie in which that thou art falle.

Lo ADAM, in the feeld of Damysse,ne,  
 With Goddés owné fynger wrought was he,  
 And nat bigeten of mannés sperme unclene,  
 And welte all paradys savyngé o tree. 3200

*De Casibus Virorum Illustrium.* The title indicates Chaucer's obligations to Boccaccio's *De Cas. Vir. et Feminarum Illust.*, from which and the same author's *De Claris Mulieribus*, Boethius, *De Consolatione*, the *Roman de la Rose*, and the Bible the monk takes his 'old ensamples.'

3180. *Lucifer*, Chaucer's addition ; Boccaccio begins with Adam.

3200. *Damysse*, Damascus ; Boccaccio's 'Ager, qui postea Damascena.'

Hadde never worldly man so heigh degree  
 As Adam, til he for mysgovernance  
 Was dryven out of hys hye prosperitee  
 To labour, and to helle, and to mes-  
 chance.

Lo SAMPSON, which that was annunciat  
 By angel, longe er his nativitee,  
 And was to God Almyghty consecrat,  
 And stood in noblesse whil he myghté see.  
 Was never swich another as was hee,  
 To speke of strengthe, and therewith  
 hardynesse ;  
 But to his wyvés toolde he his secreet,  
 Thurgh whiche he slow hymself for  
 wrecchednesse. 3210

Sampson, this noble almyghty champioun,  
 Withouten wepene save his handés tweye,  
 He slow and al to-renté the leoun,  
 Toward his weddyng walkyngé by the  
 weye.  
 His falsé wyf koude hym so plesé an  
 preye  
 Til she his conseil knew ; and she, un  
 trewe,  
 Unto his foos his conseil gan biwreyc,  
 And hym forsook, and took another newe

Thre hundred foxes took Sampson for ire  
 And alle hir taylès he togydré bond,  
 And sette the foxes taylès alle on fire,  
 For he on every tayl had knyt a brond ;  
 And they brende alle the cornés in that  
 lond,

And alle hire olyveres, and vynés eke.  
 A thousand men he slow eek with his  
 hond,  
 And hadde no wepene but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slayn so thurstéd hym  
 that he 3220  
 Was wel ny lorn, for which he gan to prey  
 That God wolde on his peyne han som  
 pitee,  
 And sende hym drynke, or ellés moste  
 he deye

And of this asses cheké, that was dreye,  
 3205. *annunciat*, from Boccaccio's 'Annunciat  
 ante per angelum Deo,' but Chaucer's lines  
 points mainly from the Bible.

Out of a wang-tooth sprang anon a welle,  
Of which he drank ynow, shortly to seye;  
Thus heelpen hym God, as *Judicum* can  
telle.

By verray force at Gazan, on a nyght,  
Maugree Philistiens of that citee,  
The gates of the toun he hath up-plyght,  
And on his bak y-caryed hem hath hee 3240  
Iyeon an hillé, that men myghte hem see.  
O noble, almyghty Sampson, lief and deere,  
Had thou nat toold to wommen thy secree,  
In all this world ne haddé been thy peere!

This Sampson never ciser drank, ne wyn,  
Neon his heed cam rasour noon, ne sheere,  
By precept of the messenger divyn;  
For alle his strengthes in his heerés were;  
And fully twenty wynter, yeer by yeere,  
He hadde of Israel the governaunce; 3250  
But sooné shal he wepé many a teere,  
For wommen shal hym bryngen to mes-  
chaunce.

Unto his lemman Dalida he tolde  
That in his heeris al his strengthé lay,  
And falsly to his foomen she-hym solde;  
And slepyng in hir barm upon a day  
hemadeto clippe or shere his heres away,  
And made his foomen al his craft espyen;  
And whan that they hym foond in this array,  
They bounde hym faste and putten out  
his eyen. 3260

But er his heer were clipped or y-shave,  
Ther was no boond with which men  
myghte him bynde;  
But now is he in prison in a cave,  
Where-as they made hym at the queerne  
grynde.

O noble Sampson, strongest of mankynde,  
O whilom juge, in glorie and in richesse!  
Now maystow wepen with thyne eyen  
blynde,  
Sith thou fro wele art falle in wrecched-  
nese.

Thende of this caytyf was as I shal seye;  
His foomen made a feeste upon a day,  
And made hym as a fool biforn hem pleye;  
And *Judicum*, Book of Judges.

And this was in a temple of greet array;  
But atté laste he made a foul affray;  
För he the pilers shook and made hem  
falle,

And down fil temple and al, and ther it lay;  
And slow hymself, and eek his foomen alle:

This is to seyn, the prynces everichoon;  
And eek thes thousand bodyes were ther  
slayn

With fallynge of the greté temple of stoon.  
Of Sampson now wol I namooressayn; 3280  
Beth war by this ensample oold and playn  
That no men telle hir conseil til hir wyves  
Of swich thyng as they wolde han secree  
fayn,

If that it touche hir lymés or hir lyvéa.

Of HERCULES, the sowereyn conquer-  
our,

Syngen his werkéslaude and heigh renoun;  
For in histyme of strengthe he was the flour.  
He slow, and rafte the skyn of the leoun;  
He of Centauros leyde the boost adoun;  
He Arpies slow, the crueel bryddés felle;  
He golden apples rafte of the dragoun;  
He drew out Cerberus, the hound of helle;

He slow the crueel tyrant Busirus,  
And made his hors to frete hym, flesh  
and boon;

He slow the firy serpent venymus; 3295  
Of Acheloy's two hornés he brakoon;  
And he slow Cacus in a cave of stoon;  
He slow the geant Anthéus the stronge;  
He slow the grisly boor, and that anon;  
And bar the hevene on his nekké longe.

Was never wight sith that this world bigan,  
That slow so manye monstres as didé he;  
Thurghout this wyde world his namé ran,

3274. *the, H<sup>o</sup> two.*

3285. *Hercules.* In this and the next stanza  
Chaucer follows closely Boethius, *De Consolatione*,  
Bk. v. Met. 7, keeping some of the phrases  
of his own translation.

3293. *Busirus*, Busiris, King of Egypt, who  
offered strangers in sacrifice.

3296. *Acheloy's*. The river-god turned himself  
into a bull to fight Hercules the better.

3296. *brak, H<sup>o</sup> raft.*

3297. *Cacus*, who stole the cattle of Hercules.

3298. *Anthéus*, Antaeus.

What for his strengthe and for his heigh  
bountee,  
And every reawmē wente he for to see.  
He was so stroong that no man, myghte  
hym lette ;  
At bothe the worldēs endēs, seith Tro-  
phee,  
In stide of boundēs he a pileer sette.

A lemman hadde this noble champioun,  
That hightē Dianira, fressh as May; 3310  
And as thise clerkēs maken mentioun,  
She hath hym sent a shertē, fressh and gay.  
Alas, thissherte—allas, and weylaway !—  
Envenymed was so subtilly withalle,  
That *er* that he had wered it half a day,  
It made his flessch al from his bonēs falle ;

But nathēles somme clerkēs hire excusen  
By oon that hightē Nessus, that it maked.  
Be as be may, I wol hire noght accusen ;  
But on his bak this sherte he wered al  
naked, 3320  
Til that his flessch was for the venym  
blaked ;  
And whan he saugh noon oother remedye,  
In hootē coles he hath hymselfen raked ;  
For with no venym deigned hym to dye.

Thus starf this worthy, myghty Hercules.  
Lo ! who may truste on Fortune any  
throwe ?

For hym that folweth al this world of  
prees,  
Er he be war, is ofte y-leyd ful lowe.  
Ful wys is he that kan hymselfen knowe !  
Beth war, for whan that Fortune list to  
glose, 3330  
Thanne wayteth she hir man to over-  
throwe  
By swich a wey as he wolde leest suppose.

The myghty trone, the precious tresor,  
The glorious ceptre, and roial magestee  
That hadde the kyng NABUGODONOSOR,

3307. *Trophes*. E and Heng., wiser than any modern commentator, append the note 'Ille vates Chaldecorum Trophæus' !

3318. *Nessus*, the Centaur whom Hercules slew.

With tonge unnethē may descriuēd bee.  
He twyēs wan Jerusalem the citee ;  
The vessel of the temple he with hym  
ladde.

At Babiloigné was his sovereyn<sup>see</sup>, 3330  
In which his glorie and his delit he hadde,

The faireste children of the blood roial  
Of Israel he leet do gelde anoon,  
And makēd ech of hem to been his thral  
Amongēs othere Daniel was oon,  
That was the wiseste child of everychon,  
For he the dremēs of the kyng expowned,  
Where-as in Chaldeye clerk ne was ther  
noon,  
That wistē to what fyn his dremēs sowned.

This proude kyng leet maken a statue of  
gold, 3340  
Sixty cubitēs long and sevene in brede,  
To which ymagē bothē yonge and oold  
Comanded he to loute, and have in drede,  
Or in a fourneys, ful of flamēs rede,  
He shal be brent, that woldē noght obeye  
But never wolde assentē to that dede  
Daniel, ne his yongē felawes tweye.

This kyng of kyngēs proud was and elaat ;  
He wende that God that sit in magestee  
Ne myghte hym nat bireve of his estaat :  
But sodeynly he loste his dignytee 3350  
And lyk a beest hym semēd for to bee ;  
And eet hey as an oxe, and lay theroute  
In reyn ; with wildē beestēs walkēd hee  
Til certain tymē was y-come aboute ;

And lik an eglēs fetheres wex his heres ;  
His naylēs lik a briddēs clawēs were ;  
Til God releessed hym a certeyn yeres,  
And yaf hym wit, and thanne with many  
a teere  
He thanked God, and ever his lyf in fecn  
Was he to doon amys, or moore trespac  
And, til that tyme he leyd was on hi  
beere, 337  
He knew that God was ful of myght and  
grace.

3365. *wax*, emend. Skeat for *wax* (E) as *were* (H2) etc. of MSS.

His sonē, which that hightē BALTHASAR,  
 That heeld the regne after his fader day,  
 Is by his fader koudē noght be war;  
 For proude he was of herte and of array,  
 And eek an ydolastred he was ay.  
 His hye estaat assured hym in pryde;  
 But Fortune caste hym down and ther  
 he lay,  
 And sodeynly his regnē gan divide. 3380

A feeste he made unto his lordēs alle,  
 Upon a tyme, and bad hem bliþhē bee;  
 And thanne hadde his officerēs gan he calle,—  
 'Goth, bryngeth forth the vessellēs,'  
 quod he,  
 'Whiche that my fader in his prosperitee  
 Out of the temple of Jerusalem biraftē,  
 And to our hye goddēs thankē we  
 Of honour that oure eldrēs with us lafte.'

His wyf, his lordēs, and his concubynes  
 Ay dronken, whil hire appetitēs lastē, 3390  
 Out of this noble vessels sondry wynes;  
 And on a wal this kyng his eyen caste,  
 And saugh an hand, armlees, that wroot  
 ful fast;  
 For feere of which he quook, and sikēd  
 soore.

This hand, that Balthasar so soore agaste,  
 Wroot *Mane, techel, phares*, and na moore.

In al that land magicien was noon  
 That koude expoundē what this lettre  
 mente;

But Daniel expowndē it anon, 3399  
 And seyde, 'King, God to thy fader sente  
 Glorie and honour, regnē, tresour, rentē,  
 And he was proude, and no-thing God  
 ne dradde,  
 And therefore God greet wreche upon  
 hym sente,  
 And hym biraftē the regnē that he hadde;

'He was out-cast of mannēs compaignye;  
 With asses was his habitacioun,  
 And eēt hey as a beest in weet and drye,  
 Til that he knew, by grace and by resoun,

3384. *vesselles*. Only *Corpus* and *Landowme*  
 make this a triyllable here.

That God of hevene hath domynacioun  
 Oyer every regne and every créature; 3410  
 And thanne hadde God of hym com-  
 passioun,  
 And hym restored his regne and his figure.

'Eek thou that art his sone art proude also,  
 And knowest alle thise thyngēs verrailly,  
 And art rebel to God and art his foo;  
 Thou drank cek of his vessels boldēly;  
 Thy wyf cek, and thy wenchēs, synfully  
 Dronke of the samē vessels sondry wynys,  
 And heriest false goddēs cursedly;  
 Therefore to thee y-shapen ful greet pyne ya.

'This hand was sent from God, that on  
 the wal 3421  
 Wroot, "*Mane, techel, phares*," trustē  
 me,—

Thy regne is doon, thou weyest noght at al,  
 Dyvyded is thy regne, and it shal be  
 To Medēs and to Persēs yve,' quod he.  
 And thilkē samē nyght this kyng was  
 slawe,

And Darius occupieth his degree,  
 Thogh he therto hadde neither right ne  
 lawe.

Lordynges, ensample heer-by may ye  
 take, 3429  
 How that in lordshipe is no sikernes;e;  
 For whan Fortūnē wole a man forsake,  
 She bereth away his regne and his richesse,  
 And eek his freendēs, bothē moore and  
 lesse;

For what man that hath freendēs thurgh  
 Fortune.  
 Mishape wol maken hem enemys, as I  
 gesse;  
 This proverbe is ful sooth and ful com-  
 mune.

CENOBIA, of Palymerie queene,—  
 As writen Persiens of hir noblesse,—  
 So worthy was in armēs, and so keene,  
 That no wight passēd hire in hardynesse,  
 Ne in lynage, ne in oother gentillesse.

3437. *Cenobia*. The account of Zenobia follows  
 closely, omitting details of battail, *Boccaccio's*  
*De Claris Mulieribus*, cap. 98.

Of kynges blood of Perce is she descended;  
I seye nat that she hadde moost fairnesse,  
But of hire shape she myghte nat been  
amended.

From hire childhede I fynde that she fledde  
Office of wommen, and to wode she went,  
And many a wildé hertés blood she shedde  
With arwés brodé that she to hem sente;  
She was so swift that she anon hem hente,  
And whan that she was elder she wolde  
kille 3450  
Leouns, leopardes, and berés al to-rente,  
And in hir armés weelde hem at hir wille.

She dorsté wildé beestés dennés seke,  
And rennen in the montaignes al thenyght,  
And slepen under the bussh; and she  
koude eke

Wrastlen, by verray force and verray myght,  
With any yong man, were he never so  
wight.

Ther myghté no thyng in hir armés stonde.  
She kepte hir maydenhod from every  
wight; 3459

To no man deigned hire for to be bonde;

But atté laste hir freendés han hire married  
To Onédake, a prynce of that contree;  
Al were it so that she hem longé taried.  
And ye shul understandé how that he  
Hadde swiché fantasies as haddé she;  
But nathéless, whan they were knyght infere,  
They lyved in joye and in felicitye,  
Forech of hem hadde oother lief and deere,

Save o thyng, that she wolde never assente  
By no wey that he sholdé by hire lye 3470  
But onés, for it was hir pleyn entente  
To have a child the world to multiplie;  
And also soone as that she myghte espye  
That she was nat with childé with that  
dede,

Thanne wolde she suffre hym doon his  
fantasye  
Eft soone, and nat but onés, out of drede;

And if she were with childé at thilké cast,

3477-80. Chaucer here misunderstands his  
original.

Na mooré sholde he pleyen thilké game,  
Til fully fourty dayés weren past;  
Thanne wolde she onés suffre hym do  
the same. 3480

Al were this Onédake wilde or fame  
Hegat na moore of hire, for thus she seyde,  
It was to wyvés lecherie and shame,  
In oother caas, if that men with hem pleyde.

Two sonés by this Onédake hadde she,  
The whiche she kepte in vertu and lettrure;  
But now unto our talé turné we.  
I seye so worshipful a creature,  
And wys ther-with, and largé with mesure,  
So penyble in the werre, and curteis eke,  
Ne mooré labour myghte in werre endure,  
Was noon, though al this world men  
sholdé seke.

Hir riche array ne myghté nat be told,  
As wel in vessel as in hire clothynge.  
She was al clad in perree and in gold,  
And eek she lasté noght, for noon huntyng,  
To have of sondry tongés ful knowynge,  
Whan that she leyser hadde; and for to  
entende

To lerné bookés was al hire likynge, 3499  
I low she in vertu myghte hir lyf dispende.

And, shortly of this storie for to tete,  
So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she,  
That they conqueréd manye regnés grete  
In the Orient, with many a faire citee  
Apertenaunt unto the magestee  
Of Romé, and with strong hond held  
hem faste,  
Nenever myghte hir foomen doon hem flee,  
Ay, whil that Onédakés dayés laste.

Hir batailles, whoso list hem for to rede,  
Agayn Sapor the kyng and othere mo, 3510  
And how that al this proces fil in dede,  
Why she conquered, and what tittle had  
therto,

And after of hir meschief and hire wo,  
How that she was bisegéd and y-take,—

3487. tale, H *purpos*.

3492. H *Was nowher noon, in al this world*

*to seke*.

3501. storie, E *proces*.

Lat hym unto my maister Petrak go,  
That writ ynough of this, I undertake.

Whan Onédake was deed she myghtily  
The regnés heeld, and with hire propre hond  
Agayn hir foos she faught so cruelly  
That ther nas kyng, ne prynce, in al that  
lond 3550

That he nas glad if he that gracé fond,  
That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye.  
With hire they maden alliance by bond  
To been in pees, and lete hire ride and  
pleye.

The emperour of Romé, Claudius,  
Ne hym bifore, the Romayn Galien,  
Ne dorsté never been so corageous  
Ne noon Ermyne, ne noon Egipcien,  
Ne Surrien, ne noon Arabycen,  
Withinne the feelde that dorsté with hire  
fichte 3550

Lest that she wolde hem with hir handes  
alen,  
Or with hir meignee putten hem to flighte.

In kynges habit wente hir sonés two,  
As heires of hir fadrés regnés alle,  
And Hermanno and Thymalao  
Hir namés were, as Persiens hem calle;  
But ay Fortune hath in hire hony galle:  
This myghty queené may no while endure.  
Fortune out of hir regné made hire falle  
To wrecchednesse and to mysaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governaunce  
Of Romé cam into his handes tweye,  
He shoope upon this queene to doon  
vengeaunce;

And with his legions he took his weye  
Toward Cenobie, and, shortly for to seye,  
He made hire fle and atté last hire hente,  
And fettred hire, and eek hire children  
tweye,

And wan the land, and hoom to Rome  
he wente.

3515. *Petrak*, i.e. Boccaccio, who, however, is never mentioned by Chaucer, for what reason is not clear.

3550. *so cruelly*, H. *ful trewely*, Corp. *trawely*.  
3556. *Ermyne*, Armenian.

Amonges othere thynges that he wan  
Hir chaar, that was with gold wrought and  
perree, 3550

This greté Romayn, this Aurelian,  
Hath with hym lad, for that men sholde  
it see.

Biforen his triúmphé walketh shee  
With gilté cheynés on hire nekke hangyng.  
Coróned was she after hir degree,  
And ful of perree chargéd hire clothyng.

Allas, Fortuné! she that whilom was  
Dredeful to kyngés and to emperoures,  
Now gaureth al the peple on hire, alas!  
And she that helmed was stárkét  
stoures, 3560

And wan by forcé townés stronge, and  
toures,

Shal on hir heed now were a vitremyte;  
And she that bar the ceptre ful of floures  
Shal bere a distaf, hire costés for to quyte.

O noble, o worthy PETRO, glorie of  
Spayne,  
Whom Fortune heeld so hyc in magestee,  
Wel oghten men thy pitous deeth com-  
playne!

Out of thy land thy brother made thee flee,  
And after, at a seege, by subtiltee, 3569  
Thou were bitraysed and lad unto his tente,  
Where-as he with his owene hand slow  
thee,  
Succedyng in thy regne and in thy rente.

The feeld of snow with thegle of blak  
therinne  
Caught with the lymerod coloured as the  
gleede,  
He brew this cursednesse and al this synne.

3565. *Petro*, Pedro the Cruel, killed by his brother Henry in 1369. In K. Heng. and Camb. this and the three other modern instances come at the end after *Croesus*, but wrongly as the Host's talk shows.  
3568. H<sup>4</sup> read *Thy bastard brother made the to fle*.

3572. *regne*, H. *land*.  
3573. Du Guesclin's arms were a black eagle on a silver shield, with a bend gules (the lymerod, or lime twig, coloured like a red coal). Wickedness is Sir Oliver de Mauny (mal-ni) of Brittany. The two trapped Pedro to the fatal meeting. The epithet Genylon refers to the Breton traitor who betrayed Roland.



The 'wikked-nest' was werker of this nede,  
 Noght Charles-Olyvver, that took ay heede  
 Of trouthe and honour, but of Armoriķe  
 Genylon-Olyvver, corrupt for meede, 3579  
 Broghte this worthy kyng in swiche a briķe.

O worthy PETRO, kyng of Cipre also,  
 That Alisandre wan by heigh maistrie,  
 Ful many a hethen wroghtestow ful wo,  
 Of which thynne owenē ligtes hadde envie,  
 And for no thyng but for thy chivalrie  
 They in thy bed han slayn thee by the  
 morwe.

Thus kan Fortūne hir wheel governe and  
 eye,  
 And out of joye bryngē men to sorwe.

Of Melan, gretē BARNABO VISCONTE,  
 God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardye,  
 Why sholde I nat thyn infortune accounte,  
 Sith in estaat thou cloumbē were so hye?  
 Thy brother sone, that was thy double  
 allye,

For he thy newew was, and sone-in-lawe,  
 Withinne his prisoun madē thee to dye,—  
 But why, ne how, noot I that thou were  
 slawe.

Of the erl HUGELYN OF PYZē the  
 langour

Ther may no tongē tellē for pitee;  
 But litel out of Pizē stant a tour, 3599  
 In whichē tour in prisoun put was he,  
 And with hym been his litel children thre;  
 The eldeste scarsly fyf yeer was of age.  
 Allas, Fortūne! it was greet crueltee  
 Swiche briddēs for to putte in swiche a  
 cage!

Dampnēd was he to dyen in that prisoun,  
 For Roger, which that bisshope was of Pize,

3581. *Petro, kyng of Cipre, Pierre de Lusignan, assassinated 1369.*

3582. *Alisandre wan, in 1365.*

3589. *Barnabo, Barnabo Visconti, deposed by his nephew, died in prison 1385.*

3597. *Hugelyn of Pize, Ugolino of Pisa, starved to death in 1289. See Dante, Inferno, xxxiii., from which Chaucer has borrowed.*

3601. *thre, Dante says four.*

3602. *scarsly fif yeer, a touch added by Chaucer.*

3604. *Roger, Ruggieri degli Ubaldini.*

Hadde on hym read a fals suggestioun  
 Thurgh which the peple gan upon hym rise  
 And putten hym to prisoun, in swich wise  
 As ye han herd, and mete and drynke he  
 hadde

So smal, that wel unnethe it may suffice,  
 And therwithal it was ful poure and badde.

And on a day bifil that in that hour  
 Whan that his metē wont was to be broght,  
 The gayler shette the dorēs of the tour.  
 He herde it wel, but he ne spak right  
 noght,

And in his herte anon ther fil a thought  
 That they for hunger woldē doon hym  
 dyen.

'Allas!' quod he, 'allas, that I was  
 wrought!' 3619  
 Therwith the teeris fillen from his eyen.

His yongē sone, that thre yeer was of age,  
 Unto hym seyde, 'Fader, why do ye wepe?  
 Whanne wol the gayler bryngen oure  
 potage;

Is ther no morsel breed that ye do kepe?  
 I am so hungry that I may nat slepe;  
 Now woldē God that I myghte slepen  
 evere!

Thanne sholde nat hunger in my wombe  
 crepe;

Ther is no thyng, but breed, that me were  
 levere.'

Thus day by day this child bigan to crye,  
 Til in his fadrēs barn adoun it lay, 3629  
 And seyde, 'Farewel, fader, I moot dye!'  
 And kiste his fader, and dyde the same  
 day;

And whan the woful fader deed it say,  
 For wo his armēs two he gan to byte,  
 And seyde, 'Allas, Fortūne! and weye  
 away!

Thy falsē wheel my wo al may I wyte!'

His children wende that it for hunger was  
 That he his armēs gnaw, and nat for wo,  
 And seyde, 'Fader, do nat so, allas!  
 But rather ete the flesh upon us two;  
 Oure flesh thou yaf us, take oute flesh  
 us fro,

And ete 'ynogh,'—right thus they to  
hym seyde,  
And after that, withinne a day or two,  
They leyde hem in his lappe adoun and  
deyde.

Hymself, despeired, eek for hunger starf;  
Thus ended is this myghty erl of Pize;  
From heigh estaat Fortune away hym carf.  
Of this tragédie it oghte ynough suffise.  
Whoso wol here it in a lenger wise,  
Redeth the greté poete of Ytaille 3650  
That highte Dant, for he kan al devyse  
Fro point to point,—nat o word wol he  
faill.

Although that NERO were as vicious  
As any feend that lith in helle adoun,  
Yet he, as telleth us Swetonius,  
This wyde world hadde in subjeccioun  
Bothe est and west, north and septem-  
trioun;  
Of rubies, saphires, and of peerles white,  
Were alle hise clothés brouded up and  
doon;  
For he in gemmés greetly gan delite. 3660

Moore delicaat, moore pompous of array,  
Moore proud, was never emperour than he;  
That ilké clooth that he hadde wered oday,  
After that tyme he nolde it never see.  
Nettés of gold threed hadde he greet plente  
To fische in Tybré, whan hym listé pleye.  
His lustés were al lawe in his decree,  
For Fortune, as his freend, hym wolde  
obeye.

He Romé brende for his delicacie;  
The senatours he slow upon a day, 3670  
To heere how men wolde wepe and crie;  
And slow his brother, and by his suster lay.  
His mooder made he in pitous array,  
For he hire wombe slitté, to biholde  
Where he conceyved was; so weilaway!  
That he so litel of his mooder tolde.

3654. *in helle*, H<sup>1</sup> *ful love*.

3655. *Swetonius*. Chaucer is more indebted  
to the *Roman de la Rose* and to Boethius, *De*  
*cons. lib. 2*, met. 6.

3657. *north*, Chaucer's slip for *south*; Corp.<sup>3</sup>

No teere out of his eyen for that sighte  
Ne cam, but seyde, 'A fair womman  
was she!'

Greet wonder is how that he koude or  
myghte

Be domesman of hire dede beautee; 3680  
The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he,  
And drank anon,—noon oother wo he  
made.

Whan myght is joynéd unto crueltee,  
Allas, to depé wol the venym wade!

In yowthe a maister hadde this emper-  
our,

To teche hym letterure and curteisye,—  
For of moraltee he was the flour,  
As in his tyme, but if bookés lye;  
And while this maister hadde of hym  
maistrye, 3689  
He makéd hym so konnyng and so sowple,  
That longé tyme it was er tirannye,  
Or any vicé, dorste on hym uncowple.

This Seneca, of which that I devyse,  
By-cause that Nero hadde of hym awich  
drede,

For he fro vices wolde hym ay chastise  
Discreetly, as by word, and nat by dede;  
'Sire,' wolde he seyn, 'an emperour  
moot nede

Be vertuous and haté tirannye';  
For which he in a bath made hym to blede  
On bothe his armés, til he mosté dye. 3700

This Nero hadde eek of acustumaunce  
In yowthe agayns his maister for to ryse,  
Which afterward hym thoughte a greet  
grevaunce;

Therefore he made hym dyen in this wise;  
But nathelees this Seneca the wise  
Chees in a bath to dye in this manere  
Rather than han another tormentise;  
And thus hath Nero slayn his maister deere.

Now fil it so that Fortune liste no lenger  
The hye pryde of Nero to cherice, 3710  
For though he weré strong, yet was she  
strenger;

3680. Taken verbatim from Chaucer's version of  
Boethius.

Shethoughté thus: 'By God, I am to nyce,  
To sette a man that is fulfild of vice  
In heigh degree, and emperour hym calle.  
By God! out of his sete I wol hym trice;  
Whan he leest weneth sonest shal he falle!'

The peple roos upon hym on a nyght  
For his defeaute, and whan he it espied,  
Out of his dores anon he hath hym dight  
Allone, and, ther he wende han benallied,  
He knockéd faste, and ay the moore he  
cried 3722  
The fastere shetté they the dorés alle;  
Tho wiste he weel he hadde hymself  
mysgyed,  
And wente his wey, no lenger dorste he  
calle.

The peple cride and rombled up and doun,  
That with hiserys herde he how theyseyde,  
'Where is this falsé tiraunt, this Neroun?'  
For fere almoost out of his wit he breyde,  
And to his goddés pitously he preyde  
For socour, but it myghté nat bityde.  
For drede of this, hym thoughté that he  
deyde, 3732  
And ran into a garden hym to hyde;

And in this gardyn foond he cherlés tweye  
That seten by a fyr, greet and reed;  
And to thise cherlés two he gan to preye  
To sleen hym, and to girden of his heed,  
That to his body, whan that he were deed,  
Were no despit y-doon for his defeame.  
Hymself he slow, he koude no better reed,  
Of which Fortúné lough, and hadde a  
game. 3740

Was never capitayn under a kyng  
That regné mo putte in subjeccioun,  
Ne strengier was in feeld of allé thyng,  
As in his tyme, ne gretter of renoun,  
Nemoore pompos in heigh presumpcioun,  
Than OLOFERNE, which that Fortune ay  
kiste  
So likerously, and ladde hym up and doun,  
Till that his heed was of, er that he wiste.

3723. E and Heng. have the same line as in  
3731 in place of this.  
3746. *Oloferne*, *Holofernes*.

Nat oonly that this world hadde hym in awe  
For lesynge of richesse or libertee, 3750  
But he made every man reneyen his lawe  
'Nabugodonosor was god,' seyde hee,  
'Noon oother god[ne] sholde adouréd be.  
Agayns his heeste no wight dorst trespass  
Save in Bethulia, a strong citee  
Where Eliachim a preest was of that place.

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne:  
Amydde his hoost he dronké lay a nyght,  
Withinne his tenté, large as is a berne,  
And yet, foral his pompe and al his myght,  
Judith, a womman, as he lay upright 3760  
Slepyng, his heed of smoot, and from  
his tente  
Ful pryvély she stal from every wight,  
And with his heed unto hir toun she wente.

What nedeth it of kyng ANTHIOCHUS  
To telle his hyé roial magestee,  
His hyé pride, his werkés venymus?  
For swich another was ther noon as he.  
Redé which that he was in Machabee,  
And rede the proudé wordés that he seyde  
And why he fil fro heigh prosperitee,  
And in an hill how wrecchedly he deyde

Fortune hym hadde enhauncéd so in prid  
That verrailly he wende he myghte attayn  
Unto the sterres upon every syde;  
And in balancé weyen ech montayne;  
And alle the floodés of the see restrayne;  
And Goddés peplé hadde hemoost in hate  
Hem wolde he sleen in torment and in  
payne,  
Wenyng that God ne myghte his pride  
abate. 3780

And for that Nichanore and Thymothee,  
Of Jewés weren venquysshed myghtily,  
Unto the Jewés swich an hate hadde he,  
That he had greithen his chaar ful hastily  
And swoor, and seyde ful despitously  
Unto Jerusalem he wolde eftsoone,  
To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly;  
But of his purpos he was let ful soone.

3749. *hym in*, H<sup>4</sup> of *him*.

3752. *Nabugodonosor*, *Nebuchadnezzar*.

3752. *god*, H<sup>4</sup> *lord*.

3753. *adoured*, H<sup>4</sup> *honoured*.

3769. *Rede*, H<sup>4</sup> *Redeth*.

3769. *Machabee*, Bk. ii. chap. 9.

nd for his manace hym so soore smoot  
th invisible wounde, ay incurable, 3790  
hat in his guttes carf it so and boot,  
hnt his peynes weren importable ;  
nd certainly the wreche was reasonable,  
or many a mannés guttes dide he peyne ;  
at from his purpos curséd and dampnable  
or all his smert he wolde hym nat  
restreyme ;

ut bad anon apparailen his hoost,—  
nd, sodeynly, er he was of it war,  
od daunted al his pride and all his boost ;  
or he so soore fil out of his char, 3800  
hat it his lemés and his skyn to-tar,  
o that he neyther myghte ga ne ryde,  
ut in a chayer men aboute hym bar  
d for-bruséd, bothé bak and syde.

he wreche of God hym smoot so cruelly,  
hat thurgh his body wikked wormés  
crepte,  
nd therwithal he stank so horribly  
hat noon of al his meynee that hym kepte,  
Whether so he awook or ellis slepte, 3809  
he myghte noght for stynk of hym endure,  
n this meschief he wayled and eek wepte,  
nd knew God lord of every créature.

to all his hoost and to hym self also  
ful wlatson was the stynk of his careyne ;  
No man ne myghte hym beré to ne fro ;  
And in this stynk and this horrible peyne,  
He starf ful wrecchedly in a monteyne.  
Thus hath this robbour and this homycide,  
That many a man madé to wepe and  
pleyne, 3819  
wich gerdoun as bilongeth unto pryde.

The storie of ALISAUNDRE is so com-  
mune,  
That every wight that hath discrecioun  
Rath herd somewhat or al of his fortune.  
This wyde world, as in conclusioun,  
He wan by strengthe, or for his hye renoun  
hey weren glad for pees unto hym sende.  
he pride of man and beest he leyde  
adoun,  
ther so he cam, unto the worldés ende.

Comparisoun myghte never yet been  
maked

Bitwixe hym and another conquerour ;  
For al this world for drede of hym hath  
quaked. 3831

He was of knighthod and of fredom flour ;  
Fortune hym made the heir of hire honour ;  
Save wyn and wommen no thyng mighte  
aswage

His hye entente in armés and labour,  
So was he ful of leonyn corage.

What preys were it to hym though I yow  
tolde

Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo,  
Of kyngés, princes, erlés, dukés bolde,  
Whiche he conquered and broghte hem  
into wo ? 3840

I seye, as fer as man may ryde or go,  
The world was his,—what sholde I moore  
devyse ?

For though I writ or tolde yow evermo  
Of his knyghthode, it myghte nat suffice.

Twelf yeer he regnéd, as seith Machabee.  
Philippés sone of Macidoyne he was,  
That first was kyng in Grece the contree.

O worthy, gentil Alisandre, allas !  
That ever sholdé fallen swich a cas !  
Empoysoned of thyn owené, folk thou  
weere ; 3850

Thy sys Fortune hath turned into aas,  
And yet for thee ne weep she never a  
teere !

Who shal me yeven teiris to compleyne  
The deeth of gentillesse and of franchise,  
That al the world weelded in his demeyne ?  
And yet hym thoughte it myghte nat  
suffise,

So ful was his corage of heigh emprise.  
Allas ! who shal me helpé to endite  
Falsé Fortune, and poyson to despise,  
The whiché two of al this wo I wyte ?

By wisdom, manhede, and by greet  
labour 3861

From humble bed to roial magestee  
Up roos he, JULIUS the conquerour,

3862. *humble bed, Corp. 2 humblestate.*

That wan al thoccident, by land and see,  
By strengthe of hand, or elles by treetee,  
And unto Romé made hem tributarie;  
And sitthe of Rome the emperour was he  
Til that Fortuné weex his adversarie.

O myghty Cesar! that in Thessalie  
Agayn Pompéus, fader thyn in lawe, 3870  
That of the orient hadde all the chivalrie  
As fer as that the day bigynneth dawne,  
Thou thurgh thy knyghthod hast hem  
take and slawe,  
Save fewe folk that with Pompéus fledde,  
Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in  
lawe,—

Thanké Fortuné, that so wel thee spedde!

But now a litel while I wol biwaille  
This Pompéus, this noble governour  
Of Romé, which that fleigh at this  
bataille. 3879

I seye, oon of his men, a fals traitour,  
His heed of smoot, to wynnen hym favour  
Of Julius, and hym the heed he broghte.  
Allas, Pompeye, of thorient conquerour,  
That Fortune unto swich a fyn thee  
broghte!

To Rome agayn repaireth Julius  
With his triumphe, lauriat ful hye;  
But on a tyme Brutus and Cassius,  
That ever hadde of his hye estaat envye,  
Ful prively had maad conspiracye  
Agayns this Julius in subtil wise, 3890  
And caste the place in which he sholdé dye  
With boydekyns, as I shal yow devyse.

This Julius to the Capitolie wente  
Upon a day, as he was wont to goon,  
And in the Capitolie anon hym hente  
This false Brutus, and his othere foon,  
And stikéd hym with boydekyns anon  
With many a wounde, and thus they lete  
hym lye;

But never gronte he at no strook but oon,  
Or elles at two, but if his storie lye. 3900

So manly was this Julius of herte,  
And so wel lovede estaatly honestee,

3866. *tributarie*, H. *contributarie*.

That though his deedly woundés soon  
smerete,

His mantel over his hypés casteth he  
For no man sholdé seen his privetee;  
And as he lay of dyng in a traunce,  
And wisté verrally that deed was hee,  
Of honestee yet hadde he remembraunce

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,  
And to Swetoun, and to Valerius also,  
That of this storie written ord and ende,  
How that to thise grete conquerours two  
Fortuné was first freend and sitthe foe.  
No man ne truste upon hire favour longe,  
But have hire in awayt for ever-moo;  
Witnesse on alle thise conquerours  
stronge.

This riché CRESUS, whilom kyng of  
Lyde,

Of whiché Cresus Cirus soore hym dradde,  
Yet was he caught amyddés al his pryde  
And to be brent men to the fyr hym ladde;  
But swich a reyn down fro the welkne  
shadde, 3921

That slow the fyr and made hym to escape;  
But to be war, no gracé yet he hadde,  
Til Fortune on the galwés made hym gape.

Whanne he escapéd was he kan nat stente  
For to bigynne a newé werre agayn.  
He wendé wel, for that Fortune hym sente  
Swich hape that he escapéd thurgh the rayn,  
That of his foos he myghté nat be slayn;  
And eek a swevene upon a nyght he mette,  
Of which he was so proud, and eek so fayn,  
That in vengeance he al his herté sette.

Upon a tree he was, as that hym thoughte,  
Ther Juppiter hym weashe, bothe bak  
and syde,  
And Phebus eek a fair towaille hym  
broughte  
To dryen hym with, and therfore was  
his pryde;

3910. *Valerius*, i.e. Valerius Maximus.

3911. *ord*, beginning; Dr. Hickes' correction  
for the word of the MSS.

3920. *And to be brent*, etc., cp. Boethius, *De  
Consolatione*, Bk. II, prose 2; H. reads: *And  
the fyrr to brene him men him ladde*.

3921. *welkne*, H. *hewen*.

and to his doghter, that stood hym bisyde,  
Which that he knew in heigh science  
habounde,  
He had hire telle hym what it signyfyde,  
And she this dreem bigan right thus ex-  
pounde :

3940

The tree,' quod she, 'the galwës is to  
meene ;  
And Juppiter bitokneth snow and reyn,  
And Phebus with his towaillë so clene,  
Tho been the sonnë-bemës for to seyn ;  
Thou shalt anhangëd be, fader, certeyn,—  
Reyn shal thee wasshe and sonnë shal  
thee drye' ;  
Thus warnëd she hym ful plat and ful  
pleyn,  
His doghter which that called was Phanye.

An-hanged was Cresus, the proudë kyng ;  
His roial tronë myghte hym nat availle.

Tragédie is noon oother maner thyng ;  
Ne kan in syngyng crië ne biwaille  
But for that Fortune alwey wole assaille  
With unwar strook the regnës that been  
proude ;  
For whan men trusteth hire, thanne wol  
she faille,  
And covere hire brighte facë with a  
clowde—

*The Knight and the Host complain of  
this Tale*

'Hoo !' quod the Knyght, 'good sire,  
namoore of this !

That ye han seyð is right ynough, y-wis,  
And muchel moore ; for litel hevynesse  
is right ynough to muchë folk, I gesse.  
I seye for me it is a greet disese, 3961  
Where as men han been in greet welthe  
and ese,

To heeren of hire sodeyn fal, alas !  
And the contrarie is joye and greet solas,  
As whan a man hath ben in poure estaat,  
And clymbeth up, and wexeth fortunat,  
And there abideth in prosperitee ;

3944. *some-times*, H<sup>o</sup> *some-stones*.

3954. *With unwar strook*. The phrase is from  
Boethius.

Swich thyng is gladsom, as it thynketh  
me,  
And of swich thyng were goodly for to  
telle.'

'Ye,' quod oure Hoost, 'by Seintë  
Poulës belle ! 3970

Ye seye right sooth ; this Monk he  
clappeth lowde ;

He spak how "Fortune covered with a  
clowde"

I noot never what, and als of a "tragédie"  
Right now ye herde, and, *pardes*, no  
remédie

It is for to biwaille, ne compleyne  
That that is doon ; and als, it is a peyne,  
As ye han seyð, to heere of hevynesse.  
Sire Monk, namoore of this, so God yow  
blesse !

Youre tale anyeth all this compaignye ;  
Swich talkyng is nat worth a boterflye,  
For therinne is ther no desport ne game.  
Wherefore, sire Monk, or daun Piers by  
youre name,

I pray yow hertely, telle us somewhat elles,  
For sikerly nere clynkyng of youre belles,  
That on youre bridel hange on every  
syde,

By hevene kyng, that for us allë dyde !  
I sholde er this han fallen doun for sleepe,  
Although the slough had never been so  
deepe ;

Thanne hadde youre tale al be toold in  
veyn, 3989

For certainly, as that thise clerkës seyn,  
Where as a man may have noon audience,  
Noght helpeth it to tellen his sentence ;  
And wel I woot the substance is in  
me,

If any thyng shal wel reported be.  
Sir, sey somewhat of huntyng, I yow preye.'

'Nay !' quod this Monk, 'I have no  
lust to pleye ;

Now lat another telle, as I have toold.'  
Thanne spak oure Hoost with rudë  
speche and boold,

And seyde unto the Nonnës Preest anon,  
'Com neer, thou preest, com hyder,  
thou sir John. 4000

3972. *covered*, H *was clipped*.  
3984. *clynkyng*, H *clinging*.

Telle us swich thyng as may oure hertés  
glade ;

Be blithé, though thou ryde upon a jade.  
What thogh thyn hors be bothé foule  
and lene ?

If he wol serve thee, rekké nat a bene ;  
Looke that thyn herte be murie evermo.'

'Yis, sir,' quod he, 'yis, Hoost, so  
moot I go,

But I be myrie, y-wis I wol be blamed.'  
And right anon his tale he hath attamed,  
And thus he seyde unto us everichon,  
This sweeté preest, this goodly man, sir  
John. 4010

### NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

*Here bigynneth The Nonnes Preestes  
Tale of the Cok and Hen,—Chaun-  
téclee and Pertelote*

A poure wydwe, somdel stape in age,  
Was whilom dwellyng in a narwe cotege  
Beside a grevé, stondynge in a dale.  
This wydwe, of which I tellé yow my  
tale,

Syn thilké day that she was last a wyf,  
In pacience ladde á ful symple lyf,  
For litel was hir catel and hir rente.  
By housbondrie of swich as God hire sente  
She foond hirself, and eek hire doghtren  
two. 4019

Thre largé sowés hadde she, and namo ;  
Three keen and eek a sheep that highté  
Malle.

Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hire halle,  
In which she eet ful many a sklendremeel ;  
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.  
No deyntee morsel passéd thurgh hir  
throthe,

Hir diete was accordant to hir cote ;  
Repleccioun ne made hire never sik,  
Attempree diete was al hir phisik,  
And exercise, and hertés suffisaunce.  
The gouté lette hire no-thing .for to  
daunce, 4020

Napoplexié shenté nat hir heed ;

*The Nonnes Preestes Tale. A fable of Marie  
de France, Des Cœs et des Werz, contains in  
38 lines the germ of this tale.*

No wyn ne drank she, neithér whit ne  
reed ;

Hir bord was servéd moost with whit  
and blak,—

Milk and broun breed,—in which she  
foond no lak ;

Seynd bacounand somtyme an eyor tweye,  
For she was, as it were, a maner deye.

A yeerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute  
With stikkés, and a dryé dych withoute,  
In which she hadde a cok, heet Chaun-  
téclee. 4021

In al the land of crowyng nas his peer.

His voys was murier than the murie organ  
On messé dayes that in the chirché gon :  
Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge  
Than is a clokke, or an abbey orlogge.

By nature knew he eche ascencioun  
Of the equynoxial in thilké toun ;  
For whan degreés fiftene weren ascended,  
Thanne crew he that it myghte nat been  
amended.

His coomb was redder than the fyn coral,  
And batallid as it were a castel wal ; 4022  
His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon ;  
Lyk asure were his legges and his toon ;  
His naylès whiter than the lylye flour,  
And lyk the burned gold was his colour.

This gentil cok hadde in his gover  
naunce

Sevene hennés for to doon al his plesaunce  
Whiche were his sustrés and his para-  
mours,

And wonder lyk to hym, as of colours ;  
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throthe  
Was clepéd faire damoysele Pertelote. 4023  
Curteys she was, discreet and debonaire,  
And compaignable, and bar hyrself so  
faire

Syn thilké day that she was seven nyght  
cold,

That trewely she hath the herte in hoold  
Of Chauntéclee, loken in every lith ;  
He loved hire so that wel was hym ther-  
with ;

But swiche a joye was it to here hem  
synge,

Whan that the brighté sounne bigan to  
sprynge,

4045. *know he, E<sup>2</sup> he crew ; wit he knew.*

In sweete accord, 'My lief is faren in  
londe'; 4069

For thilk tyme, as I have understonde,  
Beestes and briddes koud speke and  
syng.

And so bifel, that in the dawenyng,  
As Chauntecleer among his wyves alle  
Sat on his perehē, that was in the halle,  
And next hym sat this fair Pertelote,  
This Chauntecleer gangronen in his throte,  
As man that in his dreem is drecchēd  
soore.

And whan that Pertelote thus herde hym  
roore,  
She was agast, and seyde, 'O hertē decre!  
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?  
Ye been a verray sleper; fy, for shame!'

And he answerde and seyde thus:  
'Madame,

I pray yow that ye take it nat agrief;  
By God, me mette I was in swich meschief  
Right now, that yet myn herte is soore  
afright.

Now God,' quod he, 'my swevene recche  
aright,

And kepe my body out of foul prisoun!  
Me mette how that I romēd up and doun  
Withinne our yeerd, wheer as I saugh a  
beest.

Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad  
areest 4090

Upon my body, and han had me deed.  
His colour was bitwixē yelow and reed,  
And tipped was his tayl, and bothe his  
ceris,

With blak, unlyk the remenant of his  
heeris;

His snowtē smal, with glowyngē eyen  
tweye.

Yet of his look for feere almoost I deye;  
This caused me my gronyng doutlees.

'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, hertē-  
lees!

Allas!' quod she, 'for by that God above!  
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love.  
I kan nat love a coward, by my feith!  
For certēs, what so any womman seith,  
We alle desiren, if it myghtē bee,

4089. a beest. The description is exactly that  
of a 'col-dun' (l. 4408).

To han housbōndēs hardy, wise, and free,  
And secree, and no nygard, ne no fool,  
Ne hym that is agast of every tool,  
Ne noon avauntour, by that God above!  
How dorste ye seyn, for shame, unto  
youre love

That any thyng myghte makē yow aferd?  
Have ye no mannēs herte, and han a berd?

'Allas! and konne ye been agast of  
swevenys? 4111

No thyng, God woot, but vanitee in  
swevene is.

Swevenes engendren of replecciouns,  
And ofte of fume, and of complecciouns,  
Whan humours been to habundant in a  
wight.

'Certēs this dreem, which ye han  
met to-nyght,

Cometh of the greet superfluytee  
Of yourē redē colera, *parles*,  
Which causeth folk to dreden in hir dremes  
Of arwēs, and of fyre with redē lemes, 4120

Of redē beestēs, that they wol hem byte,  
Of contekes and of whelpēs, greteand lyte;  
Right as the humour of malencolie

Causeth ful many a man in sleepe to crie,  
For feere of blakē beres, or bolēs blake,  
Or ellīs blakē devcles wole hem take.  
Of othere humours koude I telle also

That werken many a man in sleepe ful wo;  
But I wol passe as lightly as I kan.

Lo, Catoun, which that was so wys a man,  
Seyde he nat thus, "Ne do no fors of  
dremes"?

'Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee  
fro the bemes,

For Goddēs love, as taak som laxatyf.  
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,

I conseilte yow the beste, I wol nat lye,  
That bothe of colere and of malencolye

Ye purgē yow, and, for ye shal nat tarie,  
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,

I shal myself to herbēs techen yow  
That shul been for youre hele, and for  
youre prow; 4140

And in oure yeerd tho herbēs shal I fynde,  
The whiche han of hire propretee by kynde

4120. *lemes*, gleams; H *beemes*.

4121. *redd*, E *greff*.

4130. *Catoun*, *Dist.* li. 32: 'somnia ne curen.'



To purgē yow, byneth and eek above.  
 Forget nat this, for Goddés owenē love !  
 Ye been ful coleryk of compleccioun.  
 Warē the sonne in his ascencioun  
 Ne fynde, yow nat repleet of humours  
 hootē ;

And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote  
 That ye shul have a fevere terciane,  
 Or an agu, that may be yourē bane. 4150  
 A day or two ye shul have digestyves  
 Of wormes, er ye take youre laxatyves  
 Of lawriol, centaure and fumetere,  
 Or elles of ellēbor that groweth there,  
 Of katapuce or of gaitrys beryis,  
 Of herbe yve, growyng in oure yeerd,  
 ther mery is ;

Pekke hem up right as they growe and  
 ete hēm yn ;  
 Be myrie, housbonde, for youre fader kyn !  
 Dredeth no dreem ; I kan sey yow  
 namoore.

‘Madame,’ quod he, ‘*grauunt mercy of*  
 youre loore, 4160

But natheles, as touchyng daun Catoun,  
 That hath of wysdom swich a greet renoun,  
 Though that he bad no dremes for to  
 drede,

By God, men may in oldē bookēs rede  
 Of many a man, moore of auctorite  
 Than ever Caton was, so moot I thee !  
 That al the revers seyn of his sentence,  
 And han wel founden by experience  
 That dremes been significaciouns  
 As wel of joye as tribulaciouns, 4170  
 That folk enduren in this lif present.  
 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument,  
 The verray precew sheweth it in dede.

‘Oon of the gretteste auctours that  
 men rede

Seith thus, that whilom two felawes wente  
 On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente,  
 And happed so they coomen in a toun,  
 Wher as ther was swich congregacioun  
 Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergeage,  
 That they ne founde as muche as a cotage  
 In which they bothē myghte logged bee ;  
 Wherefore they mosten of necessitee,

4174. *auctoritate*. Cicero, *De Divin.* i. 27, relates  
 both this and the next story.

4181. *He* reads : *In which that they might both*  
*be lodged be.*

As for that nyght, departen compaignye ;  
 And ech of hem gooth to his hostelrye,  
 And took his loggyng as it woldē falle.  
 That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,  
 Fer in a yeerd, with oxen of the plough ;  
 That oother man was logged wel ynough,  
 As was his aventure, or his fortune, 4185  
 That us governeth alle as in commune.

‘And so bifel that longe er it were day,  
 This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,  
 How that his felawe gan upon hym calle,  
 And seyde, “Allas ! for in an oxes stalle  
 This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye ;  
 Now helpe me, deerē brother, or I dye ;  
 In allē hastē com to me !” he seyde.

‘This man out of his sleepe for feere  
 abraide ;

But whan that he was wakened of his  
 sleepe, 4190

He turned hym and took of this no keepe ;  
 Hym thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.  
 Thus twies in his slepyng dremed hee,  
 And attē thriddē tyme yet his felawe  
 Cam, as hym thoughte, and seide, “I am  
 now slawe !

Bihoold my bloody woundes, depe and  
 wyde ;

Arys up erly in the morwē tyde,  
 And at the west gate of the toun,” quod he  
 “A cartē ful of donge ther shaltow se,  
 In which my body is hid ful prively ;  
 Do thilkē carte arresten boldely ; 4200  
 Mygold causēd my mordre, sooth tosayn.”  
 And tolde hym every point how he was  
 slayn,

With a ful pitous facē, pale of hewe ;  
 And trustē wel, his dreem he foond ful  
 trewe ;

For on the morwe, as soone as it was day,  
 To his felawes in he took the way,  
 And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,  
 After his felawe he bigan to calle.

‘The hostiler answerdē hym anon. 4210  
 And seyde, “Sire, your felawe is agon ;  
 As soone as day he wente out of the toun.”

‘This man gan fallen in suspicioun,—  
 Remembrynge on his dremes, that he  
 mette,—

And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he  
 lette,

Into the west gate of the toun, and fond  
 a dong carte, as it were to dongé lond,  
 that was arrayed in that samé wise  
 as ye han herd the dedé man devyse;  
 and withan hardy herte he gan to crye  
 /engeance and justice of this felonye. 4230  
 'My felawe mordred is this samé nyght,  
 and in this carte he lith gapyng upright.  
 [crye out on the ministres," quod he,  
 "That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;  
 Harrow! allas! heere lith my felawe  
 slayn!"

What sholde I moore unto this talé sayn?  
 The peple out sterte and caste the cart to  
 grounde,

And in the myddel of the dong they  
 founde

The dedé man, that mordred was al newe.

'O blisful God, that art so just and  
 trewe!

Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre alway!  
 Mordre wol out, that se we day by day;  
 Mordre is so watson, and abhomynable  
 To God, that is so just and resonable,  
 That he ne wol nat suffre it heléd be,  
 Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or thre;  
 Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.

And right anon, ministres of that toun  
 Han hent the carter, and so soore hym  
 pyned,

And eek the hostiler so soore engyned,  
 That they biknewe hire wikkednesse anon,  
 And were an-hanged by the nekké bon.

'Heere may men seen that dremés  
 been to drede;

And certés, in the samé book I rede,  
 Right in the nexté chapitre after this,—  
 I gabbé nat, so have I joye or blis,—  
 Two men that wolde han passed over  
 see,

For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,  
 If that the wynd ne haddé been contrarie,  
 That made hem in a citee for to tarie 4260  
 That stood ful myrie upon an haven syde;  
 But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,  
 The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right  
 as hem leste.

lo!if and glad they wente unto hir reste,  
 And casten hem ful erly for to saille.

4242. *And so we, etc., "H certes it is no way."*

'But to that o man fil a greet mer-  
 vaille;

That oon of hem in slepyng as he lay,  
 Hym mette a wonder drem, agayn the  
 day:

Him thoughte a man stood by his beddés  
 syde

And hym comanded that he sholde abyde,  
 And seyde hym thus: "If thou tomorwé  
 wende,

Thou shalt be dreynt, my tale is at an  
 ende."

'He wook, and tolde his felawe what  
 he mette,

And preyde hym his viage for to lette;  
 As for that day, he preyde hym to byde.

His felawe, that lay by his beddés syde,  
 Gan for to laughe, and scornéd him ful  
 faste;

"No drem," quod he, "may so myn  
 herte agaste,

That I wol letté for to do my thynges;  
 I setté not a straw by thy dremynges, 4280  
 For swevenes been but vanytees and  
 japes;

Men dreme al day of owlés or of apes,  
 And eke of many a mazé therwithal;  
 Men dreme of thyng that never was ne  
 shal;

But sith I see that thou wolt heere abyde,  
 And thus forlewthen wilfully thy tyde,  
 God woot it reweth me, and have good  
 day!"

And thus he took his leve, and wente his  
 way;

But er that he hadde half his cours  
 y-seyled,

Noot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it  
 eyled,

But casuelly the shippés botmé rente,  
 And shipe and man under the water  
 wente

In sighte of othere shippés it bisyde,  
 That with hem seyléd at the samé tyde!  
 And therefore, fairé Pertelote so deere,  
 By swiche ensamplés olde yet maistow  
 leere,

That no man sholdé been to reccheles  
 Of dremés, for I seye thee doutlees,

4282. *etc., om. E.*

That many a dreem ful soore is for to drede.

'Lo, in the lyf of Seint Kenelm Rede,  
That was Kenulphus sone, the noble Kyng  
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng.

A lite er he was mordred, on a day  
His mordre in his avysion he say.  
His norice hym expownded every deel  
His swevene, and bad hym for to kepe  
hym weel

For traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer  
oold,

And therefore litel talé hath he toold  
Of any dreem, so hooly was his herte.  
By God, I haddé levere than my sherte  
That ye hadde rad his legende as have I.  
Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,  
Macrobeus, that writ the avisoun  
In Affrike of the worthy Cipion,  
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they  
been

Warnyng of thyngés that men after seen;  
And forther-moore, I prayyow looketh wel  
In the Oldé Testament of Daniel,  
If he heeld dremés any vanitee.

'Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul  
ye see  
Wher dremés be somtyme,—I sey nat  
alle,—

Warnyngé of thyngés that shul after falle.  
Looke of Egipte the kyng, daun Pharao,  
His baker and his butiller also,  
Wher they ne felté noon effect in dremes.  
Whoso wol seken actes of sondry remes  
May rede of dremés many a wonder thyng.

'Lo, Cresus, which that was of Lyde  
kyng,

Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,  
Which signified he sholde anhangd bee?

'Lo heere Andromacha, Ectorés wyf,  
That day that Ector sholdé lese his lyf,  
She dreméd on the samé nyght biforn,  
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorne,  
If thilké day he wente into bataille;  
She warnéd hym, but it myghte nat  
availe;

He wenté forth to fighté nathéles,

<sup>4300</sup>. *Kenelm*, murdered by his tutor at the desire of a wicked sister.

And he was slayn anon of Achilles;  
But thilké tale is al to longe to telle,  
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle;  
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,  
That I shal han of this avisoun  
Adversitee; and I seye forthermoore,  
That I ne telle of laxatyves no stoor,  
For they been venymés, I woot it weel;  
I hem diffye, I love hem never a deel!

'Now let us speke of myrthe, and  
stynte al this;

Madamé Pertelote, so have I blis,  
Of o thyng God hath sent me largé grace;  
For whan I se the beaute of youre face,  
Ye been so scarlet reed aboute youre  
eyen,

It maketh al my dredé for to dyen,  
For, al-so siker as *In principio*,  
*Mulier est hominis confusio*,—  
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,  
"Wommen is mannés joye, and al his  
blis";

For whan I feele a-nyght your softé syde,  
Al be it that I may nat on yow ryde,  
For that oure perche is maad so narwe,  
allas!

I am so ful of joye and of solas,  
That I diffye bothé swevene and dreem':  
And with that word he fly down fro the  
beem,

For it was day, and eke his hennés alle;  
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,  
For he hadde founde a corn, lay in the  
yerd.

Réal he was, he was namoore aferd,  
Hé fethered Perteloté twenty tyme,  
And trad as ofté, er that it was pryme.  
He looketh as it were a grym leoun,  
And on his toos he rometh up and down;  
Hym deigné nat to sette his foot to  
grounde.

He chukketh whan he hath a corn  
y-founde,  
And to hym rennen thanne his wyvés  
alle.

Thus roial, as a prince is in an halle,  
Leve I this Chauntéclee in his pasture,  
And after wol I telle his aventure.

<sup>4353</sup>. The real meaning of the Latin is: In the beginning woman is man's destruction.

When that the monthe in which the  
world bigan,  
[That] highte March, when God first  
makéd man,  
Was compleet, and [y.] passéd were also,  
Syn March bigan, thritty dayés and two,  
Bifel that Chauntecleer in al his pryde,  
His sevene wyvés walkynge by his syde,  
Caste up his eye to the brighte sonne  
[That] in the signe of Taurus hadde y-rcenne  
Twenty degrees and oon, and som-what  
moore,  
And knew by kynde, and by noon oother  
loore,  
That it was pryme, and crew with blisful  
stevne.  
'The sonne,' he seyde, 'is clomben up  
on hevne  
Fourty degrees and oon, and moore y-wis.  
Madamé Pertelote, my worldés blis, 4390  
Herkeneth thise blisful briddés how they  
syngé,  
And se the fresshé flourés how they  
sprynge ;  
Ful is myn herte of revel and solas !'  
But sodeynly hym fil a sorweful cas ;  
For ever the latter ende of joy is wo.  
God woot that worldly joye is soone  
ago,  
And if a rethor koudé faire endite,  
He in a cronycle sauffy myghte it write,  
As for a sovereyn notabilitee. 4399  
Now every wys man, lat him herkné me ;  
This storie is al so trewe, I undertake,  
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake, .  
That wommen holde in ful greet reverence.  
Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.  
A colfox, ful of sly iniquitee,  
That in the grove hadde wonné yerés  
three,  
By heigh ymaginacioun forn-cast,  
The samé nyght thurgh-out the heggés  
brast  
Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire  
Was wont, and eek his wyvés, to repaire ;  
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay, 4411

Til it was passéd undren of the day,  
Waitynge his tyme on Chauntecleer to  
falle ;  
As gladly doon thise homycidés alle  
That in await ligen to mordré men.  
O falsé mordroure lurkyng in thy den !  
O newé Scariot, newé Genyloun !  
Falsé dissymulour, O Greek Synoun,  
That broghtest Troye al outrély to sorwe !  
O Chauntecleer, curséd be that morwe,  
That thou into that yerd slaugh fro the  
bemes ! 4421  
Thou were ful wel y-warnéd by thy dremés  
That thilké day was perilous to thee ;  
But what that God forwoot moot nedés  
bee,  
After the opinioun of certein clerkis.  
Witnesse on hym that any parfit clerk is,  
That in scole is greet altercacioun  
In this mateere, and greet disputioun,  
And hath been of an hundred thousand  
men ;  
But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren, 4430  
As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,  
Or Boece, or the bisshope Bradwardyn,  
Whether that Goddés worthy forwityng  
Streyneth me nedély to doon a thyng,—  
Nedély clepe I symple necessitee,—  
Or ellés if free choys be graunted me  
To do that samé thyng, or do it noght,  
Though God forwoot it er that it was  
wrought ;  
Or if his wityng streyneth never a deel,  
But by necessitee condicioneel. 4440  
I wil nat han to do of swich mateere,  
My tale is of a cok, as ye may heere,  
That took his conseil of his wyf with sorwe,  
To walken in the yerd upon that morwe  
That he hadde met that drem that I  
yow tolde.  
Wommennés conseils been ful ofté colde ;  
Wommennés conseil broghte us first to wo  
And made Adam fro Paradys to go,  
Ther as he was ful myrie and wel at  
esc ; 4449  
But for I noot to whom it myght displese,

4389. *Fourty*, H *Twenty*; but perhaps Chaucer  
laughing at the cock.

4399. E and Heng. assign the saying to Petrus  
Comestor.

4417. *Genyloun*, the betrayer of Roland.

4432. *Boece*, Boethius.

4432. *Bradwardyn*, author of the 'De Causa  
Dei contra Pelagium', d. 1349.

If I conseil of wommen woldé blame,  
 Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.  
 Rede auctours where they trete of swich  
 mateere,

And what they seyn of wommen ye may  
 heere;

Thise been the cokkés wordés, and nat  
 myne,

I kan noon harm of no womman divyne!

Faire in the soond, to bathe hire myrily,  
 Lith Pertelote, and alle hire sustres by,  
 Agayn the sohne, and Chauntecleer so free  
 Soong murier than the mermayde in the  
 see; 4460

For *Physiologus* seith sikerly,  
 How that they syngen wel and myrily.

And so bifel that as he cast his eye  
 Among the wortés, on a boterflye,  
 He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.  
 No-thing ne liste hym thanné for to  
 crowe,

But cride anon, 'Cok, cok!' and up he  
 sterte,

As man that was affrayéd in his herte,—  
 For naturelly a beest desireth flee  
 Fro his contrarie, if he may it see, 4470  
 Though he never erst hadde seyn it with  
 his eye.

This Chauntecleer, whan he gan hym  
 espye,

He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon  
 Seyde, 'Gentil sire, allas! wher wol ye  
 gon?

Be ye affrayed of me that am youre  
 freend?

Now, certés, I were worsé than a feend,  
 If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye.

I am nat come your conseil for tespye,  
 But trewely the cause of my comynge  
 Was oonly for to herkne how that ye  
 synge; 4480

For trewely, ye have as myrie a stevere  
 As any aungel hath that is in hevene.

Therwith ye han in musyk moore feelynge  
 Than hadde Boece, or any that kan synge.

My lord youre fader,—God his soulé  
 blesse!

4461. *Physiologus*, i.e. the *Physiologus* de  
*naturalis xii. animalium*, written by a certain  
 Theobaldus.

4484. Boece. Boethius wrote a treatise on music.

And eek youre mooder, of hire gentillesse,  
 Han in myn hous y-been to my greet  
 ese,

And certés, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow  
 please.

But for men speke of syngyng, I wol  
 seye,—

So moote I brouké wel myne eyen  
 tweye,— 4490

Save yow, I herdé never man so synge  
 As dide youre fader in the morwenynge.  
 Certés, it was of herte, al that he song;  
 And for to make his voys the moore strong,  
 He wolde so peyne hym that with bothe  
 his eyen

He mosté wynke, so loude he woldé cryen:  
 And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,  
 And strecché forth his nekké, long and  
 smal;

And eek he was of swich discrecioun  
 That ther nas no man in no regioun 4500  
 That hym in song or wisdom myghte  
 passe.

I have wel rad, in "Daun Burnel the  
 Asse,"

Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,  
 For that a preestes sone yaf hym a knok  
 Upon his leg, whil he was yong and nyce,  
 He made hym for to lese his benefice;  
 But certeyn, ther nys no comparisoun  
 Bitwixe the wisdom and discrecioun  
 Of youre fader and of his subtiltee.

Now syngeth, sire, for seinté charitee; 4510  
 Lat se, konne ye youre fader countrefete.

This Chauntecleer his wyngés gan to  
 bete,

As man that koude his traysoun nat espie,  
 So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.

Allas, ye lordés, many a fals flatour  
 Is in youre courtes, and many a losengeour,  
 That plesen yow wel moore, by my feith,  
 Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow  
 seith,—

Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterie,—  
 Beth war, ye lordés, of hir trecherye. 4520

This Chauntecleer stood hye upon his  
 toos

4500. *Daun Burnel the Asse*, in the *Spectrum*  
*Stutterum* of Nigel Winkler.

4515. *ye lordes*, H. *lordynges*.

4516. *courtes*, H. *hous*.

Strecchyng his nekke, and heeld his eyen  
cloos,

And gan to crowe loudé for the nones,  
And daun Russell, the fox, stirte up atones,  
And by the gargat henté Chauntécleer,  
And on his bak toward the wode hym  
beer;

For yet ne was ther no man that hym  
sewed.

O destinee, that mayst nat been  
eschewed!

Alas, that Chauntécleer fleigh fro the  
bemes!

Alas, his wyf ne roghté nat of dremes!  
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.

O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,  
Syn that thy servant was this Chauntéc-  
cleer,

And in thy servyce dide al his poweer,  
Moore for delit than world to multiplie,  
Why woltestow suffre hym on thy day to  
dye?

O Gaufred, deeré maister soverayn,  
That, when thy worthy kyng Richard  
was slayn

With shot, compleynéddest his deeth so  
soore!

Why ne hadde I now thy sentence, and  
thy loore,

The Friday for to chide, as diden ye?—

For on a Friday, soothly, slayn was he.  
Thanne wolde I shewe yow how that I  
koude pleyne

For Chauntéclerés drede, and for his  
peyne.

Certés, swich cry, ne lamentacioun,  
Was never of ladyes maad when Ylioun  
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streitè  
sward,

Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the  
berd,

And slayn hym,—as seith us *Eneydos*,—

As maden alle the hennés in the clos,

Whan they had peyn of Chauntécleer the  
sighte.

But sovereynly dame Perteloté shrighte,  
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubalés wyf,

<sup>4537</sup> *Gaufred*, Geoffrey of Vinesauf; author  
of a treatise on the art of poetry, in which, to  
show how such poems should be written, he be-  
wailed the death of Richard.

Whan that hir housbonde haddélost his lyf,  
And that the Romayns haddé brend  
Cartage,—

She was so ful of torment and of rage,  
That wilfully into the fyr shé sterte,  
And brende herselven with a stedefast  
herte.

O woful hennés, right so criden ye,  
As, whan that Nero brendé the citee  
Of Romé, cryden senatours wyves,  
For that hir husbondes losten alle hir  
lyves

Withoutengilt,—this Nero hath hem slayn.  
Now wol I torné to my tale agayn.

This sely wydwe, and eek hir doghtrés  
two,

Herden thise hennés crie and maken wo,  
And out at dorés stirten they anon,  
And syen the fox toward the grové gon,  
And bar upon his bak the cok away,  
And cryden, 'Out! harrow! and weyl-  
away!

Ha! ha! the fox!' and after hym they  
ran,

And eek with stavés many another man;  
Ran Colle, oure dogge, and Talbot, and  
Gerland

And Malkyn, with a dystaf in hir hand;  
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray  
hogges,

So were they fered for berkyng of the  
dogges,

And shoutyng of the men and wommen  
eek;

They ronné so hem thoughte hir herté  
breck.

They yollédén, as feendés doon in helle;  
The dokés cryden, as men wolde hem  
quelle;

The gees, for feeré, flownen over the trees;  
Out of the hyvé cam the swarm of bees;  
So hydous was the noys, a *benedicitee*!

Certés, he Jakke Straw, and his meynee,  
Ne made never shoutés half so shrille,  
Whan that they wolden any Flemyng  
kille,

As thilké day was maad, upon the fox.  
Of bras they broghten bemes, and of box,

<sup>4586</sup> *Flemyng*, to whose competition the  
English craftsmen objected.

Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe  
and powped,  
And therewithal they skrikéd and they  
howped; 4590

It seméd as that hevene sholdé falle.

Now, goodé men, I pray yow herkneth  
alle;

Lo, how Fortuné turneth sodeynly  
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy !  
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,  
In al his drede unto the fox he spak,  
And seyde, 'Sire, if that I were as ye,  
Yet wolde I seyn, as wys God helpé me,  
' Turneth agayn, ye proudé cherlés alle !  
A verray pestilence upon yow falle; 4600  
Now am I come unto the wodes syde,  
Maugree yow heed, the cok shal heere  
abyde;

I wol hym ete in feith, and that anon !'  
The fox answerde, 'In feith it shal  
be don';

And as he spak that word, al sodeynly  
This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,  
And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon;  
And whan the fox saugh that he was  
y-gon,—

'Allas !' quod he, 'O Chauntéclee,  
allas !

I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-doon trespass,  
In as muche as I makéd yow aferd, 4611  
Whan I yow hente and brought out of the  
yerd;

But, sire, I dide it of no wikke entente.  
Com down, and I shal telle yow what I  
mente;

I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so !'  
'Nay thanne,' quod he, 'I shrewe  
as bothé two,

And first I shrewe myself, bothe blood  
and bones,

If thou bigyle me any after than ones.  
Thou shalt na mooré, thurgh thy flaterye,  
Do me to syngé, and wynké with myn  
eye, 4620

For he that wynketh, whan he sholdé sec,  
Al wilfully, God lat him never thee !'

'Nay,' quod the fox, 'but God yewe  
hym meschaunce,  
That is so undiscreet of governaunce  
That jangleth whan he sholdé holde hi  
pees.'

Lo, swich it is for to be recchélees,  
And negligent, and truste on flaterye.  
But ye that holden this tale a folye,—  
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,—  
Taketh the moralité, good men; 4630  
For Seint Paul seith that al that writen is,  
To oure doctrine it is y-write y-wis;  
Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille.  
Now, goodé God, if that it be thy wille,  
As seith my lord, so make us alle goode  
men,  
And brynge us 'to his heighé blisse!  
*Amen.*

*Words of the Host to the Nun's Priest*

'Sire Nonnés Preest,' oure Hoosté  
seide anon,—

'I-blesséd be thy breche and every stoon !  
This was a murie tale of Chaunticleer;  
But, by my trouthe, if thou were secular,  
Thou woldest ben a tredéfoul aright; 4641  
For if thou have coráge, as thou hast  
might,

The weré nede of hennés, as I wene,  
Ye, mo than sevené tymés seventene !  
Se, which braunés hath this gentil preest,  
So gret a nekke, and swich a largé breest !  
He loketh as a sparhawké with his eyen;  
Him nedeth nat his colour for to dycn  
With brasile, ne with greyn of Portyngale.  
Now, sire, faire fallé yow for youré tale.  
And after that, he with ful merie chere  
Seide unto another as ye shullen heere.

4637. *Sire Nonnes Preest*. Only three MSS., one at Camb. and two at the Brit. Mus., contain this end-link. Its authenticity is not above suspicion; l. 4641 repeats B. 3735, and 'seide unto another' could hardly have been written by Chaucer.

## [TALES OF THE THIRD DAY]

## [GROUP C]

## DOCTOR'S TALE

*Heere foluweth The Phisiciens Tale*

THER was, as telleth Titus Livius,  
A knyght that calléd was Virginius,  
Unfuld of honour and of worthynesse,  
And strong of freendés and of greet  
richesse.

This knyght a doghter haddé by his  
wyf,—

No children hadde he mo in al his lyf.  
Fair was this mayde in excellent beautee  
Aboven every wight that man may see;  
For Nature hath with sovereyn diligence  
Y-forméd hire in so greet excellence, 10  
As though she woldé seyn, 'Lo, I, Nature,  
Thus kan I forme, and peynte a créature,  
Whan that me list,—who kan me countre-  
fete?

Pigmalion? Noght, though he ay forge  
and beté,

Or grave, or peynté; for I dar wel seyn  
Apellés, Zanzis, sholdé werche in veyn,  
Outher to grave, or peynte, or forge, or  
beté,

If they presumed me to countrefete.  
For He that is the Formere principal  
Hath makéd me his vicaire-general 20  
To forme and peynten erthely créaturis  
Right as me list, and ech thyng in my  
cure is

Under the mooné that may wane and  
wake;

And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe;

GROUP C. These two tales follow the Franklin's  
in E. Dr. Furnivall is responsible for their  
present placing, which is not a matter of certainty.  
*Doctor's Tale*, taken, as to its incidents, as  
Prof. Lounsbury shows, including the reference  
to Livy, from the *Roman de la Rose*, ll. 6324-94.  
In this tale H<sup>2</sup> differ greatly from E and Heng.;  
though only a few of the variants can be here  
recorded.

6. *No children*, H<sup>2</sup> and *never no* (H only, *no*).

16. *Zanzis*, Zanzis.

24. *work right*, H<sup>2</sup> *werked*.

My lord and I been ful of oon accord.  
I made hire to the worshiþe of my lord;  
So do I alle myne othere créatures,  
What colour that they han, or what  
figures.'

Thus semeth me that Nature woldé seye.

This mayde of agé twelve yeer was  
and tweye 30

In which that Nature haddé swich delit;  
For, right as she kan peynte a lillie whit,  
And reed a rosé, right with swich peynture  
She peynted hath this noble créature,  
Er she were born, upon hir lymés fre,  
Where as by right swiche colours sholdé  
be;

And Phebus dyéd hath hire tresses grete  
Lyk to the styremés of his burnéd heete;  
And if that excellent was hire beautee,  
A thousand-foold moore vertuous was she.

In hire ne lakkéd no condicioun 41  
That is to preyse, as by discrecioun.

As wel in goost as body chast was she,  
For which she flouréd in virginitee  
With alle humylitee and abstinence,  
With alle attemperaunce and pacience,  
With mesure eek of beryng and array.

Discreet she was in answering alway;  
Though she were wise as Pallas, dar I  
seyn;

Hir facound eek, ful wommanly and  
pleyn; 50

No countrefeted termés hadde she  
To semé wys; but after hir degree  
She spak, and alle hire wordés, moore  
and lesse,

Sownyng in vertu and in gentillese;  
Shamefast she was, in maydens shame-  
fastnesse,

Constant in herte, and ever in bisynesse  
To dryve hire out of ydel slogardye.

Bacus hadde of hire mouth right no  
maistrie,

25. *ful of oon*, H<sup>2</sup> *fully at*.



For wyn and youthé dooth Venus  
encresse, 59

As man in fyr wol casten oille or greesse.

And of hir owene vertu unconstreyned

She hath ful ofté tymé syk hire feyned,

For that she woldé fleen the compaignye

Where likly was to treten of folye,—

As is at feestés, revels, and at daunces,

That been occasions of daliaunces.

Swich thyngés maken children for to be

To sooné rype and boold, as men may se,

Which is ful perilous, and hath been yooore,

For al to sooné may she lerné loore 70

Of booldnesse, whan she woxen is a wyf.

And ye maistresses, in youre oldé lyf,

That lordés doghtrés han in governaunce,

Ne taketh of my wordes no displeaunce ;

Thenketh that ye been set in governynges

Of lordés doghtrés, oonly for two thynges :

Outher for ye han kept youre honestee,

Or ellés ye han falle in freletee,

And knowen wel ynough the oldé daunce,

And han forsaken fully swich meschaunce

For evermo : therfore for Cristés sake 81

To teche hem vertu looke that ye ne

slake.

A thief of venysoun, that hath forlaft

His likerousnesse and al his oldé craft,

Kan kepe a forest best of any man ;

Now kepeth wel, for if ye wolde ye kan ;

Looke wel that ye unto no vice assente,

Lest ye be dampnéd for youre wikke

entente ;

For who so dooth a traitour is certeyn ;

And taketh kepe of that that I shal seyn ;

Of allé tresons sovereyn pestilence 91

Is whan a wight bitrayseth innocence.

Ye fadrés and ye moodrés eek, also,

Though ye han children, be it oon or mo,

Yours is the charge of al hir surveiaunce,

While that they been under youre gover-

naunce ;

Beth war, if by ensample of youre lyvyng,

Or by youre negligence in chastisyng,

That they ne perisse ; for I dar wel seye,

If that they doon, ye shul it deere abeye.

74. *wordes*, H<sup>4</sup> *word*.

82. H<sup>2</sup> read *Kepeth wel the that ye undertake*.

84. *elde*, H<sup>2</sup> *thoves*.

86. *if ye wolde*, H<sup>2</sup> *and ye wil*.

94. *mo*, H<sup>2</sup> *two*.

Under a shepherde softe and negligent  
The wolf hath many a sheepe and lamb  
to-rent.

Suffiseth oon ensample now as heere,

For I moot turne agayne to my matere.

This mayde, of which I wol this tale  
expresse,

So kepte hir self hir neded no maistresse ;

For in hir lyyng maydens myghten rede,

As in a book, every good word or dede

That longeth to a mayden vertuous,

She was so prudent and so bounteuos ;

For which the fame out sprong on every

syde, 111

Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde,

That thurgh that land they preiséd hire,

echone

That lovéd vertu, save Envye allone,

That sory is of oother mennés wele,

And glad is of his sorwe and his unheele ;

The doctour maketh this descripcioun.

This mayde upon a day wente in the  
toun

Toward a temple, with hire mooder deere,

As is of yongé maydens the manere. 120

Now was ther thanne a justice in that toun,

That governour was of that regioun,

And so bifel this juge his eyen caste

Upon this mayde, avysyng hym ful faste,

As she cam forby, ther as this juge stood

Anon his herté chaungéd and his mood,

So was he caught with beautee of this

mayde,

And to hymself ful pryvély he sayde,

' This maydé shal be myn, for any man !'

Anon the feend into his herté ran, 131

And taughte hym sodeynly that he by

slyghte

The mayden to his purpos wynné myghte

For certés, by no force, ne by no meede

Hym thoughte, he was nat able for to

speede ;

For she was strong of freendés, and eek shé

Confermé was in swich soverayn

bountee,

That wel he wiste he myghte hire newe

wynne

105. *wel*, H<sup>2</sup> *telle*.

117. *The doctour*, glossed 'Augustinus' in E

125. *as this*, H<sup>2</sup> *the*.

As for to snaken hire with hir body synne;  
For which by greet deliberacioun  
He sente after a cherl, was in the toun, 140  
Which that he knew for-subtil and for-  
boold.

This juge unto this cherl his tale hath  
toold

In secree wise, and made hym to ensure  
He sholdé telle it to no créature,  
And if he hidde he sholdé lese his heed.

Whan that assented was this curséd reed  
Glad was this juge, and makéd him  
greet cheere,

And yaf hym yiftés, precieuse and deere.

Whan shapen was al hire conspiracie,  
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie  
Parfournéd sholdé been ful subtilly, 151  
As ye shul heere it after openly,  
Hoom gooth the cherl, that highté  
Claudius.

This falsé jugé that highte Apius,—  
So was his namé, for this is no fable,  
But known for historial thyng notable;  
The sentence of it sooth is, out of doute,—  
This falsé jugé gooth now faste aboute  
To hasten his delit al that he may;  
And so bifel soone after, on a day, 160  
This falsé juge, as telleth us the storie,  
As he was wont, sat in his consistórie:  
And yaf his doomés upon sondry cas,  
This falsé cherl cam forth, a ful greet pas,  
And seyde, 'Lord, if that it be youre wille,  
As dooth me right upon this pitous bille,  
In which I pleyné upon Virginius;  
And if that he wol seyn it is nat thus,  
I wol it preeve, and fyndé good wisesse  
That sooth is that my billé wol expresse.'

The juge answerde, 'Of this in his  
absence'

I may nat yeve diffynytyve sentence;  
Lat do hym calle, and I wol gladly heere;  
Thou shalt have al right and no wrong  
heere.'

Virginius cam to wite the juges wille,  
And right anon was rad this curséd bille;  
The sentence of it was as ye shul heere:—

To yow, my lord, sire Apius so deere,

138. *makeh, H<sup>o</sup> make.*

140. *cherl, here and passim H<sup>o</sup> read clerk; the  
Roman de la Rose has serfant.*

*Showeth yours pouré servant Claudius,  
How that a knyght, called Virginius, 180  
Agayns the laws, agayn al equitee,  
Holdeth, expres agayn the wyl of me,  
My servant, which that is my thral by right,  
Which fro myn hous was stole upon a  
nyght,*

*Whilthat she was ful yong; this wol I preeve  
By witnesse, lord, so that it nat yow greeve.  
She nys his doghter, nat, what so he seye;  
Wherfore to yow, my lord, the juge, I praye,  
Yeld me my thral, if that it be youre wille.  
Lo, this was al the sentence of his bille.*

Virginius gan upon the cherl biholde,  
But hastily, er he his talé tolde,  
And wolde have preevéd it, as sholde a  
knyght,

And eek by witnessyng of many a wight,  
That it was fals that seyde his adver-  
sarie,—

This curséd jugé woldé no thyng tarie,  
Ne heere a word moore of Virginius,  
But yaf his juggément, and seyde thus:—

'I deeme anon this cherl his servant  
have; 199

Thou shalt na lenger in thyn hous hir save.  
Go, bryng hire forth, and put hire in  
oure warde.

The cherl shal have his thral; this I  
awarde.'

And whan this worthy knyght,  
Virginius,

Thurgh sentence of this justice Apius,  
Mosté by force his deeré doghter yeven  
Unto the juge, in lecherie to lyven,  
He gooth hym hoom and sette him in his  
halle,

And leet anon his deeré doghter calle,  
And with a facé deed as asshen colde,  
Upon hir humble face he gan biholde, 220  
With fadrés pitee stikyng thurgh his herte,  
Al wolde he from his purpos nat converte.

'Doghter,' quod he, 'Virginia by thy  
name,

Ther been\* two weyés, outhér deeth or  
shame,

That thou most suffre; alas! that I was  
bore!

For never thou deservedest wherfore  
To dyen with a swerd, or with a knyfl

O deeré doghter, endere of my lyf,  
Which I have fostred up with swich  
plesaunce

That thou were never out of my remem-  
braunce ; 220

O doghter, which that art my lasté wo,  
And in my lyf my lasté joye also ;  
O gemme of chastitee ! in pacience,  
Take thou thy deeth, for this is my  
sentence.

For love, and nat for hate, thou most be  
deed :

My pitous hand moot smyten of thyn  
heed !

Allas ! that ever Apius the say !  
Thus hath he falsly juggéd the to day ' ;  
And tolde hire al the cas, as ye bifore  
Han herd, nat nedeth for to telle it moore.

' O mercy, deeré fader ! ' quod this  
mayde, 231

And with that word she both hir armés  
layde

About his nekke, as she was wont to do ;  
The teeris bruste out of hir eyen two,  
And sayde, ' Goodé fader, shal I dye ?  
Is ther no grace, is ther no remedye ? '

' No, certés, deeré doghter myn, ' quod  
he.

' Thanne yif me leyser, fader myn, '  
quod she,

' My deeth for to compleyne a litel space,  
For *pardes* Jepte yaf his doghter grace 240  
For to compleyne, er he hir slow, alas !  
And God it woot, no thyng was hir trespas,  
But for she ran hir fader first to see,  
To welcome hym with greet solempnitee, '  
And with that word she fil aswowne anon,  
And after, whan hir swowning is agon,  
She riseth up, and to hir fader sayde,  
' Blissed be God, that I shal dye a mayde ;  
Yif me my deeth, er that I have a shame ;  
Dooth with youre child youre wyl, a  
Goddés name ! ' 250

And with that word she preyed hym  
ful ofte

That with his swerd he woldé smyte  
softe ;

And with that word aswowné down she fil.  
Hir fader, with ful sorrowful herte and wil,

252. *leyser*, H<sup>3</sup> *love*.

Hir heed of smoot, and by the tope it  
hente,

And to the juge he gan it to presente,  
As he sat yet in doom in consistórie ;  
And whan the juge it saugh, asseith the  
storie,

He bad to take hym and anchange hym  
faste ; 259

But right anon a thousand peplein thraste,  
To save the knyght, for routhe and for  
pitee ;

For knowen was the false iniquitee.

The peple anon hath suspect of this thyng,  
By manere of the cherles chalanging,

That it was by the assent of Apius ;  
They wisten wel that he was lecherus ;

For which unto this Apius they gon,  
And caste hym in a prisoun right anon,

Wher as he slow hymself ; and Claudius,  
That servant was unto this Apius, 270

Was deméd for to hange upon a tree ;  
But that Virginius, of his pitee,

So preyed for hym that he was exiled,  
And ellés, certés, he had been bigyled.

The remenant was anhangéd, moore and  
lesse,

That were consentant of this cursednesse.

Heere men may seen how synne hath  
his merite.

Beth war, for no man woot whom God  
wol smyte,

In no degree ; ne in which manere wyse  
The worm of consciencé may agryse 280

Of wikked lyf, though it so pryvee be  
That no man woot ther-of but God and  
he ;

For be he lewéd man, or ellis lered,  
He noot how soone that he shal been  
afered ;

Therefore, I redé yow, this conseil take,  
Forsaketh synne, er synné yow forsake.

*The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien  
and the Pardoner*

Oure Hoosté gan to swere as he were  
wood ;

275. *The remenant*, the witnesses promised  
in l. 186.

278. *whom*, H<sup>3</sup> *how*.

283. H<sup>3</sup> read *Whether* (whether) that he be lewed  
man or lewed.

'Harrow!' quod he, 'by nayles, and  
by blood!

This was a fals cherl and a fals justise!  
As shameful deeth as herte may devyse  
Come to chise juges, and hire advocatz!  
Algate this sely mayde is slayn, alas!  
Alas! to deere boughte she beautee!  
Wherfore I seye al day, as men may see,  
That yiftes of Fortune and of Nature  
Been cause of deeth to many a creature.  
Hire beautee was hire deth, I dar wel  
sayn;

Alas! so pitously as she was slayn!  
Of bothe yiftes that I speke of now  
Men han ful oftē moore harm than prow.

'But trewely, myn owene maister  
deere,

301

This is a pitous talē for to heere;  
But nathelless, passe over, is no fors;  
I pray to God so save thy gentil cors,  
And eek thyne uryngals, and thy jurdones,  
Thyn Ypocras, and eek thy Galiones,  
And every boyste ful of thy letuarie;  
God blesse hem, and oure lady Seintē  
Marie!

So moot I theen, thou art a propre man,  
And lyk a prelat, by Seint Ronyan!  
Seyde I nat wel, I kan nat speke in terme?  
But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to  
erre

That I almost have caught a cardynacle.  
By corpus bones! but I have triacle,  
Or elles a draughte of moyste and corny  
ale,

Or but I heere anon a myrie tale,  
Myn herte is lost, for pitee of this mayde.  
Thou *beal amy*, thou Pardonere, he sayde,  
'Telle us som myrthe, or japēs, right  
anon!'

'It shal be doon,' quod he, 'by  
Seint Ronyan!

320

'But first,' quod he, 'heere at this alē  
stake

289. *fals cherl* and, H<sup>4</sup> *cursted thy.*

290. *shameful*, H<sup>3</sup> *schendful.*

291. 292. H<sup>3</sup> have the more vigorous couplet:

So this upon his body and his boones.  
The dorel I bykame him, al at ones.

317. *beal*, H *beest.*

319. H reads *Tel us a tale for thou canst  
say owt*, ending next line and that anon.

I wol bothe drynke and eten of a cake.'

And right anon the gentils gonne to  
crye,

'Nay! lat hym telle us of no ribaudey;  
Telle us som moral thyng, that we may  
leere

Som wit, and thannē wol we gladly heere.'

'I graunte, y-wis,' quod he, 'but I  
moot thynke

Upon som honeste thyng, while that I  
drynke.'

*Heere foloweth The Preamble of the  
Pardoners Tale*

'Lordynges,' quod he, 'in chirchēs  
whan I preche,

I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,  
And ryngē it out as round as gooth a  
belle,

331

For I kan al by rotē that I telle.

My theme is alwey oon, and ever was,—  
*Radix malorum est Cupiditas.*

'First, I pronouncē whennēs that I  
come,

And thanne my bullēs shewe I, alle and  
some;

Oure ligē lordēs seel on my patente,  
That shewe I first, my body to warente,  
That no man be so boold, ne preest, ne  
clerk,

Me to destourbe of Cristēs hooly werk;  
And, after that, thanne telle I forth my  
tales,

341

Bullēs of popēs and of cardynales,  
Of patriarkes and bishoppēs I shewe,  
And in Latyn I speke a wordēs fewe  
To saffron with my predicacioun,  
And for to stire hem to devocioun;  
Thanne shewe I forth my longē cristal  
stones

Y-crammēd ful of cloutēs and of bones,—  
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon  
Thanne have I in latoun a sholder boon

326, 327. H reads *Gladly, quod he, and sayde  
as ye schal heere, But in the cuppe wil I me be-  
thinks.*

328. *thyng*, H *tale.*

329. *chirches*, H<sup>3</sup> *chirche.*

331. *as round as gooth*, H *as loud as doth.*

345. *saffron*, H<sup>4</sup> *swore.*

Which that was of an hooly Jewes sheepe.  
 "Goode men," I seye, "taak of my  
 wordes keepe,—

If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,  
 If cow, or calf, or sheepe, or oxé swelle  
 That any worm hath ete, or worm  
 y-stonge,

Taak water of that welle and wassh his  
 tonge,

And it is hool anon; and forthermoor  
 Of pokkés, and of scabbe, and every soor,  
 Shal every sheepe be hool that of this  
 welle

Drynketh a draughte. Taak kepe eek  
 what I telle. 360

If that the goode-man that the beestés  
 oweth

Wol every wyke, er that the cok hym  
 croweth,

Fastyngé, drinken of this welle a draughte,  
 As thilké hooly Jew oure eldrés taughte,  
 His beestés and his stoor shal multiplie.

And, sires, also it heeleth jalousie,  
 For though a man be falle in jalous rage,  
 Lat maken with this water his potage,  
 And never shal he moore his wyf  
 mystriste,

Though he the soothe of hir défauté  
 wiste,— 370

Al had she taken preestes two or thre.  
 Heere is a miteyn eek, that ye may se;  
 He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,  
 He shal have multipliing of his grayn,  
 Whan he hath sowén, be it whete or otes,  
 So that he offré pens, or ellés grotés.

"Goode men and wommen, o thyng  
 warne I yow,

If any wight be in this chirché now  
 That hath doon synné horrible, that he  
 Dar nat for shame of it y-shryven be, 380  
 Or any womman, be she yong or old,  
 That hath y-maad hir housbonde coké-  
 wold,

Swich folk shal have no power ne no  
 grace

To offren to my relikes in this place;  
 And whosofyndeth hym out of swich blame  
 They wol come up and offren on Goddés  
 name,

385. blame, E fame.

And I assoille hem by the auctoritee  
 Which that by bulle y-graunted was to  
 me."

'By this gaude have I wonné, yeer  
 by yeer,

An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.  
 I stondé lyk a clerk in my pulpet, 390  
 And whan the lewéd peple is doun y-set,  
 I preché so as ye han herd bifoore,  
 And telle an hundred falsé japes moore;  
 Thanne peyne I me to stretché forth the  
 nekke,

And est and west upon the peple I bekke,  
 As dooth a dowvé, sittynge on a berne;  
 Myne handés and my tongé goon so yerne,  
 That it is joye to se my bisynesse.

Of avarice and of swich cursednesse 400  
 Is al my prechyng, for to make hem free  
 To yeven hir pens, and namely unto me;  
 For myn entente is nat but for to wyne,  
 And no thyng for correccioun of synne.  
 I rekké never whan that they been beryed,  
 Though that hir soulés goon a-blaké-  
 beryed;

Fór certés many a predicacioun  
 Comth offé tyme of yvel entencioun;  
 Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,  
 To been avauncéd by ypocrisie; 410  
 And som for veyné glorie, and som for  
 hate,

For whan I dar noon oother weyes debate  
 Thanne wol I styngé hym with my tongé  
 smerte

In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte  
 To been defamed falsly, if that he  
 Hath trespassed to my bretheren or to me;  
 For though I tellé noght his propre name,  
 Men shal wel knowé that it is the same,  
 By signés, and by othere circumstances.  
 Thus quyte I folk that doon us dis-  
 plesances; 420

Thus spitte I out my venym under hewe  
 Of hoolynesse, to semen hooly and trewe  
 'But, shortly, myn entente I wo  
 devyse,—

I preche of no thyng but for coveityse;  
 Therfore my theme is yet and ever was,  
*Radix malorum est Cupiditas.*

Thus kan I preche agayn that samé vice  
 Which that I use, and that is avarice;

But though myself be gilty in that synne  
Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne  
From avarice, and soore to repente; 431  
But that is nat my principal entente;  
I preche<sup>2</sup> no thyng but for coveitise.  
Of this matere it oghte ynogh suffice.

'Thanne telle I hem ensamples many  
oon

Of olde stories longē tyme agoon,—  
For lewēd peple loven talēs olde,—  
Swiche thynges kan they wel reporte and  
holde.

What I trowē ye, the whilēs I may preche,  
And wyynnē gold and silver for I teche,  
That I wol lyve in povertē wilfully? 441  
Nay, nay, I thoughte it never, trewely,  
For I wol preche and begge in sondry  
landes;

I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,  
Ne makē baskettes and lyve therby,  
By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.  
I wol noon of the Apostles countrefete,  
I wol have moneie, wollē, chese and whete,  
Al were it yeven of the povereste page,  
Or of the povereste wydwe in a village,  
Al sholde hir children stervē for famyne.  
Nay, I wol drynkē licour of the vync,  
And have a joly wenche in every toun;  
But herkneth, lordynges, in conclusioun.

'Youre likyng is that I shal telle a tale.  
Now have I dronke a draughte of corny  
ale,

By God, I hope I shal yow telle a thyng  
That shal by resoun been at youre likyng;  
For though myself be a ful vicious man,  
A moral tale yet I yow tellē kan, 460  
Which I am wont to prechē, for to wynde.  
Now hoold youre pees, my tale I wol  
bigynne.'

## PARDONER'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth The Pardoners Tale*

In Flaundres whilom was a compaignye  
Of yongē folk, that haunteden folye,

*Pardoner's Tale.* The earliest form of this tale is a Buddhist Birth-Story in the *Vedābhāṣa* (*Jataka*); analogues exist in Persian, Arabic, etc., and in the *Cento Novella Antiche*, but Chaucer's particular original is unknown.

As riot, haſtard, stywēs and taverneſ,  
Where-as with harpēs, lutēs and gyterneſ,  
They daunce and pleyen at dees, bothe  
day and nyght,  
And eten also, and drynken over hir  
myght,

Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifice  
Withinne that develes temple, in cursēd  
wiſe, 470

By superfluytee abhomynable.  
Hir otheſ been so grete and so dampnable  
That it is grisly for to heere hem sware;  
Oure blisseſ Lordes body they to-terē;  
Hem thoughte that Jewes rentē hym  
noght ynough,

And ech of hem at othereſ synnē lough;  
And right anon thanne comen tombesteres  
Fetys and smale, and yongē fruteſteres,  
Syngereſ with harpēs, baudēs, waferereſ,  
Whiche been the verray develes officereſ,  
To kyndle and-blowe the fyr of lecherye,  
That is annexēd unto glotonye.

The Hooly Writ take I to my witneſſe  
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkēnesse.

'Lo, how that dronken Looth, un-  
kyndely,

Lay by his doghtrēs two unwityngly;  
So dronke he was he nyste what he  
wroghte.

Herodēs, (whoso wel the storieſſoghte,)  
Whan he of wyn was repleet at his feeste,  
Right at his owenē table, he yaf his heeste  
To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltēlees.

Seneca seith a good word, doutelees;  
He seith he kan no differēcē fynde  
Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde  
And a man which that is dronkēlewe,  
But that woodnessē, fallen in a shrēwe,  
Persēvereth lenger than dooth dronkē-  
nesse.

O glotonyē, ful of cursednesse;  
O causē first of oure confusioun;  
O original of oure dampnacioun; 500  
Til Crist hadde boght us with his blood  
agayn!

Ló, how deerē, shortly for to sayn,

474. *Oure blisseſ Lordes body*, etc. The phrase occurs also in the Parson's Tale.

492. *Seneca, Ep. Senec; Corp.* reading *est good wordes for a good word.* Tyrwhitt traces the reference to *Ep. 83*.

Aboght was thilké curséd vilteyne ;  
Corrupt was al this world for glotonye ;  
Adam oure-fader, and his wyf also,  
Fro Paradys, to labour and to wo  
Were dryven for that vice, it is no  
drede,—

For whil that Aham fasted, as I rede,  
He was in Paradys, and whan that he  
Eet of the fruyt deffended, on the tree, 520  
Anon he was out cast to wo and peyne.  
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne !

O, wiste a man how manye maladyes  
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,  
He woldé been the moore mesurable  
Of his dieté, sittynge at his table !  
Allas ! the shorté throte, the tendré mouth,  
Maketh that est and west, and north and  
south,

In erthe, in air, in water, man to-swynke  
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and  
drynke ! 530

Of this matiere, O Paul, wel kanstow  
trete !

'Mete unto wombe, and wombe eek  
unto mete,

Shal God destroyen bothe,' as Paulus seith.  
Allas ! a foul thyng is it, by my feith,  
To seye this word, and fouler is the dede  
Whan man so drynketh of the white and  
rede,

That of his throte he maketh his pryvce,  
Thurgh thilké curséd superfluitee.

The Apostel wepyng seith ful pitously,  
'Ther walken manye of whiche yow  
toold have I, 530

I seye it now wepyng with pitous voys,  
That they been enemys of Cristés croys,  
Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is  
hir god.'

O wombe ! O bely ! O stynkyng is thi  
cod !

Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun !  
At either ende of thee foul is the soun ;  
How greet labour and cost is thee to  
fynde !

Thise cookés, how they stampe, and  
streyné, and grynde,

520. *as I rede*, glossed: Ieronimus contra Iovinianum (Bk. II. cap. 13).

530. *de thē, om. Ed.*

And turnen substaunce into accident,  
To fulfille al thy likerous talent !  
Out of the hardé bonés knokké they  
The mary, for they casté noght away  
That may go thurgh the golet softe and  
swoote.

Of spicerie, of leet and bark, and roote,  
Shal been his sauce y-makéd by delit,  
To make hym yet a newer appetit ;  
But certés he that haunteth swiche delices  
Is deed, whil that he lyveth in tho vices.

A lecherous thyng is wyn, and dronkenesse

Is ful of stryvyng and of wrecchednesse.  
O dronké man ! disfigured is thy face, 551  
Sour is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace,  
And thurgh thy dronké nose semeth the  
soun,

As though thou seydest ay, 'Sampsoun !  
Sampsoun !'

And yet, God woot, Sampsoun drank  
never no wyn.

Thou fallest as it were a stykéd swyn,  
Thy tonge is lost and al thyyn honeste cur ;  
For dronkenesse is verray sepulture  
Of mannés wit and his discrecioun ;  
In whom that drynke hath dóminacioun,  
He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede. 561  
Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the  
rede,

And namely fro the whité wyn of Lepe,  
That is to selle in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe.

This wyn of Spaigné crepeth subtilly  
In othere wynés growynge fasté by,

Of which ther ryseth swich fumositée,  
That whan a man hath dronken draughtés  
thre,

And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,  
He is in Spaigne right at the toune of  
Lepe,— 570

Nat at the Rochele, neat Burdeaux-toun,—  
And thanné wol he seye, 'Sampsoun,  
Sampsoun !'

But herkneth, lordyngs, o word, I yow  
preye,

539. *turnen substaunce into accident*, alter the whole character of. Chaucer is imitating the chapter De Gula in the *De Contemptu Mundi* of Innocent III.

563. *Lepe*, near Cadiz.

564. *Fysshstrete*, E. Fleetstreet.

That alle the sovereyn actès, dar I seye,  
Of victories in the Oldé Testament,  
Thurgh verray God that is omnipotent,  
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere;  
Looketh the Bible and ther ye may it  
leere.

Looke, Attilla, the greté conquerour,  
Deyde in his sleepe, with shame and  
dishonour, 580

Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenesse.  
A capitayn sholde lyve in sobrenesse;  
And over al this avyseth yow right wel  
What was comaunded unto Lamuel,—  
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel seye I;  
Redeth the Bible, and fynde it expresly  
Of wyn-yevyng to hem that han justise.  
Namore of this, for it may wel suffice.

And now that I have spoken of glo-  
tonye,

Now wol I yow diffenden hasardrye. 590  
Hasard is verray mooder of lesynges,  
And of deceite, and curséd forswerynges,  
BlaspHEME of Crist, manslaughter, and  
wast also

Of catel, and of tyme, and forthermo  
It is repreeve and contrarie of honour  
For to ben holde a commune hasardour  
And ever the hyer hé is of estaat,  
The mooré is he holden desolaat.  
If that a pryncé useth hasardrye 600  
In allé governaunce and policye,  
He is, as by communé opinioun,  
Y-holde the lasse in reputacioun.

Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,  
Was sent to Corynthe in ful gret honour  
Fro Lacidomye to maken hire alliaunce;  
And when he cam, hym happedé *par*  
*chaunce*

That alle the gretteste that were of that  
lund

Pléyyng atté hasard he hem fond;  
For which, as sooné as it myghté be,  
He stal hynf hoom agayn to his contree,  
And seyde, 'Ther wol I nat lese my  
name, 612

584. *Lamuel*, the mysterious king of Prov.  
xxxi. 1.

603. *Stilbon*. The story is told in the *Poly-  
craticus* (Bk. I, cap. v.) of John of Salisbury;  
the ambassador's name there being given as  
Chilon.

Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame,  
Yow for to allie unto none hasardours;  
Sendeth othere wise embassadours,  
For, by my trouthe, me were levere dye,  
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye;  
For ye that been so glorious in honour,  
Shul nat allyén yow with hasardours,  
As by my wyl, ne as by my trettee!  
This wisé philosophre thus seyde hee. 620

Looke eek that to the kyng Demetrius,  
The kyng of Parthés, as the book seith us,  
Sente him a paire of dees of gold, in scorn,  
For he hadde uséd hasard ther-biforn;  
For which he heeld his glorie or his  
renoun

At no value or reputacioun.

Lordés may fynden oother maner play  
Honeste ynough to dryve the day away.

Now wol I speke of othes false and  
grete

A word or two, as oldé bookés trette. 630  
Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable,  
And fals sweryng is yet moore reprevable.  
The heighé God forbad sweryng at al,—  
Witnesse on Mathew, but in special  
Of sweryng seith the hooly Jeremye,  
'Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othes, and  
nat lye

And swere in doom, and eek in rightwis-  
nesse';

But ydel sweryng is a cursednesse.  
Bihoold and se, that in the firsté table  
Of heighé Goddés heestés, honourable, 640  
How that the seconde heeste of hym is  
this:

'Take nat my name in ydel, or amys';  
Lo, rather he forbedeth swich sweryng  
Than homycide, or many a curséd thyng;  
I seye that as by ordre thus it stondeth.  
This knowen, that his heestés under-  
stondeth,

How that the seconde heeste of God is  
that;

And forther over, I wol thee telle, al plat,  
That vengeance shal nat parten from his  
hous

621. *Demetrius*. This story also is from the  
*Polycraticus*.

641. *the seconde heeste*. By the Roman  
Church the first and second commandments are  
regarded as one, and the tenth divided into two.



That of his othes is to outrageous, — 650  
 'By Goddés precious herte,' and 'By  
 his nayles,'  
 And 'By the blood of Crist that is in  
 Hayles,'  
 'Sevene is my chaunce, and thyn is cynk  
 and treye,  
 By Goddés armés, if thou falsly pleye,  
 This daggere shal thurghout thyn herté  
 go !'

This fruyt cometh of the bicchéd bonés  
 two,  
 Forsweryng, iré, falsnesse, homycide.  
 Now for the love of Crist that for us dyde,  
 Leveth youre othés, bothé grete and  
 smale.

But, sires, now wol I tellé forth my tale.  
 Thise riotours thre, of whiche I telle,  
 Longe erst er primé rong of any belle,  
 Were set hem in a tavern for to drynke ;  
 And as they sat they herde a bellé clynke  
 Bifrom a cors, was caried to his grave.  
 That oon of hem gan callen to his knave :  
 'Go bet,' quod he, 'and axé redily  
 What cors is this that passeth heer forby,  
 And looke that thou reporte his namé  
 weel.'

'Sire,' quod this boy, 'it nedeth  
 never a deel, 670  
 It was me toold er ye cam heere two  
 houres ;

He was, *pardes*, an old felawe of youre,  
 And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-nyght,  
 For-dronke, as he sat on his bench upright ;  
 Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth  
 Deeth,

That in this contree al the peplé sleeth,  
 And with his spere he smoot his herte  
 atwo,

And wente his wey withouten wordés mo.  
 He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence,  
 And, maister, er ye come in his presence,  
 Me thynketh that it wéré necessarie 681  
 For to be war of swich an adversarie ;  
 Beth redy for to meete hym evermoore ;  
 Thus taughte me my dame ; I sey na-  
 moore.'

'By Sainte Marié !' seyde this taverner,  
 682: *Hayles*, Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire.  
 683: *Leveth*, E<sup>d</sup> *Let*.

'The child seith sooth, for' he hath  
 slayn this yeer  
 Henne over a mile, withinne a greet  
 village,  
 Bothe man and womman, child, and  
 hyne, and page ;  
 I trowe his habitacioun be there ;  
 To been avyséd greet wysdom it were, 690  
 Er that he dide a man a dishonour.'

'Ye, Goddés armés !' quod this riotour,  
 'Is it swich peril with hym for to meete ?  
 I shal hym seke by wey, and eek by strete ;  
 I make avow to Goddés digné bones !  
 Herkneþ, felawés, we thre been al ones,  
 Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,  
 And ech of us bicomen ootheres brother,  
 And we wol sleen this falsé traytour,  
 Deeth ; 699

He shal be slayn, he that so manye sleeth,  
 By Goddés dignitee, er it be nyght !'  
 Togidres han thise thre hir trouthés  
 plight

To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oother,  
 As though he were his owene y-boré  
 brother ;

And up they stirte, al dronken, in this  
 rage ;

And forth they goon towardés that village  
 Of which the taverner hadde spoke bifrom.  
 And many a grisly ooth thanne han they  
 sworn ;

And Cristés blessed body they to-rente,—  
 Deeth shal be deed, if that they may  
 hym hente. 710

Whan they han goon nat fully half a  
 mile,

Right as they wolde han troden over a  
 stile,

An oold man and a pouré with hem mette ;  
 This oldé man ful mekely hem grette,  
 And seyde thus : 'Now, lordés, God  
 yow see !'

The proudeste of thise riotours thre  
 Answerde agayn, 'What, carl with sory  
 grace,

Why artow al for-wrapped, save thy face !  
 Why lyvestow so longe in so greet age ?'

This oldé man gan looken in his visage,  
 And seyde thus : 'For I ne kan nat fynde

704: *y-bore*, H<sup>3</sup> *sworne*.

A man, though that I walkéd into Ynde,  
Neither in citee, ne in no village,  
That woldé chaunge his youthe for myn  
age;

And therfore moot I han myn agé stille,  
As longé tyme as it is Goddés wille.  
Ne Deeth, alas! ne wol nat han my lyf;  
Thus walke I, lyk a restelees kaityf,  
And on the ground, which is my moodrés  
gate,

I knokké with my staf, erly and late, 730  
And seyé, "Leevé mooder, leet me in!  
Lo, how I vanysshe, flessch and blood  
and skyn;

Allas! whan shul my bonés been at reste?  
Mooder, with yow wolde I chaungé my  
cheste

That in my chambré longé tyme hath be,  
Ye, for an heyré-clowt to wrappé me!"  
But yet to me she wol nat do that grace,  
For which ful pale and welkéd is my face.

'But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye  
To speken to an old man vileynye, 740  
But he trespassse in word, or elles in dede.  
In Hooly Writ ye may your self wel rede,  
Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,  
Ye sholde arise; wherfore I yeve yow reed,  
Ne dooth unto an oold man noon harm  
now,

Namooré than ye wolde men did to yow  
In agé, if that ye so longe abyde.  
And God be with yow, where ye go or  
ryde;

I moote go thider as I have to go.'

'Nay, oldé cherl, by God, thou shalt  
nat so!' 750

Seydé this oother hasardour anon;  
'Thou partest nat so lightly, by Seint  
John!

Thou spak right now of thilké traytour,  
Deeth,

That in this contree alle oure freendés  
sleeth;

Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his  
espye,

Telle where he is, or thou shalt it abyde,  
By God and by the hooly sacrament!

730. vanysshe, H<sup>3</sup> wane.

750. or thou shalt it abyde, H<sup>3</sup> or elles thou  
shalt dye.

For soothly, thou art oon of his assent  
To sleen us yongé folk, thou falsé theef!  
'Now, sires,' quod he, 'if that ye  
be so leef' 760

To fyndé Deeth, turne up this croked wey,  
For in that grove I lafte hym, by my fey,  
Under a tree, and there he wole abydé;  
Noght for youre boost he wole him no  
thyng hyde.

Se ye that ook? Right there ye shal  
hym fynde.

God savé yow that boghte agayn man-  
kynde,

And yow amende! thus seyde this oldé  
man;

And everich of thise riotourés ran  
Til he cam to that tree, and ther they  
founde, 769

Of floryns fyne, of gold y-coynéd rounde,  
Wel ny a seven busschels, as hem thoughte.  
No lenger thanné after Deeth they  
soughte,

But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,  
For that the floryns been so faire and  
bryghte,

That doun they sette hem by this precious  
hoord.

The worsté of hem he spak the firsté word.  
'Bretheren,' quod he, 'taak kepé  
what I seye;

My wit is greet, though that I bourde  
and pleye.

This tresor hath Fortúne unto us yeven  
In myrthe and jolifite oure lyf to lyven,  
And lightly as it comth so wol we spende.  
Ey, Goddés precious dignitee! who wende  
To-day, that we sholde han so fair a  
grace?

But myghte this gold be caried fro this  
place

Hoóm to myn hous, or ellés unto  
yours,—

For wel ye woot that al this gold is  
oures,—

Thanne weré we in heigh felicitee.

But trewely, by daye it may nat bee;  
Men woldé seyn that we were thevé's  
stronge, 789

And for oure owené tresor doon us honge.

771. seven, H<sup>3</sup> eighte.

And ye mowe have a suffisant Pardoneer  
 assoillé yow in contree as ye ryde,  
 For aventure whiché that may bityde.  
 Paraventure ther may fallen oon or two  
 Doun of his hors and breke his nekke atwo;  
 Looke which a seuretee is it to yow alle,  
 That I am in youre felawshipe y-falle,  
 That may assoillé yow, bothe moore and  
 lasse,

Whan that the soule shal fro the body  
 passe. 940

I redé that oure Hoost heere shal bigynne,  
 For he is moost enveloped in synne!  
 Com forth, sire Hoost, and offré first anon,  
 And thou shalt kisse my relikes every-  
 chon,—

Ye, for a grote! Unbokele anon thy purs.  
 'Nay, nay,' quod he, 'thanne have I  
 Cristés curs!

Lat be,' quod he, 'it shal nat be, so theech!  
 Thou woldest make me kisse thyn oldé  
 breech,

And swere it were a relyk of a seint,  
 Though it were with thy fundément  
 depeint; 950

But, by the croys which that Seint  
 Eleyne fond,

'935. fallen, H<sup>8</sup> falle. 951. Eleyne, Helena.

I wolde I hadde thy coillons in 'myn hond  
 Instide of relikes, or of seintuarie.  
 Lat kutte hem of, I wol thee helpe hem  
 carie,

They shul be shryned in an hogges toord.  
 This Pardoner answerd nat a word;  
 So wrooth he was no word ne wolde he  
 seye.

'Now,' quod oure Hoost, 'I wol no  
 lenger pleye  
 With thee, ne with noon oother angry  
 man.'

But right anon the worthy Knyght  
 bigan,— 960  
 Whan that he saugh that al the peple  
 lough,—

'Namooore of this, for it is right  
 ynough!  
 Sire Pardoner, be glad and myrie of  
 cheere;

And ye, sir Hoost, that been to me so  
 deere,

I prey yow that ye kisse the Pardoner;  
 And Pardoner, I prey thee drawe thee  
 neer,

And as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye.  
 Anon they kiste and ryden forth hir weye.

## GROUP D

*The Prologue of the Wyves Tale of Bath*

'EXPERIENCE, though noon auctoritee  
 Were in this world, were right ynogh to me  
 To speke of wo that is in mariage;  
 For, lordynges, sith I twelf yeer was  
 of age,—

Y-thonked be God, that is eterne on lyve!  
 Housbondes at chirché dore I have had  
 fyve;

For I so ofté have y-wedded bee;

GROUP D. In the Ellesmere MS. this group follows the Man of Law's Tale, but the mention of Sittingbourne (l. 847) shows that it must come after the Monk's Tale with its reference to Rochester.

8. at chirche dore, where the first part of the marriage service used to be read.

And alle were worthy men in hir degree  
 But me was toold certeyn, nat long  
 agoon is,

That sith that Crist ne wente never bu  
 onis

To weddyng, in the Cane of Galilée,  
 By the same ensample taughte he me  
 That I ne sholdé wedded be but ones.  
 Herkne, eek, which a sharpe word is  
 the nones,

Beside a wellé Jhesus, God and man,

13. Against this line E has the note, 'Qui enim semel ivit, ad nupcias docuit semel es nubendum,' a quotation from St. Jerome *Adversus Jovinianum*, a treatise in favour of chastity, some of the arguments in which of Wife of Bath from here to line 128 takes up as inverts or combats.

Spak in repreve of the Samaritan :  
 "Thou hast y-had fyve housbondes," quod  
 he,  
 "And that ilk man the which that hath  
 now thee  
 Is noght thyn housbonde"; thus seyde  
 he certeyn.

What that he mente therby, I kan nat  
 seyn ; 20

But that I axé, why the fifthé man  
 Was noon housbonde to the Samaritan ?  
 How manye myghte she have in mariage ?  
 Yet herde I never tellen, in myn age,  
 Upon this nombré diffinioun.

Men may devyne, and glosen up and doun,  
 But wel I woot, expres, withouté lye,  
 God bad us for to wexe and multiplie ;  
 That gentil text kan I wel understonde.  
 Eek, wel I woot, he seyde myn housbonde  
 Sholde leté fader and mooder, and také  
 me ; 32

But of no nombré mencioune made he,  
 Of bigamy, or of octogamy ;  
 Why sholdé men speke of it vileynye.

'Lo, heere the wise kyng daun  
 Salomon ;

I trowe he haddé wyves mo than oon ;  
 As, woldé God, it lefeful were to me  
 To be refreshéd half so ofte as he !  
 Which yifte of God hadde he for alle his  
 wyvys !

No man hath swich that in this world  
 alve is. 40

God woot, this noble kyng, as to my wit,  
 The firsté nyght had many a myrie fit  
 With ech of hem, so wel was hym on lyve.

'Y-blessed be God, that I have wedded  
 fyve !

Welcome the sixté, whan that ever he shal,  
 For sothe I wol nat kepe me chaast in al.  
 Whan myn housbonde is fro the world  
 y-gon,

Som cristen man shal weddè me anon ;  
 For thanne, thapostle seith, I am free  
 To wedde, a Goddes half, where it liketh  
 me. 50

He seith to be wedded is no synne ;  
 "Bét is to be wedded than to brynne."

50. a *Goddes half*, on God's part, i.e. with His  
 assent.

What rekketh me though folk seye vileynye  
 Of shrewéd Lameth, and his bigamy ?

I woot wel Abraham was authooly man,  
 And Jacob eek, as ferforth as I kan,  
 And ech of hem haddé wyves mo than two,  
 And many another holy man also.

Whanne saugh ye ever in any manere age  
 That hyé God defended mariage 60

By expres word ? I pray you telleth me ;  
 Or where comanded he virginitee ?

I woot as wel as ye, it is no drede,  
 Thapostel whan he speket of mayden-  
 hede,

He seyde that precept ther-of hadde he  
 noon.

Men may conseilte a womman to been  
 oon,

But conseillyng is nat comandement.

He putte it in oure owene juggement ;

For haddé God comanded maydenhede  
 Thanne hadde he dampnéd weddyng with  
 the dede ; 70

And certein, if ther were no seed y-sowe,  
 Virginitee, wher-of thannesholde it growe ?  
 Poul dorste nat comanden, atté leeste,  
 A thyng of which his maister yaf noon  
 heeste.

The dart is set up of virginitee,  
 Cacche who so may, who renneth best  
 lat see !

'But this word is nat taken of every  
 wight,

But ther as God lust yive it of his myght.  
 I woot wel that the Apostel was a mayde,  
 But nathéles, thogh that he wroot and  
 sayde 80

He wolde that every wight were swich  
 as he,

Al nys but conseil to virginitee ;  
 And for to been a wyf he yaf me leve  
 Of indulgence, so it is no repreve  
 To weddè me, if that my maké dye,  
 Withouten excepcioun of bigamy,  
 Al were it good no womman for to  
 touche,—

He mente as in his bed or in his couche ;  
 For peril is bothe fyr and tow tassemble ;  
 Ye knowe what this ensample may  
 resemble. 90

This is al and som, he helde virginitee

Moore profiteth than weddyng in freltee ;  
Freltee clepe I, but if that he and she  
Wolde leden al hir lyf in chastitee.

'I graunte it wel I have noon envie  
Thogh maydenhede preferre bigamye :  
Hem liketh to be clené, body and goost.  
Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost,  
For wel ye knowe a lord in his houshold  
He nath nat every vessel al of gold ; 100  
Somme been of tree, and doon hir  
lord servyse.

God clepeth folk to hym in sondry wyse,  
And everich hath of God a propre yifte,  
Som this, som that, as hym liketh to  
shifte.

'Virginitee is greet perfeccioun,  
And continence eek, with devocioun ;  
But Crist, that of perfeccioun is wellé,  
Bad nat every wight sholdé go selle  
All that he hadde and yive it to the poore,  
And in swich wisé folwe hym and his foore.  
He spak to hem that wolde lyve parfitly,  
And, lordynges, by youre leve, that am  
nat I.

I wol bistowe the flour of al myn age  
In the actés and in fruyt of mariage.

'Telle me also, to what conclusioun  
Were membes maad of generacioun,  
And for what profit was a wight  
y-wroght ?

Trusteth right wel, they were nat maad  
for noght.

Glose who so wole, and seye bothe up  
and down,

That they were makyd for purgacioun 120  
Of uryne, and oure bothé thyngés smale  
Were eek to knowe a femele from a male,  
And for noon oother causé,—sey ye no ?  
The experience woot wel it is noght so ;  
So that the clerkés be nat with me wrothe,  
I sey this, that they beth maked for bothe ;  
This is to seye, for office, and for ese  
Of engendrure, ther we nat God displese.  
Why sholde men ellés in hir bookés sette  
That man shal yeldé to his wyf hire dette ?  
Now wher-with sholde he make his  
paiement, 121

If he ne used his sely instrument ?

Thanne were they maad upon a créature,

ga. *preyistith, H<sup>o</sup> parfit.*

To purge uryne and eek for engendrure.  
'But I seye noght that every wight is  
holde,

That hath swich harneys as I to yow tolde,  
To goon and usen hem in engendrure,  
Thanne shuld men take of chastitee me  
cure.

Crist was a mayde and shapen as a man,  
And many a seint sith that the world  
bigan, 122

Yet lyved they ever in parfit chastitee.  
I nyl nat envye no virginitee ;  
Lat hem be breed of puré wheté seed,  
And lat us wyvés hoten barly breed,  
And yet with barly breed Mark tellé kan  
Oure Lord Jhesu refreshéd many a man.

'In swich estaat as God hath cleped us,  
I wol persévère, I nam nat precius ;  
In wyfhode I wol use myn instrument  
As frely as my Makere hath it sent. 123  
If I be daungerous, God yeve me sorwe  
Myn housbonde shal it have bothe ewe  
and morwe,

Whan that hym list com forth and pay  
his dette.

An housbonde I wol have, I nyl nat lette  
Which shal be bothe my dettour and m  
thral,

And have his tribulacioun withal  
Upon his flessch, whil that I am his wyf.  
I have the power, durynge al my lyf,  
Upon his propre body, and noght he.  
Right thus the Apostel tolde it unto me, 124  
And bad oure housbondes for to love t  
weel ;

Al this sentence me liketh every deel.

Up stirte the Pardoner, and that anot  
'Now, dame,' quod he, 'by God an  
by Seint John !

Ye been a noble prechour in this cas.  
I was aboute to wedde a wyf, allas !  
What, sholde I hye it on my flessch  
deere ?

Yet hadde I lever wedden a wyf to-yeere  
'Abyde,' quod she, 'my tale is n  
bigonne. 125

Nay, thou shalt drynken of another ton  
Er that I go, shal savoure wors than al  
And whan that I have toold thee for  
my tale

if tribulacioun in mariage,  
if which I am expert in al myn age,—  
his to seya, my self have been the  
whippe,—

han maystow chesé wheither thou wolte  
sippe

if thilké tonnè that I shal abroche.  
te war of it, er thou to ny approche,  
for I shal tell ensamples mo than ten,  
'Whoso that nyl be war by othere men, 180  
by hym shul othere men corrected be";  
[he samé wordes writeth Ptholomee;  
rede in his Almageste and take it there.]

'Dame, I wolde praye yow, if youre  
wyl it were,'

Seydè this Pardoner, 'as ye bigan  
telle forth youre talé; spareth for no man,  
And teche us yongé men of youre prak-  
tike.'

'Gládly, sirs, sith it may yow like;  
But yet I praye to al this compaignye,  
If that I speke after my fantasye, 190  
As taketh not agrief of that I seye,  
For myn entente is nought but for to  
pleye.

'Now, sire, now wol I tellé forth my  
tale.

As ever moote I drynken wyn or ale,  
shal seye sooth, of housbondes that I  
hadde,

is thre of hem were goode, and two  
were badde.

The thre were goodé men and riche, and  
olde;

Jnnethé myghté they the statut holde  
in which that they were bounden unto me;  
Ic woot wel what I meene of this, *pardee!*  
Ic help me God, I laughé whan I thynke  
How pitously-a-nyght I made hem swynke!  
And, by my fey, I tolde of it no stoor;  
They had me yiven hir lond and hir  
tresoor,

Me neded nat do lenger diligence  
To wyinne hir love, or doon hem rever-  
ence;

They loved me so wel, by God above,

180. *Ptholomee*. No one has yet verified the  
references to the Almageste here and in l. 324.  
182. *stra*, H<sup>2</sup> *quod* *ache*.  
184. *lond*, E *gold*.

That I ne tolde no deyntee of hir love!  
A wys woman wol sette hire, ever in  
oon, 209

To gete hire lovè ther as she hath noon;  
But sith I hadde hem hoolly in myn hond,  
And sith they hadde me yeven all hir lond,  
What sholde I taken heede hem for to  
plese,

But it were for my profit and myn ese?  
I sette hem so a werké, by my fey,  
That many a nyght they songen "weil-  
awaye!"

The bacoun was nat fet for hem, I trowe,  
That som men han in Essexe at Dun-  
mowe. 218

I governed hem so wel after my lawe,  
That ech of hem ful blisful was and fawe  
To brynge me gayé thynges fro the fayre;  
They were ful glad whan I spak to hem  
faire,

For, God it woot, I chidde hem spitously.  
'Now herkneth how I baar me pro-  
prely,

Ye wisé wyvès that kan understonde.  
'Thus shul ye speke, and beren hem  
on honde;

For half so boldély kan ther no man  
Swéré and lyé as a woman kan.  
I sey nat this by wyvès that been wyse,  
But if it be whan they hem mysavysc. 230  
I-wis a wyf, if that she kan hir good,  
Shal beré hym on hond the cow is wood,  
And také witnessse of hir owene mayde  
Of hir assent; but herkneth how I sayde.

'Sire, oldé kaynard, is this thyn array?  
Why is my neighéborés wyf so gay?  
She is honouréd over al ther she gooth;  
I sitte at hoom, I have no thrifty clooth.  
What dostow at my neighéborés hous?  
Is she so fair? artow so amorous? 240  
What rowne ye with oure mayde? *Bene-  
dicite!*

209. *sette*, H<sup>2</sup> *biy*.

218. *Dunmowe*. The Dunmow fitch is still  
given as a prize to a husband and wife who  
have never quarrelled.

232. *cow*, chough or jackdaw, the reference  
being to a tale like the Manciple's.

235. From here to l. 325 Chaucer takes his  
text from a fragment of Theophrastus, *De Nup-  
titiis*, preserved in §§ 313, 314 of St. Jerome's  
treatise against Jovinian.

Sire, oldē lecchour, lat thy japē be !  
And if I have a gossib or a freend,  
Withouten gilt thou chidest as a feend,  
If that I walke or pleye unto his hous.  
Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous  
And prechest on thy bench with yvel  
preef :

Thou seist to me it is a greet meschief  
To wedde a pourē womman for costage ;  
And if she be riche and of heigh parage, 250  
Thanne seilstow it is a tormentrie  
To suffre hire pride and hire malencolie ;  
And if that she be faire, thou verray  
knave,

Thou seyst that every holour wol hire  
have ;

She may no while in chastitee abyde  
That is assaillēd upon echē syde.

‘Thou seyst som folk desire us for  
richesse,

Somme for oure shapē, somme for oure  
fairnesse,

And som for she kan either synge or  
daunce,

And som for gentillesse, and daliaunce,  
Som for hir handēs, and hir armēs  
smale,— 261

Thus goth al to the devel by thy tale !  
Thou seyst men may nat kepe a castel wal,  
It may so longe assaillēd been over al.

‘And if that she be foul, thou seist  
that she

Coveiteth every man that she may se,  
For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe,  
Til that she fyndē som man hire to chepe ;  
Ne noon so grey a goos gooth in the lake,  
As, seilstow, wol been withoutē make ; 270  
And seyst it is an hard thyng for to welde  
A thyng that no man wole, his thankēs,  
helde.

Thus seilstow, lorel, whan thou goost to  
bedde,

And that no wys man nedeth for to wedde,  
Ne no man that entendeth unto hevене.  
With wildē thonder dynt and fry leveve  
Mootē thy welkēd nekkē be to-broke !

‘Thou seyst that droppying houses,  
and eek smoke,  
And chiding wyvēs, maken men to flee  
Out of hir owene hous, a ! *benedicitee* ! 280

What eytleth swich an old man for to  
chide ?

‘Thou seyst we wyvēs wol oure vices  
hide

Til we be fast, and thanne we wol hen  
shewe,—

Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe  
‘Thou seist that oxen, asses, hors, and  
houndes,

They been assayēd at diversē stoundes ;  
Basyns, lavourēs, er that men hem bye,  
Spoonēs and stooles, and al swich hous  
bondrye,

And so been pottēs, clothēs, and array ;  
But folk of wyvēs maken noon assay 29  
Til they be wedded,—oldē dotard shrewe  
Thanne, seilstow, we wol oure vices shewe

‘Thou seist also that it displeseth me  
But if that thou wolt preysē my beaute  
And but thou poure alwey upon my face  
And clepe me “fairē dame” in ever  
place ;

And but thou make a feeste on thilkē da  
That I was born, and make me fress  
and gay ;

And but thou do to my norice honour,  
And to my chamberere withinne a  
bour, 3

And to my fadrēs folk and his allyes,—  
Thus seilstow, oldē bareful of lyes !

‘And yet of oure apprentice Janēkyr  
For his criske heer, shynynge as gold :  
fyn,

And for he squiereth me bothe up at  
doun,

Yet hastow caught a fals suspecioun,—  
I wol hym noght, thogh thou were de  
to-morwe !

‘But tel me this, why hydestow wi  
sorwe

The keyēs of thy cheste, away fro me ?  
It is my good, as wel as thyn, *pardes* !  
What ! wenestow make an ydiot of a  
dame ?

Now, by that lord that callēd is Se  
Jame,

Thou shalt nat bothē, thogh thou w  
wood,

Be maister of my body, and of  
good ;

That oon thou shalt forgo, maugree thyne  
eyen!

What nedeth thee of me to enquire, or  
spyen?

I trowe thou woldest loke me in thy  
chiste;

Thou sholdest seye, "Wyf, go wher thee  
liste;

Tak your disport, I wol nat leve no  
taly;

[knowe yow for a trowe wyf, dame Alys."  
We love no man that taketh kepe, or  
charge,

Wher that we goon; we wol ben at our  
large.

'Of allé men y-blessed moot he be,  
The wise astrologien, Daun Ptholome,  
That seith this proverbe in his Almageste,  
"Of allé men his wysdom is the hyste  
That reketh never who hath the world  
in honde."

By this proverbe thou shalt understonde,  
Have thou ynogh, what thar thee recche  
or care

How myrly that othere folkés fare? 330  
For certeyn, oldé dotard, by youre leve,  
Ye shul have queynté right ynogh at eve.  
He is to greet a nygard that wolde werne  
A man to lighte his candle at his lanterne.  
He shal have never the lassé light, *pardee!*  
Have thou ynogh, thee thar nat pleyné  
thee.

'Thou, seyst also, that if we make us  
gay

With clothyng, and with precious array,  
That it is peril of oure chastitee;  
And yet with sorwe thou most enforcé  
thee,

And seye thise wordés in the Apostles  
name:

"In habit maad with chastitee and shame,  
Ye women shul apparaille yow," quod  
he,

"And noght in tresséd heer, and gay  
perree,

As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche."  
After thy text, ne after thy rubriche,  
I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat.

Thou seydest this, that I was lyk a cat;  
For whoso wolde senge a cattés skyn,

Thanne wolde the cat wel dwellen in his  
in; 350

And if the cattés skyn be slyk and gay,  
She wol nat dwelle in housé half a day;  
But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,  
To shewe hir skyn, and goon a-cater-  
wawed;

This is to seye, if I be gay, sire shrewe,  
I wol renne out my borel for to shewe.

'Sire, oldé fool, what eyleth thee to  
spyen?

Thogh thou preye Argus with his  
hundred eyen

To be my wardécors, as he kan best,  
In feith, he shal nat kepe me but me  
lest; 360

Yet koude I make his berd, so moot I  
thee!

'Thou seydest eek, that ther been  
thyngés thre

The whiché thyngés troublen al this erthe,  
And that no wight ne may endure the  
ferthe.

O leeve sire shrewé, Jhesu shorte thy lyf!  
Yet prechestow and seyst an hateful wyf  
Y-rekened is for oon of thise meschances.  
Been ther none othere of thy resemblances  
That ye may likne youre parables unto,  
But if a sely wyf be oon of tho? 370

'Thou likenest wommenés love to  
helle,

To bareyne lond, ther water may nat  
dwelle;

Thou liknest it also to wildé fyr,  
The moore it brenneth the moore it hath  
desir

To consumen every thyng that brent wole  
be;

Thou seyst, right as wormés shende a tree,  
Right so a wyf destroyeth hire housbond  
This knowé they that been to wyvés  
bonde.'

Lordynges, right thus as ye have  
understonde

Baar I stify myne olde housbondes on  
honde, 380

That thus they seyden in hir dronkenesse;  
And al was fals, but that I took witnesse

357. *eyleth*, *H<sup>6</sup> helpith*.

361. *make his berd*, cheat him.



On Janekyn, and on my nece also.

O Lord, the peyne I dide hem and the wo!  
Ful giltlees, by Goddés sweeté pyne!

For as an hors I koudé byte and whyne;  
I koudé pleyne, thogh I were in the gilt,  
Or ellés often tyme hadde I been spilt.  
'Who so first cometh to the mille first  
grynt';

I pleynéd first, so was oure werre y-stynt;  
They were ful glad to excusen hem ful  
blyve

Of thyng of which they never agilte hir  
lyve.

Of wenches wblde I beren hem on  
honde,

Whan that for syk unnethés myghte thay  
stonde;

Yet tikled it his herté, for that he  
Wende that I hadde of hym so greet  
chiertee!

I swoor that al my walkynge out by  
nyghte

Was for tespyé wenches that he dighte.  
Under that colour hadde I many a myrthe,  
For al swich witte is yeven us in oure  
byrthe,—

Deceitè, wepyng, spyngnyng, God hath  
yive

To wommen kyndely whil they may lyve;  
And thus of o thyng I avaunté me,  
Atte ende I hadde the better in ech de-  
gree,—

By sleighte, or force, or by som maner  
thyng,

As by continueel murmure or grucchyng.  
Namely abeddé hadden they meschaunce;  
Ther wolde I chide and do hem no  
plesaunce;

I wolde no lenger in the bed abyde,  
If that I felte his arm over my syde,  
Til he had maad his raunsoun unto me;  
Thanne wolde I suffre hym do his  
nyceteé;

And therfore every man this tale I telle,—  
Wynne who so may, for al is for to selle;  
With empty hand men may none haukés  
lure.

For wyngnyng wolde I al his lust endure

From H; Heng.<sup>4</sup> *Whoso that first to  
mille cometh first grynt.*

And maké me a feynéd appetit,

And yet in bacoun hadde I never delit;  
That madé me that ever I wolde hem  
chide;

For thogh the pope hadde seten hem  
biside

I wolde nat spare hem at hir owene bord,  
For, by my trouthe, I quitte hem word  
for word.

As helpe me verray God omnipotent,  
Though I right now sholde make my  
testament,

I ne owe hem nat a word that it nys quit.  
I broghte it so abouté by my wit  
That they moste yeve it up as for the  
beste,

Or ellés hadde we never been in reste;  
For thogh he lookéd as a wood leoun,  
Yet sholde he faille of his conclusioun.

Thanne wolde I seyé, 'Goodé lief,  
taak keepe,—

How mekely looketh Wilkyn, oure  
sheeppé!

Com neer, my spousé, lat me ba thy  
cheke;

Ye sholdé been al pacient and meke,  
And han a sweeté, spicéd conscience,  
Sith ye so preche of Jobés pacience.  
Suffreth alwey, syn ye so wel kan preche,  
And, but ye do, certain we shal yow  
teche

That it is fair to have a wyf in pees.

Oon of us two moste bowen, doughtlees,  
And sith a man is mooré resonable

Than womman is, ye mosté been suffrable.  
What eyleth yow to grucché thus and  
grone?

Is it for ye woldé have my queynte allone?  
Wy, taak it al! lo, have it every deel!  
Peter! I shrewe yow, but ye love it  
weel;

For if I woldé selle my belé chose  
I koudé walke as fresch as is a rose;  
But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth.  
Ye be to blame, by God! I sey yow sooth.  
Swiche manere wordés haddé we or  
honde.

Now wol I speken of my fourthe  
housbonde.

My fourthe housbonde was a revelour;

This is to beyn, he hadde a paramour ;  
And I was yong and ful of ragerye,  
Stibourne and strong and joly as a pye.  
Wel koude I dauncé to an harpe smale,  
And synge, y-wis, as any nyghtyngale,  
Whan I had dronke a draughte of sweeté  
wyn.

Metellus, the foulé cherl, the swyn ! 460  
That with a staf birafte his wyf hire lyf,  
For she drank wyn ; thogh I hadde been  
his wyf

He sholdé nat han daunted me fro drynke !  
And after wyn on Venus moste I thyнке,  
For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,  
A likerous mouth moste han a likeroustayl.  
In wommen vinolent is no defence,—  
This knowen lecchours by experience.

But, Lord Crist ! whan that it remem-  
breth me

Upon my yowthe, and on my jolitee, 470  
It tikleth me aboute myn herté roote !  
Unto this day it dooth myn herté boote  
That I have had my world, as in my tyme.  
But Age, allas ! that al wole envenyme,  
Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith,—  
Lat go, fare wel, the devel go therwith !  
The flour is goon, ther is namoore to telle,  
The bren, as I best kan, now moste I selle ;  
But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde.  
Now wol I tellen of my fourthe housbonde.

I seye I hadde in herté greet despit 48:  
That he of any oother had delit ;  
But he was quit, by God, and by Seint  
Joce !

I made hym of the samé wode a croce.  
Nat of my body in no foul manere,  
But certainly I madé folk swich cheere,  
That in his owene grece I made hym frye  
For angre, and for verray jalousy.  
By God, in erthe I was his purgatorie,  
For which I hope his soule bein glorie ! 490  
For God it woot, he sat ful ofte and song  
Whan that his shoo ful bitterly hym wrong.  
Ther was no wight save God and he that  
wiste

In many wise how sooré I hym twisté.

He deyde whan I cam fro Jerusalem,  
And lith y-grave under the roodé beam,  
Al is his tombé noght so curys  
As was the sepulchre of hym Daryus,  
Which that Appelles wroghté subtilly ;  
It nys but wast to burye hym preciously. 500  
Lat hym fare wel, God yêve his soulereste,  
He is now in his grave and in his cheste !

Now of my fifthé housbonde wol I telle.  
God lete his soule never come in helle !  
And yet was he to me the moosté shrewé ;  
That feele I on my ribbes al by rewe,  
And ever shal, unto myn endyng day ;  
But in oure bed he was so fresch and gay ;  
And therwithal so wel koude he me glose,  
Whan that he woldé han my belé chose,  
That thogh he hadde me bet on every bon,  
He koudé wynne agayn my love anon.  
I trowe I loved hym besté for that he  
Was of his lové daungerous to me.  
We wommen han, if that I shal nat lye,  
In this matere a queynté fantasye ;  
Wayté ! what thyng we may nat lightly  
have

Ther-after wol we crie al day and crave.  
Forbede us thyng, and that desiren we ;  
Preesse on us faste and thanné wol we fle.  
With daunger outé we al oure chaffare ; 510  
Greet prees at market maketh deeré ware,  
And to greet cheepe is holde at litel prys ;  
This knoweth every womman that is wys.

My fifthé housbonde, God his soule  
blesse !  
Which that I took for love, and no  
richesse,

He somtyme was a clerk of Oxenford,  
And hadde left scole and wente at hom  
to bord \*

With my gossib, dwellynge in oure toun ;  
God have hir soule, hir name was Alisoun.  
She knew my herte, and eek my privetee,  
Bet than oure parisshe preest, as moot  
I thee.

To hire biwreyed I my conseil al,  
For hadde myn housbonde pisséd on a  
wal,

460. *Metellus*. The story is from Valerius Maximus, *Bk. vi. ch. 3*.

483. *Saint Joce*, Saint Jodocus, a Breton hermit of the 7th century.

498. *Daryus*. The tomb which Appelles wrought for Darius by Alexander's order is described in the 6th book of the *Alexandriis* of Gualtier de Lille.

Or doon a thyng that sholde han cost his  
lyf,

To hire, and to another worthy wyf,  
And to my nece, which that I lovéd weel,  
I wolde han toold his conseil every deel;  
And so I dide ful often, God it woot,  
That made his face ful often reed and hoot  
For verray shame, and blamed hymself,  
for he

Had toold to me so greet a pryvétee. 541

And so bifel that onés in a Lente,  
So often tymes I to my gossyb wente,—  
For ever yet I lovéd to be gay,  
And for to walke in March, Averill and  
May,

Fro hous to hous to heere sondry talys,—  
That Jankyn clerk, and my gossyb dame  
Alys

And I myself into the feeldés wente.  
Myn housbonde was at London al that  
Lente; 550

I hadde the bettre leyser for to pleye,  
And for to se, and eek for to be seye  
Of lusty folk. What wiste I wher my  
grace

Was shapen for to be, or in what place?  
Therefore I made my visitaciouns  
To vigilies and to processions,  
To prechyng eek, and to thise pilgrimages,  
To pleyes of myracles, and to mariages,  
And wered upon my gayé scarlet gytes.  
Thise wormes, ne thise motthes, ne thise  
mytes, 560

Upon my peril frete hem never a deel.  
And wostow why? For they were uséd  
weel.

Now wol I tellen forth what happéd me.  
Iseye that in the feeldés walked we,  
Till trewely we hadde swich daliance,  
This clerk and I, that of my purveiance  
I spak to hym, and seyde hym how that he,  
If I were wydwé, sholdé weddéd me;  
For certainly,—I sey for no bobance,—  
Yet was I never withouten purveiance  
Of mariage, nof othere thyngés eek. 571  
I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek  
That hath but oon hole for to sterté to,  
And if that faille, thanne is al y-do.

... I bar hym on honde he hadde enchanted  
me,—

My damé taughté me that soutiltee,—  
And eek I seyde, I mette of hym al nyght,  
He wolde han slayn me as I lay up right,  
And al my bed was ful of verray blood;  
But yet I hope that he shal dome good, 581  
For blood bitokeneth gold, as me was  
taught;

And al was fals, I dremed of it righ  
naught,

Bút I folwed ay my damés loore,  
As wel of this as of othere thyngés moore  
But now, sire,—lat me se,—what I  
shal seyn?

A ha! by God, I have my tale ageyn.  
Whan that my fourthé housbonde was  
on beere

I wepte algate and madé sory cheere,  
As wyvés mooten, for it is usage,  
And with my coverchief covered my  
visage; 591

But, for that I was purveyed of a make,  
I wepte but smal, and that I undertake!  
To chirche was myn housbonde bon  
a-morwe

With neighébores, that for hym made  
sorwe,

And Jankyn, ouré clerk, was oon of the  
As help me God, whan that I saugh hym  
After the beere, me thoughte he hadde  
paire

Of leggés and of feet so clene and faire,  
That al myn herte I yaf unto his hoold  
He was, I trowe, a twenty wynter oold, 6  
And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth;  
But yet I hadde alwey a coltés tooth.  
Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me we  
I hadde the prente of seinté Venus seel  
As help me God, I was a lusty oon,  
And faire and riche, and yong, and v  
bigon,

And trewely, as myne housbondes toldén  
I hadde the beste quonyam myghté be  
For certés, I am al Venerien  
In feelynge, and myn herte is Marcier  
Venus me yaf my lust, my likerousnes  
And Mars yaf me my sturdy hardynes  
Myn ascendent was Taur and M  
therinne;

Allas, alas! that ever love was synne  
F folwed ay myn inclinacioun

By vertu of my constellacioun,  
That made me I koudé noght withdrawe  
My chambre of Venus from a good felawe.  
Yet have I Martés mark upon my face,  
And also in another, privee, place, 620  
For God so wys be my savacioun,  
[ne loved never by no discrecioun,  
But ever folwedé myn appetit,—  
Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit;  
I took no kepe, so that he likéd me,  
How poore he was, ne eek of what degree.

What sholde I seye, but at the monthes  
ende

This joly clerk, Jankyn, that was so hende,  
Hath wedded me with greet solempnytee,  
And to hym yaf I all the lond and fee,  
That ever was me yeven ther-bifoore; 631  
But afterward repented me ful soore.  
He noldé suffre nothyng of my list;  
By God, he smoot me onés, on the lyst,  
For that I rente out of his book a leef,  
That of the strook myn eré wex al deaf.  
Stibourne I was as is a leonesse,  
And of my tonge a verray jangleresse;  
And walke I wolde, as I had doon biforn,  
From hous to hous, although he had it  
sworn; 640

For which he often tymés woldé preche,  
And me of oldé Romayn geestés teché;  
How he, Symplicius Gallus, lefte his wyf,  
And hire forsok for terme of al his lyf,  
Noght but for open-heedid he hir say  
Jokynge out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romayn tolde he me by name,  
That, for his wyf was at a someres game  
Withouten his wityng, he forsook hire eke;  
And thanne wolde he upon his Bible seke  
That ilké proverbe of Ecclesiaste, 651  
Where he comandeth, and forbedeth faste,  
Man shal nat suffre his wyf go roule  
aboute.

Thanne wolde he seye right thus, with-  
outen doute:

*Whoso that buyldeth his hous al of salwes,  
And prieth his blynd hors over the fawes,  
And suffrith his wyf to go seken halwes,  
Is worthy to been hanged on the galwes;*

642. *geestes.* These stories of Sulpicius Gallus  
and Sempronius Sophus are taken from Valerius  
Maximus (Bk. vi. ch. 3).

But al for noght, I setté noght an hawe  
Of his proverbes, nof his oldé sawe; 660  
Ne I wolde nat of hym corrected be.  
I hate hym that my vices telleth me,  
And so doo mo, God woot, of us than I.  
This made hym with me wood al outrely;  
I noldé noght forbere hym in no cas.

Now wol I seye yow sooth, by Seint  
Thomas!

Why that I rente out of his book a leef,  
For which he smoot me so that I was  
deef.

He hadde a book that gladly, nyght  
and day,

For his desport he woldé rede alway. 670  
He clepéd it 'Valerie' and 'Theofraste,'  
At whiché book he lough alwey ful faste;  
And eek ther was som-tyme a clerk at  
Rome,

A cardinal, that highté Seint Jerome,  
That made a book agayn Jovinian,  
In whiché book eek ther was Tertulan,  
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowys,  
That was abbessé nat fer fro Parys;  
And eek the Parables of Salomon,  
Ovidés Art, and bookés many on; 680  
And allé thise were bounden in o volume;  
And every nyght and day was his custume,  
Whan he hadde leyser and vacacioun  
From oother worldly occupacioun,  
To reden on this book of wikked wyves.  
He knew of hem mo legendés and lyves  
Than been of goodé wyvés in the Bible;  
For, trusteth wel, it is an impossible  
That any clerk wol speké good of wyves,—  
But if it be of hooly Seintés lyves,— 690  
Ne of noon oother womman never the mo.  
Who peyntedé the leoun? Tel me who.  
By God! if wómmen haddé writen stories,  
As clerkés han withinne hire oratories,  
They wolde han writen of men moore  
wikkednesse

Than all the mark of Adam may redresse.  
The children of Mercúrie and Venus

671. *Valerie*, i.e. Walter Map's *Epistola  
Valerii ad Rusticum de non ducenda uxore*

672. *Theofraste*. See note to l. 235.

676. *Tertulan*, perhaps Tertullian's treatise *De  
Exhortatione Castitatis*.

677. *Crisippus, Trotula*, not identified, yet  
with any probability.

Been in hir wirkyng ful contrarius ;  
 Mercurie loveth wysdam and science,  
 And Venus loveth ryot and dispance ; 700  
 And for hire diverse disposicioun  
 Each falleth in otheres exaltacioun ;  
 And thus, God woot, Mercurie is desolat  
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat ;  
 And Venus falleth ther Mercurie is reysed ;  
 Therefore no womman of no clerk is  
 preyssed.

The clerk whan he is oold, and may  
 noght do

Of Venus werkis worth his oldé sho,  
 Thanne sit he doun and writ in his dotage  
 That wommen kan nat kepe hir mariage.

But now to purpos why I toldé thee 711  
 That I was beten for a book, *pardes*.

Upon a nyght Jankyn, that was oure sire,  
 Redde on his book, as he sat by the fire,  
 Of Eva first, that for hir wikkednesse  
 Was al mankyndé broght to wrecched-  
 nesse ;

For which that Jesus Crist hymself was  
 slayn,

That boghte us with his herté blood agayn.  
 Lo, heere expres of womman may ye fynde,  
 That womman was the los of al mankynde.

Thou redde he me how Sampson loste  
 his heres ; 721

Slepynge, his lemman kitte it with hir  
 sheres ;

Thurgh which tresoun loste he bothe his  
 eyen.

Thou redde he me, if that I shal nat lyen,  
 Of Hercules and of his Dianyre,  
 That causéd hym to sette hymself afyre.

No thyng forgat he the penaunce and wo  
 That Socrates hadde with his wyvés two ;  
 How Xantippa caste pisse upon his heed.  
 This sely man sat stille as he were deed ;  
 He wiped his heed, namooré dorste he  
 seyn 731

But, 'Er that thonder stynté comth a  
 reyn !'

Of Phasippha, that was the queene of  
 Crete,

708. *worth*, etc., H is not worth a scho.

717-20. Omitted in H<sup>o</sup>.

727. *penaunce*, from Pet.<sup>3</sup> E<sup>3</sup> *serue*, H<sup>3</sup>  
*serve*.

733. *Phasippha*, *Phalpa*.

For shrewednesse hym thoughte the tal  
 swete.

Fy ! speke namore ; it is a grisly thyng  
 Of hire horrible lust and hir likyng !

Of Clitemystra, for hire lecherye  
 That falsly made hire housbonde for to  
 dye ;

He redde it with ful good devocioun.

He tolde me eek for what occasioun 741  
 Amphiorax at Thebés loste his lyf ;

Myn housbonde hadde a legende of his  
 wyf,

Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold  
 Hath prively unto the Grekes told'  
 Wher that hir housbonde hidde hym in  
 a place,

For which he hadde at Thebés sory grace.

Of Lyma tolde he me, and of Lucy ;  
 They bothé made hir housbondes for to  
 dye,—

That oon for love, that oother was for hate  
 Lyma hir housbonde, upon an even late  
 Emposoned hath, for that she was his  
 fo ;

Lucia likerous loved hire housbonde so,  
 That, for he sholde alwey upon him  
 thynke,

She yaf hym swich a manere lové-drynk  
 That he was deed, er it were by th  
 morwe ;

And thus algates housbondes han sorwe

Thanne tolde he me how oon Latumy  
 Compleyned, unto his felawe Arrius,  
 That in his gardyn growéd swich a tree,  
 On which, he seyde, how that his wyv  
 thre 74

Hangéd hymself for herté despitus.

'O leevé brother,' quod this Arrius,  
 'Yif me a plante of thilké blisséd tree,  
 And in my gardyn planféd it shal be !'

Of latter date of wyvés hath he red,  
 That somme han slayn hir housbondes :  
 hir bed,  
 And lete hir lecchour dighte hire al th  
 nyght,

743. *Eriphilem*, who betrayed Amphiaras  
 gain the necklacs of Harmonia.

747. *Lyma*, an error for 'Livia, who poison  
 Drusus ; this instance and the next are tak  
 from Map.

757. *Latumyus*. Map calls him *Pacuvius*.

Whil that the corps lay in the floor  
upright;

and somme han dryven nayles in hir brayn  
Whil that they slepte, and thus they han  
been slayn. 770

omme han hem yeven poysoun in hire  
drynke;

le spak moore harm than hertè may  
bithynke;

and therewithal he knew of mo proverbes,  
han in this world ther growen gras or  
herbes.

Bet is,' quod he, 'thyn habitacioun  
le with a leoun or a foul dragoun,  
han with a womman usynge for to  
chyde.'

Bet is,' quod he, 'hye in the roof abyde,  
han with an angry wyf down in the hous.'  
hey been so wikked and contrarious, 780  
hey haten that hir housbondes loven ay.  
le seyde a womman cast hir shame away  
Vhan she cast of hir smok; and forther  
mo,

A fair womman, but she be chaast also,  
s lyk a gold ryng in a sowes nose.  
Who woldè wenè, or who wolde suppose,  
The wo that in myn hertè was, and pyne?

And whan I saugh he woldè never fyne  
fo reden on this cursèd book al nyght,  
Al sodeynly thre levès have I plyght 790  
Out of his book, right as he radde, and eke  
with my fest so took hym on the cheke,  
That in oure fyr he fil bakward adoun;  
And he up stirte as dooth a wood leoun,  
And with his fest he smoot me on the  
heed,

That in the floor I lay as I were deed;  
And whan he saugh how stillè that I lay,  
He was agast and wolde han fled his way,  
I'll attè laste out of my swogh I breyde.  
'O hastow alayn me, falsè thief?' I seyde;  
'And for my land thus hastow mordred  
me? 800

Er I be deed; yet wol I kissè thee.'  
And neer he cam, and knelèd faire  
adoun,

And seyde, 'Deerè suster Alisoun!  
As help me God, I shal thee never smyte.  
That I have doon it is thyself to wyte;  
For yeve it me, and that I thee biseke';

And yet, eft-soones, I hitte hym on the  
cheke,

And seyde, 'Theef! thus muchel am I  
wreke. 809

Now wol I dye, I may no lenger speke.'  
But attè laste, with muchel care and wo,  
We fille acorded by us selsen two.

He yaf me al the bridel in myn hond,  
To han the governance of hous and lond,  
And of his tonge, and of his hond also,  
And made hym brenne his book anon  
right tho;

And whan that I hadde geten unto me  
By maistrie al the soveraynètee,—

And that he seyde, 'Myn owene trewè wyf,  
Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf; 820  
Keepe thyn honour, and keepe eek myn  
estaat,'—

After that day we hadden never debaat.  
God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde  
As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,  
And also trewe, and so was he to me.  
I prey to God, that sit in magestee,  
So blesse his sòulè for his mercy deere.  
Now wol I seye my tale, if ye wol heere.

*Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour  
and the Frere*

The Frere lough whan he hadde herd  
al this;

'Now, dame,' quod he, 'so have I joye  
or blis, 830

This is a long preamble of a tale.'  
And whan the Somonour herde the Frere  
gale,

'Lo,' quod the Somonour, 'Goddès  
armès two!

A frere wol entremette him ever-mo.  
Lo, goodè men, a flye, and eek a frere,  
Wol falle in every dysshè and mateere.  
What spekestow of "preambulacioun"?  
What? amble, or trotte, or pees, or go  
sit down!

Thou lettest oure disport in this manere.'

'Ye, woltow so, sire Somonour?' quod  
the Frere; 840

'Now, by my feith! I shal, er that I go,  
836. and, Corp.<sup>8</sup> and eat, a clumsy device to  
help out the line.

Telle of a somonour swich a tale or two  
That alle the folk shal laughen in this  
place.\*

'Now ellés, Freré, I bishrewe thy face,'  
Quod this Somonour, 'and I bishrewé me  
But if I tellé talés, two or thre,  
Of frerés, er, I come to Sidyngborne,  
That I shal make thyn herté for to morne,  
For wel I woot thy pacience is gon.'

\*Oure Hoosté cridé, 'Pees! and that  
anon'; 850  
And seyde, 'Lat the womman telle hire  
tale;

Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.  
Do, dame, telle forth youre tale, and  
that is best.'

'Al redy, sire,' quod she, 'right as  
yow lest;

If I have licence of this worthy Frere.'

'Yis, dame,' quod he, 'tel forth, and  
I wol heere.'

### WIFE OF BATH'S TALE

In tholdé dayés of the Kyng Arthour,  
Of which that Britons speken greet  
honour;

All was this land fulfild of fairye. 859  
The elf queene with hir joly compaignye  
Daunced ful ofte in many a grené mede.  
This was the olde opinion as I rede,—  
I speke of manye hundred yeres ago,—  
But now kan no man se none elvés mo,  
For now the greté charitee and prayeres  
Of lymytours, and othere hooly freres,  
That serchen every lond and every stream,  
As thikke as motés in the sonnè beem,—  
Bléssyngé hallés, chambres, kichenés,  
boures,

Citées, burghes, castels, hyé toures, 870  
Thrópés, bernés, shipnes, daýyeres,—  
This maketh that ther been no fairyes;  
For ther as wont to walken was an elf,  
Ther walketh now the lymytour hymself,

859. *Sidyngborne*, Sittingbourne.

870. *Wife of Bath's Tale*. No original of this tale  
is known. Tyrwhitt compares it to the story of  
Florent in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, Bk. I.

867. *serchen*, *H. sachen*.

In undermelés and in morwenýnges,  
And seyth his matyns and his hooly  
thynges

As he gooth in his lymytacioun.  
Wommen may go now sauflý up and down  
In every bush or under every tree,  
Ther is noon oother incubus but he, 882  
And he ne wol doon hem non dishonour.

And so bifel it that this kyngé, Arthour,  
Hadde in his hous a lusty bachelour  
That on a day cam ridyngé fro ryver,  
And happed that, allone as she was born,  
He saugh a mayde walkyngé hym bifom,  
Of whiché mayde, anon, maugree hir heed,  
By verray force birafté hire maydenhed;  
For which oppressioun was swich clamour,  
And swich pursute unto the kyng Arthour,  
That dampnéd was this knyght for to be  
deed. 891

By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his  
heed,—

Paráventure swich was the statut tho,—  
But that the queene and othere ladyes mo,  
So longé preyeden the kyng of grace,  
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place,  
And yaf hym to the queene al at hir wille  
To chesé whether she wolde hym save  
or spille.

The queene thanketh the kyng with al  
hir myght, 899

And after this thus spak she to the knyght,  
Whan that she saugh hir tyme upon a day:  
'Thou standest yet,' quod she, 'in swich  
array,

That of thy lyf yet hastow no suretee.  
I grante thee lyf, if thou kanst tellen me  
What thyng is it that wommen moos  
desiren,—

Be war, and keepe thy pekké-boon from  
iren,—

And if thou kanst nat tellen it anon,  
Yet shal I yeve thee levé for to gon  
A twelf-month and a day, to seche an  
leere

An answeré sufficient in this mateere; 901  
And suretee wol I han, er that thou pas  
Thy body for to yelden in this place.'

878. *now*, cm. EH4.

882. *non*, the reading of Camb. MS. onh  
EH6 but, which is pointless.

Wo was this knyght, and sorwefully he  
siketh ;

But what? he may nat do al as hym liketh,  
And at the laste he chees hym for to  
wende,

And come agayn right at the yerès ende,  
With swich answeere as God wolde hym  
purveye,

And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth  
his weye.

He seketh every hous and every place  
Where as he hopeth for to fynde grace 920  
To lerne what thyng wommen loven  
moost ;

But he ne koude arryven in no coost  
Wher as he myghte fynde in this mateere  
Two creätures accordyng in feere.

Somme seyde wommen loven best  
richesse,

Somme seyde honour, somme seyde joly-  
nesse,

Somme riche array, somme seyden lust  
abedde,

And oft tyme to be wydwe and wedde.  
Somme seyde that oure hertés been moost  
esed 929

Whan that we beeny-flatered and y-pled.

He gooth ful ny the sothe, I wol nat  
lye,—

A man shal wyne us best with flaterye ;  
And with attendance and with bisynesse,  
Been we y-lymed, bothé moore and lesse.

And sommé seyen that we loven best  
For to be free, and do right as us lest,  
And that no man repreve us of oure vice,  
But seye that we be wise and no-thing  
nyce ;

For trewely ther is noon of us alle,  
If any wight wol clawe us on the galle, 940  
That we nyl kike, for he seith us sooth.  
Assay, and he shal fynde it that so dooth,  
For, be we never so vicious with-inne,  
We wol been holden wise and clene of  
synne.

And sommé seyn that greet delit han we  
For to been holden stable and eke secree,  
And in o purpos stedefastly to dwelle,  
And nat biwreyé thyng that men us telle ;  
But that tale is nat worth a raké-stele.

*Pardes*, we wommen konné no thyng hele ;

Witnesse on Myda,—wol ye heere the  
tale ? 951

Ovyde, amongés othere thyngés smale,  
Seyde Myda hadde under his longé heres,  
Growyng upon his heed, two asses eres,  
The whiché vice he hydde as he best  
myghte,

Ful subtilly, from every mannés sighte,  
That save his wyf ther wiste of it namo.  
He loved hire moost, and trusted hire also ;

He preyde hire that to no creäture  
She sholdé tellen of his disfigure. 960

She swoor him nay, for al this world  
to wyne,

She noldé do that vileynye or synne,  
To make hir housbonde han so foul a  
name.

She noldé nat telle it for hir owene shame ;  
But nathéles hir thoughté that she dyde,  
That she so longé sholde a conseil hyde ;  
Hir thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir  
herte,

That nedély som word hire moste asterte ;  
And sith she dorsté telle it to no man,  
Down to a mareys fasté by she ran. 970  
Til she came there her herte was a-fyre,  
And as a bitore bombleth in the myre  
She leyde hir mouth unto the water down :  
' Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy  
soun,'

Quod she, 'to thee I telle it and namo,—  
Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two.  
Now is myn herte all hool, now is it oute,  
I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'  
Heere may ye se, thogh we a tyme abyde,  
Yet, out it moot, we kan no conseil hyde.  
The remenant of the tale if ye wol heere,  
Redeth Ovyde, and ther ye may it leere.

This knyght, of which my tale is  
specially,

Whan that he saugh he myghte nat come  
therby,

That is to seye, what wommen lové moost,  
Withinne his brest ful sorweful was the  
goost.

But hoom he gooth, he myghté nat  
sojourne,

The day was come that homward moste  
he tourne,

951. *Myda, Midas.*



And in his wey it happed hym to ryde  
 In al this care, under a forest syde, 990  
 Wher as he saugh upon a dauncé go  
 Of ladyes foure and twenty, and yet mo ;  
 Tward the whiché daunce he drow ful  
 yerne,  
 In hope that som wysdom sholde he lerne ;  
 But certainly, er he came fully there,  
 Vanysshéd was this daunce, he nyste  
 where.

No créature saugh he that bar lyf,  
 Save on the grene he saugh sittyng a wyf ;  
 A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.  
 Agayn the knyght this oldé wyf gan ryse,  
 And seyde, 'Sire knyght, heer-forth ne  
 lith no wey ; 1001  
 Tel me what that ye seken, by youre fey !  
 Paraventure it may the better be ;  
 Thise oldé folk kan muchel thyng,' quod  
 she.

'My leevé mooder,' quod this knyght,  
 'certeyn  
 I nam but deed but if that I kan seyn  
 What thyng it is that wommen moost  
 desire :

Koude ye me wisse I wolde wel quite  
 youre hire.'

'Plight me thy trouthe, heere in myn  
 hand,' quod she,  
 'The nexté thyng that I requere thee 1010  
 Thou shalt it do, if it lye in thy myght,  
 And I wol telle it yow, er it be nyght.'

'Have heer my trouthe,' quod the  
 knyght, 'I graunte !'

Thanne quod she, 'I dar me wel  
 avaunte

Thy lyf is sauf, for I wol stonde therby ;  
 Upon my lyf, the queene wol seye as I.  
 Lat se, which is the proudeste of hem alle  
 That wereth on a coverchief or a calle,  
 That dar seye "nay" of that I shal thee  
 teche. 1019

Lat us go forth withouten lenger speche.  
 Tho rownéd she a pistel in his ere,  
 And bad hym to be glad and have no fere.

When they be comen to the court, this  
 knyght

Seyde he had holde his day as he hadde  
 hight,

And redy was his answer, as he sayde.

Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,  
 And many a wydwe, for that they had  
 been wise,

The queene herself sittyng as a justise,  
 Assembled been, his answer for to here ;  
 And afterward this knyght was bode  
 appere. 1020

To every wight comanded was silence,  
 And that the knyght sholde telle in  
 audience

What thyng that worldly wommen loved  
 best.

This knyght ne stood nat stille as doth  
 a best,

But to his questioun anon answerde,  
 With manly voys, that al the court it herde.

'My ligé lady, generally,' quod he,  
 'Wommen desiren have sovereynnee,  
 As wel over hir housbond, as hir love,  
 And for to been in maistrie hym above.  
 This is youre mooste desir, thogh ye me  
 kille. 1041

Dooth as yow list, I am heer at youre  
 wille.'

In al the court ne was ther wyf, ne  
 mayde,

Ne wydwe, that contraried that he sayde,  
 But seyden he was worthy han his lyf ;  
 And with that word up stirte the oldé wyf,  
 Which that the knyght saugh sittyng on  
 the grene ;

'Mercy !' quod she, 'my sovereyn lady  
 queene !

Er that youre court departé, do me right ;  
 I taughté this answer unto the knyght,  
 For which he plighté me his trouthe there,  
 The firsté thyng I woldé hym requere,  
 He wolde it do, if it lay in his myght.  
 Bifore the court thanne, preye I thee, sir  
 knyght,'

Quod she, 'that thou me take unto thy  
 wyf,

For wel thou woost that I have kept thy lyf.  
 If I sey fals, sey "nay," upon thy fey !'

This knyght answerde, 'Allas, and  
 weylaway !

I woot right wel that swich was my biheste.  
 For Goddés love, as chees a newe  
 requeste ! 1060

Tak al my good, and lat my body go.'

'Nay, thanne,' quod she, 'I shrewe us  
bothé two !'  
For thogh that I be foul, and oold, and  
poore,  
[ nolde, for al the metal, ne for oore  
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,  
But if thy wyf I were, and eek thy love !'  
'My "love" !' quod he, 'nay, my  
dampnacioun !

Allas ! that any of my nacioun  
Sholde ever so foulé disparaged be !'  
But al for noght, the ende is this, that he  
Constreyned was, he nedés moste hire  
wedde, <sup>1071</sup>  
And taketh his oldé wyf, and gooth to  
bedde.

Now wolden som men .seye, pará-  
venture,  
That for my negligence I do no cure  
To tellen yow the joye and al tharray,  
That at the feesté was that ilké day ;  
To which thyng shortly answeren I shal ;  
I seye, ther nas no joye ne feesté at al.  
Ther nas but hevynesse, and muché sorwe,  
For privly he wedded hire on a morwe,  
And al day after hidde hym as an owle,  
So wo was hym, his wyf lookéd so foule.

Greet was the wo the knyght hadde in  
his thought,  
Whan he was with his wyf abedde y-brought.  
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro ;  
His oldé wyf lay smyllynge evermo,  
And seyde, 'O deeré housbonde,  
*benedicite* !

Fareth every knyght thus with his wyf,  
as ye ?

Is this the law of kyng Arthúres hous ?  
Is every knyght of his so dangerous ? <sup>1090</sup>  
I am youre owene love, and youré wyf ;  
I am she which that savéd hath youre lyf,  
And certes, yet dide I yow never unright,  
Why fare ye thus with me, this firsté  
myght ?

Ye faren lyk a man had lost his wit ;  
What is my gilt ? For Goddés love tel it,  
And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'Amended !' quod this knyght, 'allas !  
nay, nay !

It wol nat been amended never mo,  
Thou art so loothly, and so oold also, <sup>1100</sup>

And ther-to comen of so lough a kynde,  
That litel wonder is thogh I 'walwe and  
wynde.

So, woldé God ! myn herté woldé breste !'

'Is this,' quod she, 'the cause of youre  
unreste ?'

'Ye, certainly,' quod he, 'no wonder is.'

'Now, sire,' quod she, 'I koude  
amende al this,

If that me liste, er it were dayés thre ;  
So wel ye myghté bere yow unto me.

'But for ye spoken of swich gentillesse  
As is descended out of old richesse, <sup>1110</sup>  
That therfore sholden ye be gentil men,  
Swich arrogance is nat worth an hen.  
Looke, who that is moost vertuous alway,  
Pryvee and apert, and moost entendeth ay  
To do the gentil dedés that he kan,  
Taak hym for the grettest gentil man.  
Crist wole we clayme of hym oure gentil-  
lesse,

Nat of oure eldrés for hire old richesse ;  
For, thogh they yewe us al hir heritage,—  
For which we clayme to been of heigh  
parage,— <sup>1120</sup>

Yet may they nat biquethé for no thyng,  
To noon of us, hir vertuous lyving,  
That made hem gentil men y-called be,  
And bad us folwen hem in swich degree.

'Wel kan the wisé poete of Florence,  
That highté Dant, speken in this sen-  
tence,—

Lo, in swich maner rym is Dantes tale,—  
'Ful selde up riseth by his branches  
smale

Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse  
Wole that of hym 'we clayme oure  
gentillesse ; <sup>1130</sup>

For of oure eldrés may we no-thing  
clayme,

But temporel thyng that man may hurte  
and mayme.'

'Eek every myght woot this as wel as I,  
If gentillesse were planted naturelly,  
Unto a certeyn lynage down the lyne,  
Pryvee nor apert, thanne wolde they  
never fyne

<sup>1126</sup>. *Dant, Purgatorio*, vil. 121-3: 'Rada  
volte gisurge per li rami L'umana probitate,' etc.  
<sup>1132</sup>. *eldres may we, H. ancestors we.*

To doon of gentiltesse the faire office;  
They myghte do no vileynye or vice.

'Taak fyr and ber it in the darkeste  
hous, 1139

Bitwix this and the mount of Kaukasous,  
And lat men shette the dorés and go  
thenne,

Yet wole the fyr as faire lye and brenne  
As twenty thousand men myghte it  
biholde;

His office natureel ay wol it holde,  
Up peril of my lyf, til that it dye.

'Heere may ye se wel how that  
genterye

Is nat annexed to possessioun,  
Sith folk ne doon hir operacioun  
Alwey, as dooth the fyr, lo, in his kynde;  
For, God it woot, men may wel often fynde  
A lordés sone do shame and vileynye;

And he that wole han pris of his gentrye,  
For he was boren of a gentil hous,  
And hadde his eldrés noble and vertuous,

And nyl hymselfen do no gentil dedis,  
Ne folwen his gentil auncestre that deed is,  
He nys nat gentil, be he duc or erl;

For vileyns synful dedés make a cherl;  
For gentillessé nys but renomee  
Of thyne auncestrés, for hire heigh  
bountee, 1160

Which is a strangé thyng to thy persone.  
Thy gentillessé cometh fro God allone;  
Thanne comth oure verray gentiltesse of  
grace,

It was no thyng biquethe us, with oure  
place.

'Thenketh how noble, as seith  
Valerius,

Was thilké Tullius Hostillius,  
That out of poverté roos to heigh noblesse.  
Redeth Senek, and redeth eek Boece,  
Ther shul ye seen expresse, that no drede  
is, 1169

That he is gentil that dooth gentil dedis;  
And therefore, leewe housbonde, I thus  
conclude;

Al were it that myne auncestres weren  
rude,

1159. *renomes*, renown; cp. Boethius, *Ek. iii. Prose 6*.

1165. *Valerius*, see Valerius Maximus, *Ek. iii. ch. 4*.

Yet may the hye God, and so hope I,  
Graant me grace to lyven vertuously;  
Thanne am I gentil, whan that I bigynne  
To lyven vertuously and weyvé synne.

'And ther as ye of poverté me repreve  
The hye God, on whom that we bileeve,  
In wilful poverté chees to lyve his lyf,  
And certés, every man, mayden, or wyf,  
May understonde that Jhesus, hevene  
kyng, 1181

Ne wolde nat chese a vicious lyvyng.  
Glad poverté is an honeste thyng, certeyn;  
This wole Senek and othere clerkés seyn;  
Whoso that halt hym payd of his poverté,  
I holde hym riche, al hadde he nat a  
sherte;

He that coveteth is a povere wight,  
For he wolde han that is nat in his  
myght;  
But he that noght hath, ne coveteth have,  
Is riche, although ye holde hym but a  
knave. 1190

'Verray poverté, it syngeth properly;  
Juvenal seith of poverté, myrily,  
"The pouré man, whan he goth by the  
weye,

Before the thevés he may synge and pleye."  
Poverté is hateful good, and as I gesse  
A ful greet bryngere-out of bisynesse,  
A greet amendere eek of sapience,  
To hym that taketh it in pacience.  
Poverté is this, although it seme alenge,  
Possessioun that no wight wol chalenge.  
Poverté ful ofté, whan a man is lowe,  
Maketh his God, and eek hymself, to  
knowe.

Poverté a spectacle is, as thynketh me,  
Thurgh which he may his verray freendé  
see;

And therefore, sire, syn that I noght yow  
greve,

Of my poverté namoore ye me repreve.  
'Now, sire, of eldé ye reprevé me;  
And certés, sire, thogh noon auctoritee  
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour

1190. *Juvenal, Sat. x. 22*.

1195. *hateful* (Corp. <sup>3</sup> *hatal*, hostile). E quod in the margin in the answer to the question 'Quid est paupertas (Odibile bonum, sanitatis mate etc.)' from the Dialogue of Adrian and Secundus found in Vincent de Beauvais.

Seyn that men sholde an oold wight doon  
favour, 1220

And clepe hym fader, for youre gentil-  
lesse,

And auctours shal I fynden, as I gesse.

'Now, ather ye seye that I am foul and  
old,

Than dredeyou noght to beena cokewold;

For filthe and eeldē, al so moot I thee!

Been gretē wardeyns upon chastitee:

But nathēless, syn I knowe youre delit,

I shal fulfille youre worldly appetit.

'Chese now,' quod she, 'oon of thise  
thynges tweye: 1229

To han me foul and old til that I deye,

And be to yow a trewē, humble wyf,

And never yow displese in al my lyf;

Or ellēs ye wol han me yong and fair,

And take youre aventure of the repair

That shal be to youre hous by cause of me,

Or in som oother placē may wel be;

Now chese yourselven, wheither that yow  
liketh.'

This knyght avyseth hym and sorē  
silketh;

But attē laste he seyde in this manere:

'My lady and my love, and wyf so deere,

I put me in youre wisē governance; 1231

Cheseth youre self which may be moost  
plesance,

And moost honour to yow and me also;

I do no fors the wheither of the two,

For as yow liketh it suffiseth me.'

'Thanne have I gete of yow maistrie,'  
quod she,

'Syn I may chese, and governe as me  
lest?'

'Ye, certēs, wyf,' quod he, 'I holde  
it best.'

'Kys me,' quod she, 'we be no lenger  
wrothe,

For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow  
bothe,— 1240

This is to seyn, ye, bothē fair and good.

I prey to God that I moote sterven wood,

But I to yow be al so good and trewe,

As ever was wyf syn that the world was  
newe;

And but I be to-morn as fair to seene

As any lady, emperice, or queene,

That is bitwixe the est and eek the west;  
Dooth with my lyf and deth right as yow  
lest.

Cast up the curtyng,—lookey, how that it is.'

And whan the knyght saugh verraily  
al this, 1250

That she so fair was, and so yong ther-to,

For joye he hente hire in his armēs two,

His hertē bathēd in a bath of blisse;

A thousand tyme arewe he gan hire kisse,

And she obeyēd hym in every thyng

That myghtē doon hym plesance or likyng.

And thus they lyve unto hir lyvēs ende

In parfit joye; and Jhesu Crist us sende

Housbondēs meekē, yongē, fressha-bedde,

And gracē toverbyde hem that we wedde,

And eek, I praye Jhesu to shorte hir lyvēs

That nat wol be govērd by hir wyves;

And olde and angry nygardes of dispençe,

God sende hem soonē verray pestilence!

### *The prologe of the Freres Tale*

This worthy Lymytour, this noble Frere,

He made alway a maner louryng chiere

Upon the Somonour, but for honestee

No vileyns word as yet to hym spak he;

But attē laste he seyde unto the Wyf,

'Damē,' quod he, 'God yeve yow right  
good lyf! 1270

Ye han heer touchēd, al so moot I thee!

In scolē-matere greet difficultee.

Ye han seyde muchē thyng right wel, I  
seye;

But, dame, heere as we rydē by the weye

Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,

And lete auctoritees, on Goddēs name,

To prechyng, and to scolē of clergie,

And if it lykē to this compaignye

I wol yow of a somonour telle a game.

*Pardee*, yemay wel knowē by the name 1280

That of a somonour may no good be sayd.

I praye that noon of you be yvele apayd,—

A somonour is a rennerer up and doun

With mandēmētz for fornicacioun,

And is y-bet at every townēs ende.'

Oure Hoost tho spak, 'A, sire, ye  
sholde be hende

And curteys, as a man of youre estaat,

In compaignys ; we wol have no debaat !  
Telleth youre tale, and lat the Somonour  
be.'

'Nay,' quod the Somonour, 'lat hym  
seye to me 1290  
What so hym list,—whan it comth to  
my lot,  
By God ! I shal hym quiten every grot !  
I shal hym tellen which a greet honour  
It is to be a flatteryng lymytour ;  
And his office I shal hym telle y-wis.'

Oure Hoost answerde, 'Pees ! namoore  
of this !'

And after this he seyde unto the Frere,  
'Tel forth youre tale, my leevé maister  
deere.'

### FRIAR'S TALE

#### *Heere bigynneth The Freres Tale*

Whilom ther was dwellynge in my  
contree

An erchédekene, a man of heigh degree,  
That boldly dide execucioun 1301

In punysshynge of fornicacioun,  
Of wicchecraft, and eek of bawderye,  
Of diffamacioun and avowtrye,  
Of chirché-revès, and of testamentz,  
Of contractes, and of lakke of sacramentz,  
And eek of many another manere cryme,  
Which nedeth nat rehercen for this tyme ;  
Of usure, and of symonye also. 1309

But certès, leccours dide he grettest wo ;  
They sholdè syngen if that they were hent ;  
And smale tytheres weren foule y-shent ;  
If any persone wolde upon hem pleyne  
Ther myghte asterte hym no pecunyal  
peyne.

For smale tithes, and for smal offrynge,  
He made the peple pitously to synge,  
For er the bisshope caughte hem with  
his hook,

1294, 1295. Between these lines E<sup>6</sup> wrongly  
insert 1297, 1298.

*The Freres Tale.* Two Latin stories, one of a  
wicked seneschal, the other of a lawyer, making  
the same points as this, were printed by Thomas  
Wright, and have been reprinted in Part I. of  
the Chaucer Society's *Originals and Analogues*.  
We may be sure that the setting of this story is  
entirely Chaucer's own.

They weren in the erchédeknes book ;  
And thanne, hadde he, thurgh his juris-  
diccioun,

Power to doon on hem correccioun. 1300  
He hadde a somonour redy to his hond ;  
A slyer boye was noon in Engeland ;  
For subtilly he hadde his espialle  
That taughte hym whér hym myghte  
availle.

He koudé spare of leccours oon or two,  
To techen hym to foure and twenty mo ;  
For thogh this somonour wood was  
an hare,

To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare,  
For we been out of his correccioun,  
They han of us no jurisdiccioun, 1313  
Ne never shullen, termé of alle hir lyves

'Peter ! so been the wommen of th  
styves,'

Quod the Somonour, 'y-put out of m  
cure !'

'Pees ! with myschance and wil  
mysaventure !'

Thus seyde our Hoost, 'and lat hy  
telle his tale.

Now telleth forth, thogh that th  
Somonour gale ;

Ne spareth nat, myn owene maister deere  
This falsé thief, this somonour, qu  
the Frere,

Hadde alwey bawdés redy to his hond,  
As any hank to lure in Engeland, 13  
That tolde hym al the secree that th  
knewe,

For hire acquyeyntance was nat come  
newe ;

They weren his approwours prively.  
He took hymself a greet profit therby ;  
His maister knew nat alwey what he w  
Withouten mandément, a lewed man  
He koude somne, on peyne of Cristés cu  
And they were glade to fillé wel his pu  
And make hym greté feestés atte nale  
And right as Judas hadde purses smale, 1  
And was a thief, right swich a thief was !  
His maister hadde but half his dúttec.  
He was, if I shal, even hym his laude  
A thief, and eek a somnour, and a baw  
He hadde eek wenches at his retenue  
1323. *subtily, H. privately.*

[That whether that sir Robert, or sir Huwe,

Or Jakke, or Ranf, or whose, that it were [that lay by hem, they tolde it in his ere.

Thus was the wenche and he of oon assent, 1359

And he wolde fecche a feynéd mandément,  
And somme hem to the chapitre bothé two,

And pile the man, and lete the wenché go.

Thanne wolde he seye, 'Freend, I shal for thy sake

Dō striken thee out of oure lettres blake,  
Thee thar namore as in this cas travaille;  
I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle.'

Certeyn he knew of briberfés mo  
Than possible is to telle in yerés two;  
For in this world nys doggè for the bowe  
That kan an hurt deer from an hool y-knowe 1370

Bet than this somnour knew a sly lecchour,  
Or an awotier, or a paramour;  
And, for that was the fruyt of al his rente,  
Therefore on it he sette al his entente.

And so bifel that onés on a day  
This somnour, ever waityng on his pray,  
Rod forth to somean old wydwe, a ribibe,  
Feynyng a causé, for he woldé brybe,—  
And happed that he saugh biforn hym ryde  
A gay yeman, under a forest syde. 1380  
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and kene;

He hadde upon a courtépy of grene,  
An hat upon his heed with frenges blake.

'Sire,' quod this somnour, 'hay! and wel atake!'

'Welcome!' quod he, 'and every good felawe.

Wher rydestow, under this grene-wode shawe,'

Seydè this yeman; 'wiltow fer to day?'

This somnour hym answerde and seyde, 'Nay,

Heere fasté by,' quod he, 'is myn entente  
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente 1390

That longeth to my lordés duetée.'

'Artow thanne a baillý?' 'Ye,' quod he,—

<sup>1356.</sup> *sir Robert*, a priest, not a knight.

<sup>1364.</sup> *shas*, *H<sup>2</sup> shas*.

He dorstè nat, for verray filthe and shame,  
Seye that he was a somchour, for the name.

'*Depardieux!*' quod this yeman,  
'deerè broother!

Thou art a baillý, and I am another.

I am unknowen as in this contree;  
Of thyn acqueyntance I wolde prayé thee,  
And eek of bretherhede, if that yow leste;  
I havé gold and silver in my cheste; 1400  
If that thee happe to comén in oure shire  
Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desire.'

'*Grantmercy!*' quod this somonour,  
'by my feith!'

Everych in ootheres hand his trouthe leith,  
For to be sworné bretheren til they deye;  
In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.

This somonour that was as ful of jangles  
As ful of venym been thise waryangles,  
And ever enqueryng upon every thyng;  
'Brother,' quod he, 'where is now youre dwelling, 1410

Another day if that I sholde yow seche?'  
This yeman hym answerde, in softé speche:

'Brother,' quod he, 'fer in the north contree,

Where as I hope som tyme I shal thee see.  
Er we departe I shal thee so wel wisse  
That of myn hous ne shaltow never myase.'

'Now, brother,' quod this somonour,  
'I yow preye,

Teche me, whil that we ryden by the weye,—

Syn that ye been a baillif as am I,—  
Som subilttee, and tel me feithfully 1420  
In myn office how I may moosté wyne,  
And spareth nat for conscience ne synne,  
But as my brother tel me how do ye.'

'Now, by my trouthe, brother deere,'  
seyde he,

'As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale,  
My wages been ful streitè and ful smale;  
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,  
And myn office is ful laborous;  
And therefore by extorcions I lyve;  
For sothe, I take all that men wol me yeve,  
Algate by sleyghté, or by violence. 1431

<sup>1395.</sup> *deere*, *H<sup>2</sup> liere*.

<sup>1406.</sup> *hir weye*, *H<sup>2</sup> and playe(n)*.

Fro yeer to yeer I wynne al my dispence ;  
I kan no bettre tellé, feithfully.'

'Now certés,' quod this somonour,  
'so fare I ;

I sparé nat to taken, God it woot,  
But if it be to hevy or to hoot,  
What I may gete in conseil prively ;  
No maner conscience of that have I ;  
Nere myn extorcioun I myghte nat lyven,  
Nor of swiche japés wol I nat be shryven.  
Stomak, ne conscience, ne knowe I noon  
I shrewe thise shrifté-fadres everychoon !  
Wel be we met, by God and by Seint  
Jame !

But, leevé brother, tel me thanne thy  
name,'

Quod this somonour ; 'in this meeneð  
while.'

This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.

'Brother,' quod he, 'wiltow that I  
thee telle ?

I am a feend ; my dwellyng is in helle,  
And heere I ryde aboute my purchasyng,  
To wite wher men wol yeve me anythyng.  
My purchas is theffet of al my rente. <sup>1452</sup>  
Looke how thou rydest for the same  
entente.

To wynne good, thou rekkest never how ;  
Right so fare I, for ryde I wolde right  
now

Unto the worldés endé for a preyé.'

'A !' quod this somonour, '*benedicite !*  
what sey ye ?

I wende ye were a yeman trewely.  
Ye han a mannés shape as wel as I,  
Han ye a figure thanne determinat  
In hellé, ther ye been in youre estat ?' <sup>1460</sup>

'Nay, certeinly,' quod he, 'ther have  
we noon,

But whan us liketh we kan take us oon,  
Or ellés make yow semé we been shape  
Somtyme lyk a man, or lyk an ape ;  
Or lyk an angel kan I ryde or go.  
It is no wonder thyng thogh it be so ;  
A lowsy jogelour kan deceyvé thee,  
And *pardes !* yet kan I moore craft than  
he.'

'Why,' quod the somonour, 'ryde ye  
thanne or goon

In sondry shape, and nat alwey in oon ?'

'For we,' quod he, 'wol <sup>us</sup> swiche  
formés make <sup>1471</sup>

As moost able is oure preyés for to take.'

'What maketh yow to han al this  
labour ?'

'Ful many a cause, leevé sire  
somonour,'

Seydè this feend ; 'but allé thyng hath  
tyme ;

The day is short, and it is passéd pryme,  
And yet ne wan I nothyng in this day ;  
I wol entende to wynnyng if I may,  
And nat entende our wittés to declare ;  
For, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare <sup>148</sup>  
To understonde, although I tolde hem thee.  
But for thou axest why labouren we,—  
Forsomtyme we been Goddés instrumentz,  
And meenés to doon his comandémentz,  
Whan that hym list, upon his créatures,  
In divers art and in diverse figures.  
Withouten hym we have no myght  
certayn,

If that hym list to stonden ther agayn.  
And somtyme, at oure prayere, han we lew  
Oonly the body and nat the soulé greve  
Witnesse on Job, whom that we didnen wo  
And somtyme han we myght of both  
two,

This is to seyn, of soule and body eke ;  
And somtyme be we suffred for to seke  
Upon a man and doon his soule unreste  
And nat his body, and al is for the best  
Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun  
It is a cause of his savacioun,—  
Al be it that it was nat oure entente  
He sholde be sauf, but that we wold  
hym hente,— <sup>19</sup>

And somtyme be we servant unto man,  
As to the erchëbisshope, Seint Dunstan  
And to the Apostles servant eek was I.

'Yet tel me,' quod the somonour  
'feithfully,

Make ye yow newé bodies thus alway  
Of elementz ?' The feend answerd  
'Nay,

Somtyme we feyne, and somtyme we ary  
With dedé bodyes, in ful sondry wyse,  
And speke as renably and faire and we

<sup>1470</sup> wittes, H *things*.  
<sup>1480</sup> art, H<sup>4</sup> *act, actes*.

As to the Phitonissa dide Samuel ; 1520  
And yet wol som men seye it was nat he.  
I do no fors of youre dyvynytee,  
But o thyng warne I thee, I wol nat jape,  
Thou wok alगतs wite how we been  
shape,  
Thou shalt hereafterwardes, my brother  
deere,  
Come there thee nedeth nat of me to leere,  
For thou shalt by thyn owene experience  
Konne in a chayer rede of this sentence  
Bet than Virgil while he was on lyve,  
Or Dant also ; now lat us ryde blyve, 1530  
For I wole holdé compaignye with thee  
Til it be so that thou forsaké me.'

'Nay,' quod this somonour, 'that shal  
nat bityde !'

I am a yeman knowen is ful wyde ;  
My trouthe wol I holde as in this cas ;  
For though thou were the devel, Sathanas,  
My trouthe wol I holdé to my brother,  
As I am sworn, and ech of us til oother,  
For to be trewe brother in this cas ;  
And bothe we goon abouten oure purchas.  
Taak thou thy part, what that men wol  
thee yeve, 1537  
And I shal myn,—thus may we bothé  
lyve,—  
And if that any of us have moore than  
oother,  
Lat hym be trewe and parte it with his  
brother.'

'Igraunté,' quod the devel, 'by my fey !'  
And with that word they ryden forth  
hir wey,  
And right at the entryng of the townés  
ende,  
To which this somonour shoope hym for  
to wende,  
They saugh a cart that charged was with  
hey,  
Which that a cartere droof forth in his  
wey. 1540  
Deepe was the wey, for which the carté  
stood :  
The cartere smoot and cryde as he were  
wood,

1520. *Phitonissa*, Pythoness, i.e. the Witch of  
Endor.  
1528. i.e. be able to lecture on this theme.

'Hayt, Brok ! hayt, Scot ! what spare ye  
for the stones !

The feend,' quod he, 'yow fecché, body  
and bones,

As ferforthly as ever were ye foled !  
So muché wo as I have with yow tholed !  
The devel have al, bothe hors and cart  
and hey !'

This somonour seyde, 'Heere shal we  
have a pley' ;

And neer the feend he drough, as noght  
ne were,

Ful prively, and rownd in his ere, 1550  
'Herkne, my brother ! herkne, by thy  
feith !

Herestow nat how that the cartere seith ?  
Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,  
Bothe hey and cart and eek his caples  
thre.'

'Nay,' quod the devel, 'God woot,  
never a deel.

It is nat his entente, trust thou me weel ;  
Axe hym thyself, if thou nat trowest me,  
Or ellés stynt a while, and thou shalt see.'

This cartere thakketh his hors upon  
the croupe,

And they bigonné drawn and to-stoupe.  
'Heyt ! now,' quod he, 'ther Jhesu Crist  
yow blesse ! 1561

And al his handwerk bothé moore and  
lesse !

That was wel twight, myn owene lyard  
boy !

I pray God savé thee ! and Seinté Loy !  
Now is my cart out of the slow, *pardes* !'

'Lo, brother,' quod the feend, 'what  
tolde I thee ?

Heere may ye se, myn owene deeré  
brother,

The carl spak oon thing, but he thoghte  
another.

Lat us go forth abouten oure viage ;  
Heere wyne I nothyng upon cariage.' 1570

Whan that they cpmen semwhat out  
of towne

1559. *thakketh*, smacks ; E<sup>2</sup> *taketh*.

1559. *hors*, plural.

1564. *pray*, E *pray to*.

1564. *thes*, H<sup>2</sup> *thy* (the) *body*.

1564. *Seinté Loy*, St. Eligius.

1568. *thing*, om. E.



This somonour to his brother gan to  
rowne :

'Brother,' quod he, 'heere woneth an  
old rebeke

That hadde almoost as lief to lese hire  
nekke,

As for to yeve a peny of hir good.

I wole han twelf pens though that she be  
wood,

Or I wol sompne hire unto oure office,  
And yet, God woot, of hire knowe I no  
vice ;

But, for thou kanst nat, as in this contree,  
Wynné thy cost, taak heer ensample of  
me.' 1580

This somonour clappeth at the wydwes  
gate :

'Com out,' quod he, 'thou oldé virytrate !  
I trowe thou haßt som frere or preest with  
thee.'

'Who clappeth ?' seyde this wyf,  
'*benedicite* !

God save you, sire ! what is youre sweeté  
wille ?'

'I have,' quod he, 'of somonaunce a  
bille ;

Up peyne of cursyng looké that thou be  
To-morn bifore the archédeknes knee,  
Tanswere to the court of certeyn thynges.'

'Now, Lord,' quod she, 'Crist Jhesu,  
kyng of kynges,' 1590

So wisly helpé me, as I ne may !

I have been syk, and that ful many a day ;  
I may nat go so fer,' quod she, 'ne ryde,  
But I be deed, so priketh it in my syde.

May I nat axe a libel, sire somonour,  
And answer there by my procuratour  
To swich thyng as men wole opposen me ?'

'Yis,' quod this somonour, 'pay anon  
—lat se—

Twelf pens to me and I wole thee acquite.  
I shal no profit han therby but lite, 1600

My maister hath the profit, and nat I.  
Com of, and lat me ryden hastily ;

Gif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarye !'  
'Twelf pens !' quod she, 'now lady,

Sainte Marie !

So wisly help me out of care and synne,

1585. *somonaunce, E. somones.*

1587. *Up, E. Upon.*

This wyde world thogh that 'I sholdé  
wynne,

Ne have I nat twelf pens withinne myn  
hoold ;

Ye knowen wel that I am poure and old.  
Kithé youre almesse on me, pouré wrecche.'

'Nay, thanne,' quod he, 'the foulé  
feend me fecche,' 1610

If I thexcuse though thou shul be spilt !'  
'Allas !' quod she, 'God woot I have  
no gilt.'

'Pay me !' quod he, 'or by the sweete  
Seinte Anne,

As I wol bere away thy newé panne  
For dette which that thou owest me of  
old,—

Whan that thou madest thyn housbonde  
cokéwold

I payde at hoom for thy correccioun.'

'Thou lixt !' quod she, 'by my sava-  
cioun

Ne was I never er now, wydwe ne wyf,  
Somoned unto youre court in al my lyf !

Ne never I nas but of my body trewe. 1621  
Unto the devel, blak and rough of hewe,  
Yeve I thy body and my panne also !'

And whan the devel herde hire cursen  
so

Upon hir knees, he seyde in this manere:  
'Now, Mabély, myn owene moder deere,

Is this youre wyl in earnest that ye seyde ?'

'The devel,' quod she, 'so fecche hym  
er he deye,—

And panne and al, but he wol hym  
repente !'

'Nay, oldé stot ! that is nat myn  
entente,' 1630

Quod this somonour, 'for to repenté me  
For anythyng that I have had of thee ;

I wolde I hadde thy smok and every  
clooth.'

'Now, brother,' quod the devil, 'be  
nat wrooth :

Thy body and this panne been myne by  
right ;

Thou shalt with me to hellé yet to-nyght,  
Where thou shalt knowen of oure privitee  
Moore than a maister of dyvynytee.'

And with that word this foulé feend hym  
hente. 1639

Body and spule he with the devel wente  
Where as that somonours han hir heritage;  
And God, that maketh after his ymage  
Mankynde, save and gyde us alle and  
some,  
And leve thise somonours goodé men  
blycome!

Lordynges, I koude han toold yow,  
quod this Frere,  
Hadde I had leyser for this Somnour heere,  
After the text of Cristé, Poul, and John,  
And of oure othere doctours many oon,  
Swiche peynés that youre herté myghte  
agryse;  
Al be it so no tongé may devyse— 1650  
Thogh that I myghte a thousand wynter  
telle—

The peynes of thilké curséd hous of helle;  
But for to kepe us fro that curséd place  
Waketh and preyeth Jhesu for his grace,  
So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.  
Herketh this word, beth war, as in this  
cas:

'The leoun sit in his awayt alway  
To sle the innocent, if that he may.'  
Disposeth ay youre hertés to withstonde  
The feend, that yow wolde maké thral  
and bonde; 1660  
He may nat tempté yow over youre  
myght,  
For Crist wol be youre champion and  
knyght;  
And prayeth that thise somonours hem  
repente  
Of hir mysdedes, er that the feend hem  
hente!

*The prologe of the Somonours Tale*

This Somonour in his styropes hyé  
stood.  
Upon this Frere his herté was so wood,  
That lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire.  
'Lordynges,' quod he, 'but o thyng I  
desire,—  
I yow blaake that of youre curteisye,

1660. *He* make the hit more direct, reading  
*this (sore) temptour him repente*, etc.  
1660. *He*, *He* up he.

Syn ye han herd this falsé Frere lye, 1670  
As suffereth me I may my talé telle.

'This Frere bosteth that he knoweth  
helle,  
And God it woot, that it is litel wonder;  
Frerés and feendés been but lyte, asonder;  
For, *pardes*! ye han ofté tyme herd telle  
How that a freré ravysshed was to helle  
In spirit onés by a visoun;  
And as an angel ladde hym up and doun,  
To shewen hym the peynés that ther  
were,

In al the placé saugh he nat a frere. 1680  
Of oother folk he saugh ynowe in wo.  
Unto this angel spak the freré tho:

"Now, sire," quod he, "han frerés  
swich a grace

That noon of hem shal comé to this place?"

"Yis," quod this angel, "many a  
millioun";

And unto Sathanas he ladde hym doun,  
And now hath Sathanas, seith he, a tayl,  
Brodder than of a carryk is the sayl.

"Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas,"  
quod he,

"Shewe forth thyn ers, and lat the freré  
se 1690

Where is the nest of frerés in this place?"  
And er that half a furlong wey of space,  
Right so as bees out swarmen from an  
hyve,

Out of the develes ers ther gonné dryve  
Twénty thousand frerés in a route,  
And thurgh-out hellé swarméden aboute,  
And comen agayn as faste as they may  
gon,

And in his ers they crepten everychon;  
He clapte his tayl agayn and lay ful  
stille.

This frere, whan he hadde lookéd al his  
fille 1700

Upon the tormentz of this sory place,  
His spirit God restoréd of his grace  
Unto his body agayn, and he awook;  
But nathéles, for feré yet he quook,  
So was the develes ers ay in his mynde;  
That is his heritage of vermay kynde.  
God save yow allé, save this curséd  
Frere!

My prologe wol I ende in this manere.'

## SUMMONER'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Somonour his Tale*

Lordynges, ther is in Yorkshire, as I  
gesse,

A mersshy contrecalléd Holderneshe, <sup>1720</sup>  
In which ther wente a lymytour aboute  
To preche, and eek to begge, it is no  
doute.

And so bifel that on a day this frere  
Hadde prechéd at a chirche in his manere,  
And specially, aboven every thyng,  
Excited he the peple in his prechyng  
To trentals, and to yeve for Goddés sake,  
Wherwith men myghte hooly houses make,  
Ther as diviné servyce is honoured,  
Nat ther as it is wasted and devoured,  
Ne ther it nedeth nat for to be yeve, <sup>1721</sup>  
As to possessioners that mowen lyve,  
Thankéd be God! in wele and habun-  
daunce.

'Trentals,' seide he, 'deliveren fro  
penaunce  
Hir freendés soulés, as wel olde as yonge;  
Ye, whan that they been hastily y-songe,  
Nat for to holde a preest joly and gay;  
He syngeth nat but o masse in a day.  
Delivereth out,' quod he, 'anon, the  
soules!

Ful hard it is, with flesschbook or with  
oules <sup>1730</sup>

To been y-clawéd, or to brenne, or bake;  
Now spede yow hastily for Cristés sake.'  
And whan this frere had seyd al his  
entente

With *qui cum patre*, forth his wey he wente.

Whan folk in chirche had yeve him  
what hem lest,

He went his wey, no lenger wolde he reste.  
With scrippe and tipped staf, y-tukked hye,  
In every hous he gan to poure and pryve,  
And beggeth mele, and chese, or ellés  
corn.

His felawe hadde a stafe tipped with horn,

*Summoner's Tale.* The central incident of  
this was, no doubt, common property; but the  
setting of the tale must be Chaucer's.  
<sup>1720</sup> Yorkshire, as, H. Engleland.  
<sup>1730</sup> tipped, H. fyked.

A peyre of tables al of yvory, <sup>1741</sup>

And a poyntel polyashed fetialy,  
And wroote the namés alwey as he stood  
Of allé folk that yaf hym any good,  
Ascaunces that he woldé for hem prey.

'Yif us a bussel whetté, malt or reye,  
A Goddés kechyl, or a troype of chese,  
Or ellés what yow lyst, we may nat cheese;  
A Goddés halfpenny, or a masse peny, <sup>1740</sup>  
Or yif us of youre brawn, if ye have eny;  
A dagoun of youre blanket, leevé dame,  
Oure suster deere,—lo heere I write youre  
name,—

Bacoun, or beef, or swich thyng as ye  
fynde.'

(A sturdy harlot wente ay hem bihynde,  
That was hir hostés-man, and bar a sak,  
And what men yaf hem leyde it on his  
bak.

And whan that he was out at dore anon,  
He planed awey the namés everichon  
That he biforn had writen in his tables.

He served hem with nyfles and with fables.

'Nay! ther thou list, thou Somonour!'  
quod the Frere. <sup>1761</sup>

'Pees!' quod oure Hoost, 'for Cristés  
mooder deere;

Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al.'  
So thrive I, quod this Somonour, so  
I shal!

So longe he wenté, hous by hous, til he  
Cam til an hous ther he was wont to be  
Refreshéd moore than in an hundred  
placis;

Syk lay the goodé man whos that the  
place is;

Bedrede upon a couché lowe he lay.

'*Deus hic!*' quod he, 'O Thomas  
freend, good day!' <sup>1771</sup>

Seyd this freré, curteisly and softe.

'Thomas,' quod he, 'God yeldé yow  
ful ofte

Have I upon this bench faren ful weel;  
Heere have I eten many a myrie meel';  
And fro the bench he droof away the  
cat,

And leyde adoun his potente and his hat  
And eek his scrippe, and sette hym softe  
adoun.

His felawe was go walked into toun,

Forth with his knave into that hostelrye  
Where as he shoopes hym thilké nyght to  
lye. 1780

'O deeré maister,' quod this siké man,  
'How haf ye faré sith that March bigan?  
I saugh yow noght this fourtényght or  
moore.'

'God woot,' quod he, 'laboured I  
have ful soore,  
And specially for thy savacioun  
Have I seyde many a precious orisoun;  
And for oure othere freendés, God hem  
blessé.

I have to day been at youre chirche at  
messe,

And seyde a sermoun after my symple wit,  
Nat al after the text of booly writ; 1790  
For it is hard to yow, as I suppose,  
And therfore wol I teche yow al the glose.  
Glosynge is a glorious thyng certeyn,  
For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkés seyn.  
There have I taught hem to be charitable,  
And spende hir good ther it is resonable;  
And thère I saugh oure dame,—a, where  
is she?'

'Yond, in the yerd, I trowé that  
she be,'

Seyde this man, 'and she wol come anon.'

'Ey, maister, welcom be ye, by Seint  
John!' 1800

Seyde this wyf; 'how fare ye, hertely?'

The frere ariseth up ful curteisly  
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe,  
And kiste hire sweete, and chirketh as a  
sparwe

With his lyppe: 'Dame,' quod he,  
'right weel,

As he that is youre servant every deel.  
Thankéd be God, that yow yaf soule and  
lyf,

Yet saugh I nat this day so fair a wyf  
In al the chirché, God so savé me!'

'Ye, God amende defaultés, sire,' quod  
she, 1810

'Algeten welcome be ye, by my fey!'

'Grant mercy, dame, this have I  
founde alwey,

But of youre greté goodnesse, by youre  
leve,

I woldé prey yow that ye nat yow greve,

I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe;  
Thise curatz been ful negligant and slowe  
To gropé tendrély a conscience.

In shrift, in pryng is my diligence,  
And studie in Petrés wordés and in  
Poules. 1819

I walke, and fisshé cristen mennés soules,  
To yelden Jhesu Crist his propre rente.  
To sprede his word is set al myn entente.'

'Now, by youre leve, O deeré sire,'  
quod she,

'Chideth him weel, for, seinté Trinitee!  
He is as angry as a pissemyre,  
Though that he have al that he kan desire,  
Though I him wrye a-nyght and make  
hym warm,

And on hym leye my leg, outhér myn arm,  
He groneth lyk oure boor, lith in oure  
sty.

Oother desport ryght noon of hym have I,  
I may nat plesse hym in no maner cas.' 1831

'O Thomas, *je vous dy*, Thomas!  
Thomas!

This maketh the feend, this mosté ben  
amended;

Ire is a thyng that hyé God defended,  
And therof wol I speke a word or two.'

'Now, maister,' quod the wyf, 'er that  
I go,

What, wol ye dyne? I wol go therabouté.'

'Now, damé,' quod he, '*je vous dy*  
*sans doute*,

Have I nat of a capoun but the lyvere,  
And of youre softé breed nat but a  
shyvere, 1840

And after that a rosted pigges heed,—  
But that I nolde no beest for me were  
deed,—

Thanne hadde I with yow hoomly suffi-  
saunce.

I am a man of litel sustenaunce.  
My spirit hath his fostryng in the Bible,  
The body is ay so redy and penyble  
To waké, that my stomak is destroyed;  
I prey yow, damé, ye be nat anoyed,  
Though I so freendly yow my conseil  
shewe.

By God, I wolde nat telle it but a fewe!'

'Now, sire,' quod she, 'but o word er  
I go: 1851

My child is deed withinne thise wykés two,  
loone after that ye wente out of this toun.

‘His deeth saugh I by revelacioun,  
seith this frere, ‘at hoom in oure dortour,  
dar wel seyn that er that half an hour  
After his deeth, I saugh hym born to blisse  
In my avisioun, so God me wisse!  
So dide our sexteyn and oure fermerer,  
That han been trewé frerés fifty yeer,—  
They may now, God be thanked of his  
loone! 186r

Maken hir jubilee, and walke allone.  
And up I roos, and al oure covent eke,  
With many a tearé trikyng on my cheke,  
Withouten noyse, or claterynge of belles,  
*Te deum* was oure song and no thyng  
elles;

Save that to Crist I seyde an orisoun,  
Thankyng hym of his revelacioun;  
For, sire and damé, trusteth me right weel,  
Oure orisons been moore effectueel, 1870  
And moore we seen of Cristés secree  
thynges,  
Than burel folk, al though they weren  
kynges.

We lyve in poverté and in abstinence,  
And burell folk in richesse and despence  
Of mete and drynke, and in hir foul delit.  
We han this worldés lust al in despit.  
Lazar and Dives lyveden diversly  
And diverse gerdoun hadden they ther-by.  
Who-so wol preye he moot faste and be  
clene,

And fatte his soule and make his body  
lene. 1880

We fare as seith thapostle; clooth and  
foode

Suffisen us, though they be nat ful goode;  
The clennessé and the fastyngé of us freres  
Maketh that Crist accepteth oure preyerés.

‘Lo, Moyses fourty dayes and fourty  
nyght

Fasted, er that the heighé God of myght  
Spak with hym in the mount of Synay.

With empty wombe, fastyngé many a  
day,

Receyved he the lawé that was writen  
With Goddés fynger; and Elye, wel ye  
witen, 1890

In mount Oreb, er he hadde any speche

With hyé God, that is oure lyvés leche,  
He fasted longe, and was in contemp-  
launce.

‘Aaron, that hadde the temple in  
governance,

And eek the othere preestés everichon,  
Into the temple whan they sholdé gon  
To preyé for the peple, and do servyse,  
They nolden drynken in no maner wyse  
No drynké which that myghte hem  
dronké make; 1899

But there, in abstinencé preye and wake,  
Lest that they deyden:—taak heede what  
I seye,—

But they be sobre that for the peple preye,  
War that I—I seye namoore,—for it  
suffiseth.

Oure Lord Jhesu, as hooly writ devyseth,  
Yaf us ensample of fastyngé and preyerés;  
Therfore we mendynantz, we sely freres,  
Been wedded to povérte and continence,  
To charite, humblesse, and abstinence,  
To persecucioun for rightwinesse,  
To wepyngé, misericordé and clennessé;  
And therfore may ye se that oure pre-  
yerés,— 191r

I speke of us, we mendynantz, we freres,—  
Been to the hyé God moore acceptable  
Than yourés with youré feestés at the table  
Fro Paradys first, if I shal nat lye,  
Was man out chaced for his glotonye,  
And chaast was man in Paradys certeyn  
‘But herkné, Thomas, what I shal th  
seyn,

I ne have no text of it, as I suppose,  
But I shal fynde it in a maner glose, 192  
That specially oure sweeté Lord Jhesus  
Spak this by frerés, whan he seyde thus  
“Blessed be they that povere i  
spirit been,”—

And so forth al the gospel may ye seen  
Wher it be likker oure professioun,  
Or hirs that swymmen in possessioun,—  
Fy on hire pompe and on hire glotonye  
And for hir lewédnesse, I hem diffye!

‘Me thynketh they been lyk Jovynal  
Fat as a whale, and walkyngé as a swa!  
Al vinolent as botel in the spence. 19

192p. *Jovynal*, probably the mythical emper  
of the *Gesta Romanorum*.

Hir preyere is of ful greet reverence  
When they for soules seye the Psalm of  
David,—

Lo, "but" they seye, *cor meum eructavit*,—  
Who folweth Cristes gospel, and his foore,  
But we that humble been and chaast and  
poore,

Werkeris of Goddés word, not auditours ?  
Therefore, right as an hauk up at a sours  
Up springeth into their, right so prayeres  
Of charitable and chaste, bisy freres 1940  
Maken hir sours to Goddés erés two.

Thomas, Thomas, so moote I ryde or go,—  
And by that lord that clepid is Seint Yve !  
Nere thou our brother sholdestou nat  
thyve !

In our chapitré praye we day and nyght  
To Crist that he thee sendé heele and  
myght

Thy body for to weelden, hastily.'

'God woot,' quod he, 'no thyng therof  
feele I !

As help me Crist, as I, in fewé yeres,  
Han spent upon diversé manere freres 1950  
Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet.  
Certeyn my good I have almoost biset,—  
Farwel my gold, for it is al ago !'

The frere answerde, 'O Thomas, dos-  
tow so ?

What nedeth yow diversé frerés seche ?  
What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche  
To sechen othere lechés in the toun ?  
Youre inconstance is youre confusioun.

Holde ye thanne me, or ellés oure covent,  
To praye for yow been insufficient ? 1960  
Thomas, that jape nys nat worth a myte ;  
Youre maladye is for we han to lyte.

A ! yif that covent half a quarter otes !

A ! yif that covent foure and twenty grotes !

A ! yif that frere a peny, and lat hym go !

Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thyng be so !

What is a ferthyng worth parted in twelve ?

Lo, ech thyng that is oned in it selve

Is moore strong than when it is to-scatered.

Thomas, of me thou shalt nat been y-  
flatered ; 1970

Thou woldest han oure labour al for noght ;

The hye God, that al this world hath

through,

Seith that the werkman worthy is his hyre.

Thomas, noght of youre tresor I desire,  
As for my self, but that al oure covent  
To preye for yow is ay so diligent,

And for to buylden Cristés owene chirche.

Thomas, if ye wol lerne for to wirche

Of buyldynge up of churches, may ye fynde

If it be good in Thomas lyf of Inde. 1980

Ye lye heere ful of anger and of ire,

With which the devel set youre herte afyre,

And chiden heere the sely innocent,

Youre wyf, that is so meke and pacient ;

And therfore, Thomas, trowe me if thee

leste,

Ne stryve nat with thy wyf, as for thy  
beste ;

And ber this word away now, by thy feith,

Touchynge this thyng, lo what the wise  
seith,

"Withinne thyn hous ne be thou no leoun ;

To thy subgitz do noon oppressioun, 1990

Ne maké thyn acqueyntis fro the flec."

And, Thomas, yet eft-soones I chargé thee,

Be war of yre that in thy bosom slepeth,

War fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth

Under the gras and styngeth subtilly ;

Be war, my sone, and herkne paciently,

That twenty thousand men han lost hir  
lyves

For stryvyng with hir lemmans and hir  
wyves.

Now sith ye han so hooly, meke a wyf,

What nedeth yow, Thomas, to maken stryf ?

Ther nys, y-wys, no serpent so cruel 2000

Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel

As womman is, whan she hath caught an  
ire ;

Vengeance is thanné al that they desire.

Ire is a synne, oon of the greté sevene,

Abhomynable unto the God of hevene,

And to hymself it is destruccioun.

This every lewéd viker, of persoun,

Kan seye, how ire engendreth homycide.

Ire is in sooth executour of pryde. 2010

I koude of ire seye so muché sorwe

My talé holdé lasté til tomorwe ;

And therfore preye I God, bothe day and  
nyght,

1980. Thomas. St. Thomas professed to be an architect, but the palace he built for the Indian king was in heaven.

An irous man God sende hym litel myght.  
It is greet harme and certès greet pitee  
To sette an irous man in heigh degree.

'Whilom ther was an irous potestat,  
As seith Senek, that duryng his estaat  
Upon a day out ryden knyghts two;  
And as Fortuné wolde that it were so  
That oon of hem cam hoom, that oother  
nought. 2021

Anon the knyght bifore the jüge is broght,  
That seyde thus: "Thou hast thy felawe  
slayn,

For which I deme thee to the deeth  
certayn";

And to another knyght comanded he,  
"Go lede hym to the deeth, I chargé  
thee!"

And happed as they wenté by the weye,  
Toward the placé ther he sholdé deye,  
The knyght cam which men wenden had  
be deed.

Thanne thoughté they it was the besté  
reed, 2030

To lede hem bothé to the jüge agayn.

They seiden, "Lord, the knyght ne hath  
nat slayn

His felawe; heere he standeth hool alyve."

"Ye shul be deed," quod he, "so moot I  
thryve!

That is to seyn, bothe oon, and two, and  
thre."

And to the firsté knyght right thus spak  
he:

"I dampnéd thee, thou most algate be  
deed;

And thou, also, most nedés lese thyn heed,  
For thou art causé why thy felawe deyth";  
And to the thridde knyght right thus he  
seith: 2040

"Thou hast nat doon that I comanded  
thee";

And thus he hidedoon sleen hem allé  
thre.

'Irous Cambises was eek dronkelewe  
And ay delited hym to been a shrewe;  
And so bifel a lord of his meynée,

2021. *Senek*. This story is told by Seneca, *De  
Ira*, l. 16, of Cn. Piso (T.)

2043. *Cambises*. This story is also in Seneca,  
*St. 145*; it differs a little from one in Herodotus,  
*St. 11*, (T.)

That lovéd vertuous moralitee,  
Seyde on a day bitwene hem two right  
thus:

"A lord is lost if he be vicious,  
And dronkenesse is eek a foul secord  
Of any man, and namely in a lord. 2050  
Ther is ful many an eye, and many an ere,  
Awaityng on a lord, and he noot where.  
For Goddés love drynk moore attemprely!  
Wyn maketh man to lesen wrecchedly  
His mynde and eek his lymés everichon."

"The revers shaltou se," quod he anon,  
"And preeve it by thyn owene experience.  
That wyn ne dooth to folk no swid  
offence.

Ther is no wyn bireveth me my myght  
Of hand, ne foot, ne of myne eyen sight"  
And for despit he drank ful muchel moore  
An hondred part, than he hadde doo  
bifore;

And right anon, this irous, curséd wrecch  
Léet this knyghtés sone bifore hym fecche  
Comandyng hym he sholde bifore hy  
stonde;

And sodeynly he took his bowe in hond  
And up the streng he pulled to his ere,  
And with an arwe he slow the child rigl  
there.

"Now, wheither have I a siker hand  
noon?"

Quod he; "is al my myght and myn  
agon?"

Hath wyn byrevéd me myne eyen sight?  
What sholde I tellé thanswere of t  
knyght?

His sone was slayn, ther is namoore  
seye.

Beth war, therefore, with lordés how  
pleye.

Syngeth *Placbo*,—and I shal, if I kan  
But if it be unto a pouré man.

To a poure man men sholde his vices tel  
But nat to a lord, thogh he sholde  
to helle.

'Lo, irous Cirus, thilké Percien,  
How he destroyed the ryver of Gysen,  
For that an hors of his was dreynat th  
inne,

2050. *Cirus*. See Herodotus, *St. 1*, and Sen-  
*De Ira*, both of whom call the river Gyndes.

Whan that he wenté Babiloigne to wynne.  
 He madé that the ryver was so smal  
 That wommen myghte wade it over al.

'Lo, what seyde he that so wel teché  
 kan :

'Ne be no felawe to an irous man,  
 Ye with no wood man walké by the weye,  
 Lest thee repente,"—ther is namore to  
 seye.'

'Now, Thomas, leevé brother, lef thyn  
 ire,  
 Thou shalt me fynde as just as is a squyre ;  
 Hoold nat the develes knyf ay at thyn  
 herte,—  
 Thyn angre dóoth thee al to sooré  
 smerte,—

But shewe to me al thy confessioun.'

'Nay,' quod the sike man, 'by Seint  
 Symoun !

I have be shryven this day at my curat ;  
 I have hym toold hoolly al myn estat.  
 Nedeth namore to speken of it, seith he,  
 But if me list, of myn humylitee.'

'Yif me thanne of thy gold, to make  
 oure cloystre,'

Quod he, 'for many a muscle and many  
 an oystre,

Whan othere men han ben ful wel at eyse,  
 Hath been oure fooðe, our cloystre for  
 to reyse ;

And yet, God 'woot, unnethe the  
 fundément

Parfournéd is, ne of our pavément

Nys nat a tyle yet withinne oure wones,—

By God, we owen fourty pound for stones !

'Now help, Thomas ! for hym that  
 harwed helle,

For ellés mosté we oure bookés selle ;

And if ye lakke oure predicacioun

Thanne goth the world al to destruccioun.

For whoso wolde us fro this world bireve,

So God me savé, Thomas, by youre leve,

He wolde bireve out of this world the  
 sonne ;

For who kan teche, and werchen, as we  
 konne ?

And that is nat of litel tyme,' quod he,

'But syn that Elie was, or Elise,

Han freré been,—that fynde I of record ;

2116. *Elie, E. Ennok.*

In charitee y-thanked be oure Lord !

Now, Thomas, helpe for seinté charitee !'

And doun anon he sette hym on his  
 knee.

This sike man wax wel ny wood for ire ;  
 He woldé that the frere had been on fire  
 With his false dissymulacioun.

'Swich thyng as is in my possessioun,  
 Quod he, 'that may I yeven, and noon  
 oother.

Ye sey me thus, "that I, am youré  
 brother" ?'

'Ye, certés,' quod the frere, 'trusteth  
 weel,

I took oure dame oure lettre and oure  
 seel.'

'Now wel,' quod he, 'and somewhat  
 shal I yeve

Unto youre hooly covent whil I lyve,  
 And in thyn hand thou shalt it have anon,  
 On this condicioun, and oother noon ;

That thou departe it so, my leevé brother,  
 That every frere have also muche as  
 oother ;

This shaltou swere on thy professioun,  
 Withouten fraud or cavillacioun.'

'I swere it,' quod this freré, 'by my  
 feith !'

And therwithal his hand in his he leith,—  
 'Lo heer my feith, in me shal be no lak.'

'Now thanne, put in thyn hand doun  
 by my bak,'

Seydè this man, 'and gropé wel bihynde ;

Bynethé my buttok ther shaltow fynde

A thyng that I have hyd in pryvetee.'

'A !' thoghte this frere, 'this shal go  
 with me !'

And doun his hand he launcheth to the  
 clifte,

In hopé for to fyndé there a yifte ;

And whan this sike man felté this frere

Aboute his tuwel gropé there and heere,

Amydde his hand he leet the frere a  
 fart ;

Ther nys no capul drawynge in a cart

That myghte have lete a fart of swich a  
 soun.

The frere up stirte, as dooth a wood  
 leoun,—

2133. *lewe, H<sup>o</sup> dore.*



'A! false cherl,' quod he, 'for Goddès bones !

This hastow for despit doon for the nones ;  
Thou shalt abyte this fart, if that I may !'

His meynec, whiche that herden this affray,

Cam lepyng in, and chaced out the frere ;  
And forth he gooth with a ful angry cheere,

And fette his felawe, ther as lay his stoor.  
He lookèd as it were a wildè boor,—

He gryntè with his teeth, so was he wrooth ; 2162

A sturdy paas doon to the court he gooth,  
Wher 'as ther woned a man of greet honour,

To whom that he was alwey confessour ;  
This worthy man was lord of that village.

This frerè cam as he were in a rage,  
Where as this lord sat etyng at his bord ;

Unnethès myghte the frerè speke a word,  
Til attè laste he seyde, 'God yow see !'

This lord gan looke and seidè,  
'Benedicitee !' 2170

What, frerè John, what maner world is this ?

I se wel that som thyng ther is amys ;  
Ye looken as the wode were ful of thevys ;

Sit down anon, and tel me what youre grief is,

And it shal been amended, if I may.'

'I have,' quod he, 'had a despit this day,

God yeldè yow ! adoun in youre village,  
That in this world is noon so poure a page,

That he nolde have abhomynacioun 2179  
Of that I have receyved in youre toun ;

And yet ne greveth me no thyng so soore,  
As that this oldè cherl, with lokkès hoore,

Blasphemèd hath oure hooly covent eke.'

'Now, maister,' quod this lord, 'I yow biseke'—

'No "maister," sire,' quod he, 'but servitour,

Thogh I have had in scolè swich honour ;  
God liketh nat that "Raby" men us calle,

Neither in market ne in youre largè halle.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'but tel me al youre grief.'

*2179. as wel that som, E. knows som maner.*

'Sire,' quod this frere, 'an odiou meschief' 219

This day bityd is to myn ordre and me ;  
And so *par consequens* in ech degre

Of hooly chirchè ; God amende it soone !

'Sire,' quod the lord, 'ye woot wha is to doone ;

Distempre yow noght, ye be my confes sour ;

Ye been the salt of the erthe and th savour ;

For Goddès love youre pacience y holde ;

Tel me youre grief' ; and he anon hy tolde,

As ye han herd biforn, ye woot wha what.

The lady of the hous al stillè sat 220  
Til she had herdè what the frerè sayde :

'Ey ! Goddès mooder,' quod she, 'blisful mayde !

Is ther oght ellès ? Telle me feithfully  
'Madame,' quod he, 'how thynkè hereby ?'

'How that me thynketh ?' quod she  
'so God me speedè !

I seye, a cherle hath doon a cherlès ded  
What sholde I seye ? God lat hy never thee,

His sikè heed is ful of vanytee ;  
I holde hym in a manere frenesye.'

'Madame,' quod he, 'by God I sh nat lye, 221

But I on oother wise may be awreke,  
I shal disclaundre hym, over al ther speke,—

This false blasphemour that chargèd m  
To partè that wol nat departed be,—

To every man ylichè, with meschaunce  
The lord sat stille, as he were in traunce,

And in his herte he rolled up and dou  
'How hadde the cherl ymaginacioun,

To shewè swich a probleme to the frer  
Never erst er now herd I of swi mateere ; 222

I trowe the devel putte it in his mynde  
In ars-metrikè shal ther no man fynde

Biforn this day of swich a questioune.

*2211. wile, E. wyes.*

Certes, it was a shrewed conclusioun,  
That everyman sholde have yliche his part,  
As of the soun or savour of a fart.  
O vile proudé cherl ! I shrewe his face !  
Lo, sirés,' quod the lord, with hardé grace,  
'Who herd ever of swich a thyng er now ?  
"To every man ylike,"—tel me how ?  
It is an impossible, it may nat be. 2231  
Ey, nycé cherl ? God lete thee never thee !  
The rumblyng of a fart, and every soun,  
Nis but of air reverberacioun,  
And ever it wasteth, litel and litel away.  
Ther is no man kan demen, by my fey !  
If that it were departed equally.  
What, lo, my cherl, lo, yet how shrewedly,  
Unto my confessour to day he spak ;  
I holde hym, certeyn, a demonyak. 2240  
Now ete youre mete, and lat the cherl go  
pleye.  
Lat hym go honge hymself a devel weye !'

*The wordes of the lordes Squier and his  
kervens for departyng of the fart on  
twelve*

Now stood the lordes Squier at the bord,  
That karf his mete, and herdé, word by  
word,  
Of allé thynges whiche that I have sayd ;  
'My lord,' quod he, 'be ye nat yvele  
apayd,  
I koudé tellé for a gowné-clooth  
To yow, air frere, so ye be nat wrooth,  
How that this fart sholde evene y-deléd be  
Among youre covent, if it lykéd me.' 2250  
'Tel,' quod the lord, 'and thou shalt  
have anon  
A gowné-clooth, by God, and by Seint  
John !'  
'My lord,' quod he, 'whan that the  
weder is fair,  
Withouten wynd, or perturbyng of air,  
Lat bryng a cartéwheel into this halle,—  
But looké that it have his spokés alle,—  
Twelve spokés hath a cartwheel comunly ;  
And bryng me thanne twelf frerés,—  
woot ye why ?

2224. H<sup>2</sup> read *who schulde make a demonstra-  
cion.*  
2227. *vile*, H<sup>2</sup> *spes*.

For thritten is a covent, as I gesse ;  
The confessor heere, for his worthynesse,  
Shal pourvenne up the nombre of his  
covent. 2261  
Thanne shal they kneléd down, by oon  
assent,  
And to every spokés ende, in this manere,  
Ful sadly leye his nosé shal a frere.  
Your noble confessor there, God hym  
save !  
Shal holde his nose upright under the nave.  
Thanne shal this cherl, with bely stif  
and toght  
As any labour, hyder been y-brought,  
And sette hym on the wheel right of this  
cart, 2269  
Upon the nave, and make hym lete a fart,  
And ye shul seen, up peril of my lyf,  
By preevé which that is demonstratif,  
That equally the soun of it wol wende,  
And eke the styng, unto the spokés ende,—  
Save that this worthy man, youre con-  
fessor,  
By cause he is a man of greet honour,  
Shal have the firsté fruyt, as resoun is.  
The noble usage of frerés yet is this,  
The worthy men of hem shul first be  
served,— 2279  
And certainly, he hath it weel disserved,  
He hath to day taught us so muchel good  
With prechyng in the pulpit ther he stood,  
That I may vouchésauf, I sey for me,  
He hadde the firsté smel of fartés three,  
And so wolde al the covent hardily ;  
He bereth hym so faire and hoolily.'  
The lord, the lady, and alle men save  
the frere,  
Seyden that Jankyn spak in this matere  
As wel as Euclide, or Protholomee :  
Touchyng this cherl, they seyden, sub-  
tiltee 2290  
And heigh wit made hym speken as he  
spak ;  
He nys no fool, ne no demonyak ;  
And Jankyn hath y-wonne a newe gowne.  
My tale is doon,—we been almoost at  
towne.

2272. *proves which*, H *verray proof*.  
2289. *Protholomee*, Ptolemy.  
2294. *at town*, Sittingbourne.

GROUP E

*Heere foloweth The Prologe of the Clerkes  
Tale of Oxenford*

'SIRE Clerk of Oxenford,'oure Hosté  
sayde,

'Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a  
mayde,

Were newé spouses, sittyng on the bord ;  
This day ne herd I of youre tonge a word.  
I trowe ye studie abouté som sophyme ;  
But Salomon seith "every thyng hath  
tyme."

For Goddés sake ! as beth of better cheere !  
It is no tymé for to studien heere ;  
Telle us som myrie talé, by youre fey !  
For what man that is entred in a pley, <sup>10</sup>  
He nedés moot unto the pley assente ;  
But precheth nat, as frerés doon in Lente,  
To make us for oure oldé synnés wepe,  
Ne that thy talé make us nat to slepe.  
Telle us som murie thyng of aventúres,—  
Youre termés, youre colours, and youre  
figúres

Keepe hem in stoor til so be ye endite  
Heigh style, as whan that men to kyngés  
write ;

Speketh so pleyn at this tyme, I yow  
preye, <sup>19</sup>

That we may understandé what ye seye.'

This worthy clerk benignely answeerde,  
'Hosté,'quod he, 'I am under youre yerde,  
Ye han of us, as now, the governance,  
And therefor wol I do yow obeisance  
As fer as resoun axeth hardily.

I wol yow telle a talé which that I  
Lernéd at Padwé of a worthy clerk,  
As preved by his wordés and his werk ;  
He is now deed and nayléd in his cheste,  
I prey to God so yeve his soule reste ! <sup>30</sup>

'Fraunceys Petrark, the lauriat poete,  
Highté this clerk whos rethoriké sweete  
Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie,—

19. I, E<sup>2</sup> vs.

27. *Lerned at Padwe*: Petrarch was either at or near Padua from Jan. to Sept. 1373, and Chaucer may easily have visited him on his Genoese mission of that year.

29. *deed*. Petrarch died in 1374.

As Lynyan dide of philosophie,  
Or lawe, or oother art particuler,—  
But deeth, that wol nat suffre us dwell  
heer,

But as it were a twynklyng of an eye,  
Hem bothe hath slayn, and allé shul  
dye.

But forth to tellen of this worthy man  
That taughté me this tale, as I bigan,  
I seye that first with heigh stile  
enditeth,

Er he the body of his talé writeth,  
A prohemye, in the which discryveth  
Pemond, and of Salucés the contree ;  
And speketh of Apennyn, the hillés hy  
That been the boundés of West Lu  
bardye,

And of Mount Vesulus in special,  
Where as the Poo out of a wellé smal  
Taketh his firsté spryngyng and his sou  
That estward ay encesseth in his cours  
To Emeleward, to Ferrare and Venyse,  
The which a longe thyng weré to devy  
And trewely, as to my juggément,  
Me thynketh it a thyng impertinent,  
Save that he wole convoyen his mateer:  
But this is his talé which that ye may heer

CLERK OF OXFORD'S TAL

*Heere bigynneth The Tale of the Clerk  
Oxenford*

PART I

Ther is, at the West syde of Ytaille  
Doun at the roote of Vesulus the cold

34. *Lynyan*, an Italian jurist, who died in 1371.

44. *Pemond*, Piedmont.

44. *Saluces*, Saluzzo.

47. *Mount Vesulus*, Monte Viso.

51. *To Emeleward*, i.e. towards the dist.  
traversed by the old *Via Asmilianna*.

56. *this is, E<sup>2</sup> this*.

*The Tale of the Clerk*. This is for the 1  
part a close rendering of the Latin versio  
the Tale of Griselda, written by Petrarch ;  
reading Boccaccio's story in the *Decamer* ;  
Chaucer's chief departures from Petrarch  
pointed out in the notes.

lusty pilyne, habundant of vitaille,  
There many a tour and toun thou mayst  
biholde <sup>60</sup>

hat founded were in tyme of fadrés olde,  
and many another delitable sighte,  
and Salucés this noble contree highte.

markys whilom lord was of that lond,  
as were his worthy eldrés hym bifore,  
and obeisant and redy to his hond  
Were alle his ligés, bothe lasse and moore.  
Thus in delit he lyveth, and hath doon  
yoore,

Beloved and drad, thurgh favour of  
Fortune, <sup>69</sup>  
Bothe of his lordés and of his commune.

Therwith he was, to speke as of lynage,  
The gentilleste y-born of Lumbardye;  
A faire persone, and strong, and yong  
of age,

And ful of honour and of curteisye;  
Discreet ynogh his contree for to gye,—  
Save in somme thyngés that he was to  
blame,—

And Walter was this yongé lordés name.

I blame hym thus, that he considered  
nogh

In tyme comynge what hym myghte  
bityde; <sup>79</sup>

But in his lust present was al his thought,  
As for to hauke and hunte on every syde,  
Wel ny alle othere curés leet he slyde;  
And eek he nolde, and that was worst of  
alle,

Weddē no wyf, for nogh that may bifalle.

Only that point his peplé bar so soore  
That flokmele on a day they to hym  
wente,

And oon of hem that wisest was of  
loore,—

<sup>78</sup> *considered*, E<sup>2</sup> *considereth*. We may quote the original of this stanza to show how close Chaucer keeps to his text: 'vir inagnis nisi quod, presentis sua sorte contentus, incuriosissimus futurorum erat. Itaque venatui aucupioque deditus alio illa, incuberat ut alia pene cuncta negligeret; quodque in primis agre populi ferrebat ab ipais quoque conjugii consiliis abhorrebat.'

Or ellés that the lord best wolde assente  
That he sholde telle hym what his peplé  
mente,

Or ellés koude he showe wel swich  
mateere,— <sup>90</sup>

He to the markys seyde as ye shul heere:

'O noble markys, youre humanitee  
Assureth us and yeveth us hardinesse  
As ofte as tyme is of necessitee  
That we to yow mowe telle oure hevynesse.

Accepteth, lord, now for youre gentillesse,  
That we with pitous herte unto yow  
pleyne,

And lat youre erés nat my voys desdeyne.

Al have I nought to doone in this mateere  
Moore than another man hath in this place,  
Yet for as muche as ye, my lord so deere,  
Han alwey shewed me favour and grace,  
I dar the bettre aske of yow a space  
Of audience, to shewen oure requeste,  
And ye, my lord, to doon right as yow  
leste;

For certés, lord, so wel us liketh yow  
And al youre werk, and ever han doon,  
that we

Ne koudé nat us-self devysen how  
We myghté lyven in moore felicitee,  
Save o thyng, lord, if it youre willé be, <sup>110</sup>  
That for to been a wedded man yow leste;  
Thanne were youre peple in sovereyn  
hertés reste.

Boweth youre nekke under that blisful yok  
Of soveraynété, nogh of servyse,  
Which that men clepeth spousaille or  
wedlok,

And thenketh, lord, among youre thoughtés  
wyse,  
How that oure dayés passe in sondry wyse,  
For thogh we slepe, or wake, or rome,  
or ryde,

Ay fleeth the tyme, it nyl no man abyde;

<sup>113</sup> Chaucer here transfers Petrarch's epitheta. 'Collumque non liberum modo sed imperiosum legitimo subijcis jugo' is the Latin.

And thogh youre grené youthe floure as  
 yit, 120  
 In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,  
 And Deeth manaceth every age and smyt  
 In ech estaat, for ther escapeth noon;  
 And al so certain as we knowe echoon  
 That we shul deye, as uncerteyn we alle  
 Been of that day whan deeth shal on us  
 falle.

'Accepteth thanne of us the trewe  
 entente

That never yet refuseden thyn heeste,  
 And we wol, lord, if that ye wole assente,  
 Chese yow a wyf in short tyme atté leeste,  
 Born of the gentilleste and of the meeste  
 Of al this land, so that it oghte seme  
 Honour to God and yow, as we kan  
 deeme.

Delivere us out of al this bisy drede,  
 And taak a wyf, for hye Goddés sake;  
 For if it so bifelle, as God forbede!  
 That thurgh youre deeth youre lyné  
 sholdé slake,

And that a straungé successour sholde take  
 Your heritage, O, wo were us alyve!  
 Wherefore we pray you hastily to wyve.' 140

Hir meeké preyere, and hir pitous  
 cheere,

Madé the markys herté han pitee.

'Ye wol,' quod he, 'myn owéne peplé  
 deere,

To that I never erst thoughté streyné me.

I me rejoysséd of my libertee,

That seeldé tyme is founde in mariage;  
 Ther I was free, I moot been in servage;

But nathelees, I se youre trewe entente,  
 And trust upon youre wit, and have  
 doon ay;

Wherefore, of my free wyl, I wole assente  
 To weddè me as soone as ever I may. 151  
 But ther as ye han profréd me this day  
 To chesé me a wyf, I yow release  
 That choys, and prey yow of that profré  
 cesse,

For, God it woot, that children ofté been  
 Unlyk hir worthy eldrés hem bifore;

Bountee comth al of God, nat of the streen  
 Of which they been engendred and y-bore.  
 I truste in Goddés bountee, and therefore  
 My mariage, and myn estaat and reste,  
 I hym bitake,—he may doon as hym leste

Lat me allone in chesyngé of my wyf—  
 That charge upon my bak I wol endure  
 But I yow preyre, and charge upon yourely  
 That what wyf that I take, ye me assure  
 To worshipec hire, whil that hir lyf may dure  
 In word and werk, bothe heere, an  
 everywheere,  
 As she an emperourés doghter weere;

And forthermoore, this shal ye swer  
 that ye

Agayn my choys shul neither grucche;  
 stryve;

For sith I shal forgoon my libertee  
 At youre requeste, as ever moot I thryv  
 Ther as myn herte is set, ther wol I wyv  
 And, but ye wole assente in this mane:  
 I prey yow speketh namoore of this mater

With hertely wyl they sworn a  
 assenten

To al this thyng, ther seyde no wight ne  
 Bisekyngé hym of grace, er that th  
 wenten,

That he wolde graunten hem a certein  
 Of his spousaille, as soone as ever he m  
 For yet alwey the peplé somewhat drea  
 Lest that this markys no wyf woldé wed

He graunten hem a day, swich as h  
 leste,

On which he wolde be wedded aikerl  
 And seyde he dide al this at hir reques  
 And they, with humble ententé, buxon  
 Knelyngé upon hir knees ful reverent  
 Hym thonken alle; and thus they  
 an ende

Of hire entente, and hoom agayn  
 wende.

And heer-upon he to his officerés  
 Comaundeth for the festé to purveye  
 And to his priver knyghtés and squi  
 174. And but ye wole, etc., not in Latin

Swich charge yaf as hym liste on hem leye;  
And they to his comandement obeye,  
And ech of hem dooth al his diligence  
To doon unto the feesté reverence.

PART II

Noght fer fro thilké paleys honorable  
Ther as this markys shoope his mariage,  
There stood a throop, of sité delitable,  
In which that pouré folk of that village  
Hadden hir beestés and hir herbergage,  
And of hire labour tooke hir sustenance,  
After the erthe yaf hem habundance.

Among thise pouré folk ther dwelte a man  
Which that was holden pourest of hem  
alle,—

But hyé God som tymé senden kan  
His grace into a litel oxés stalle;  
Janicula, men of that throope hym calle;  
A doghter hadde he fair ynogh to sighte,  
And Grisildis this yongé mayden highte.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee  
Thanne was she oon the faireste under  
sonne,  
For pouréliche y-fostred up was she;  
No likerous lust was thurgh hire herte  
y-ronne,

Wel offer of the welle than of the tonne  
She drank, and for she woldé vertu plesse  
She knew wel labour, but noon ydel esc.

But thogh this maydé tendre were of age,  
Yet in the brest of hire virginitee  
Ther was enclosed rype and sad corage,  
And in greet reverence and charitee  
Hir oldé, pouré fader fostred shee;  
A fewé sheepe, spynnyng, on feeld she  
kepte,  
She woldé noght been ydel til she slepte.

And whan she homward cam she woldé  
bryng  
Wortes, or othere herbés, tymés ofte,  
The whiche she shredde and seeth for hir  
lyvyng,

218-220. Chaucer's addition.

And made hir bed ful harde and no thyng  
softe;

And ay she kepte hir fadres lyf on-lofte,  
With everich obeisaunce and diligence  
That child may doon to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this pouré créature,  
Ful ofté sithe this markys sette his eye  
As he on huntynge rood paraventure;  
And, whan it fil that he myghte hire espye,  
He noght with wantowne lookyng of folye  
His eyen caste on hire, but in sad wyse  
Upon hir chiere he gan hym ofte avyse,

Commendynge in his herte hir womman-  
hede,

And eek hir vertu, passynge any wight  
Of so yong age, as wel in chiere as dede;  
For thogh the peple have no greet insight  
In vertu, he considered ful right  
Hir bountee, and disposéd that he wolde  
Wedde hire oonly, if ever he weddéd sholde.

The day of weddyng cam, but no wight kan  
Tellé what womman that it sholdé be;  
For which merveilléd wondred many a man,  
And seyden, whan they were in privetee,  
'Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee?  
Wol he nat wedde? alas! alas! the while!  
Why wole he thus hymself and us bigile?'

But nathélees this markys hath doon make,  
Of gemmés, set in gold and in asure,  
Broochés and ryngés, for Grisildis sake;  
And of hir cloyng took he the mesure  
By a mayde lyke to hire of stature,  
And eek of othere ornamentés alle  
That unto swich a weddyng sholdé falle.

The time of undern of the samé day  
Approcheth, that this weddyng sholdé be,  
And al the paleys put was in array,  
Bothe hall and chambres, ech in his degree;  
Houses of office stuffed with plentee,  
Ther maystow seen of deyntéuous vitaille  
That may be founde as fer as last Ytaille.

232. sette, E. caste.

238. gan, H<sup>o</sup> woldé.

249-252. Chaucer's addition.

263-266. Chaucer's addition.

This roial markys richely arrayed,  
 Lordes and ladyes in his compaignye,  
 The which to the feesté weren y-prayed,  
 And of his retenue the bachelrye, <sup>270</sup>  
 With many a soun of sondry melodye,  
 Unto the village of the which I tolde,  
 In this array the righte wey han holde.

Grisilde of this, God woot, ful innocent,  
 That for hire shapen was al this array,  
 To fecchen water at a welle is went,  
 And cometh hoom as soone as ever she  
 may;

For wel she hadde herd seyde that thilké day  
 The markys sholdé wedde, and if she  
 myghte <sup>279</sup>  
 She woldé fayn han seyn som of that sighte.

She thoghte, 'I wole with othere maydens  
 stonde,  
 That been my felawes, in oure dore and se  
 The markysesse, and therefore wol I fonde  
 To doon at hoom as soone as it may be  
 The labour which that longeth unto me;  
 And thanne I may at leyser hire biholde  
 If she this wey unto the castel holde.'

And as she wolde over hir thresshold gon  
 The markys cam, and gan hire for to calle;  
 And she set down hir water pot anon <sup>290</sup>  
 Biside the thresshold in an oxés stalle,  
 And down upon hir knes she gan to falle,  
 And with sad contenance kneleth stille  
 Til she had herd what was the lordés will.

This thoughtful markys spak unto this mayde  
 Ful sobrely, and seyde in this manere:  
 'Where is youre fader, Grisildis?' he  
 sayde;

And she with reverence, in humble cheere,  
 Answerde, 'Lord, he is al redy heere';  
 And in she gooth withouten lenger lette,  
 And to the markys she hir fader fette. <sup>301</sup>

He by the hand thanne took this oldé man,  
 And seyde thus, whan he hym hadde asyde,  
 'Janicula, I neither may ne kan  
 Lenger the plesance of myn herté hyde.

<sup>267</sup>. richely, H<sup>3</sup> really (royally).

<sup>281</sup> app. The form of the colloquy is Chaucer's.

<sup>290-294</sup>. Chaucer's addition.

If that thou vouchésauf, what-so bityde,  
 Thy doghter wol I take, er that I wende  
 As for my wyf unto hir lyvés ende.

Thou lovest me, I woot it wel certeyn,  
 And art my feithful ligé man y-bore, <sup>31</sup>  
 And al that liketh mé, I dar wel seyn.  
 It liketh thee, and specially therefore,  
 Tel me that poynt that I have seyde bifore  
 If that thou wolt unto that purpos drawe  
 To také me as for thy sone-in-lawe.'

This sodeyn cas this man astonysed  
 That reed he wax, abayst, and al quakyn  
 He stood; unnethés seyde he wordés m  
 But oonly thus: 'Lord,' quod he, 'm  
 willyng <sup>3</sup>

Is as ye wole, ne ayeynes youre likyng  
 I wol no thyng, ye be my lord so deere  
 Right as yow lust governeth this mateere

'Yet wol I,' quod this markys softel  
 'That in thy chambre, I, and tho  
 and she,

Have a collacioun, and wostow why?'  
 For I wol axe if it hire will be  
 To be my wyf, and reule hire after me  
 And al this shal be doon in thy presenc  
 I wol nocht speke out of thynd audien

And in the chambre whil they we  
 aboute

Hir tretys, which as ye shal after heere  
 The peple cam unto the hous with-out  
 And wondred hem in how honest  
 manere,

And tentify, she kepte hir fader deere  
 But outrély Grisildis wondre myghte,  
 For never erst ne saugh she swich a sight

No wonder is thogh that she were aston  
 To seen so greet a gest come in that plac  
 She never was to swiché gestés woned  
 For which she looked with ful palé fac  
 But, shortly forth this tale for to chace,  
 Thise are the wordés that the markys say  
 To this benigne, verrey, feithful mayde

<sup>334</sup>. tentify, H<sup>3</sup> tenderly.

<sup>340</sup>. Chaucer's conventional addition.

<sup>341</sup>. tale, H<sup>3</sup> matters.

Grisildé, he seyde, 'ye shal wel  
 R lyketh to youre fader and to me  
 That I yow wedde; and eek it may so  
 stonde,  
 As I suppose, ye wol that it so be;  
 But thise demandes axe I first,' quod he,  
 'That aith it shal be doon in hastif wyse,  
 Wol ye assente or ellys yow avyse?' 350

I seye this, be ye redy with good herte  
 To al my lust, and that I frely may  
 As me best thynketh do yow laughe or  
 smerte,  
 And never ye to grucche it nyght ne day?  
 And eek whan I sey "ye" ne sey nat  
 "nay,"  
 Neither by word, ne frowning contenance?  
 Swere this, and heere I swere oure alli-  
 ance.'

Wondrynge upon this word, quakyng  
 for drede,  
 She seyde, 'Lord, undigne and unworthy  
 Am I to thilke honour that ye me beede;  
 But as ye wole youreself, right so wol I, 362  
 And heere I swere that never willyngly  
 In werk, ne thought, I nyl yow disobeye,  
 For to be deed, though me were looth to  
 deye!'

'This is ynogh, Grisildé myn,' quod he,  
 And forth he gooth with a ful sobré cheere  
 Out at the dore, and after that cam she,  
 And to the peple he seyde in this manere:  
 'This is my wyf,' quod he, 'that stándeth  
 heere; 369  
 Honoureth hire, and loveth hire, I preye,  
 Whosome loveth; ther is namore to seye.'

And for that nothyng of hir oldé gere  
 She sholdé pryng into his hous, he bad  
 That womman sholdé dispoillen hire  
 right there;

Of which thise ladyes were nat right glad  
 To hande the charyt wher-inne she was

But natheles she mayde, bright of hewe,  
 Fro foot to hevede they clothed han al newe.

371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

Hir heris han they kembd, that lay un-  
 tressed

Ful rudely, and with hir fynGRES smale 380  
 A corone on hire heed they han y-dressed,  
 And sette hire ful of nowches grete and  
 smale.

Of hire array what sholde I make a tale?  
 Unneth the peple hire knew for hire  
 fairnesse,

Whan she translated was in swich richesse.

This markys hath hire sponused with a  
 ryng,

Brought for the samé cause, and thanne  
 hire sette

Upon an hors snow-whit and wel amblyng,  
 And to his paleys, er he lenger lette,

With joyful peple that hire ladde and  
 mette, 390

Convoyed hire, and thus the day they  
 spende

In revel til the sonnè gan descende;

And, shortly forth this talé for to chace,  
 I seye that to this newé markysesse  
 God hath swich favour sent hire of his  
 grace,

That it ne seméd nat by likynesse  
 That she was born and fed in rudénesse,  
 As in a cote, or in an oxé stalle,  
 But norissed in an emperour's halle.

To every wight she woxen is so deere  
 And worshipful, that folk ther she was  
 bore, 402

And from hire birthé knewe hire yeer by  
 yeere,

Unnethé throwéd they, but dorstehan swore  
 That to Janicle of which I spak bifore  
 She doghter nere, for, as by conjecture,  
 Hem thoughte she was another créature;

For though that ever vertuous was she,  
 She was encressed in swich excellence  
 Of thewés goode, y-set in heigh bountee,  
 And so discreet and fair of eloquence, 410  
 So benigne, and so digne of reverence,  
 And koudé so the peplés herte embrace,  
 That ech hire lovedé that looked on hir face.



Nocht oonly of Saluces in the toun  
 Publicd was the bountee of hir name.  
 But eek biside in many a regioun,  
 If oon seide wel, another seyde the same.  
 So spradde of hire heighe bountee the fame  
 That men and wommen, as wel yonge as  
 olde,  
 Goon to Saluce upon hire to bihold. 420

Thus Walter lowely—nay, but roially—  
 Wedded with fortunat honestete,  
 In Goddés pees lyveth ful esily  
 At hoom, and out ward grace ynogh had he;  
 And for he saugh that under lowe degree  
 Was ofté vertu hid, the peple hym heelde  
 A prudent man, and that is seyn ful seelde.

Nat oonly this Grisildis thurgh hir wit  
 Koude al the feet of wyfly homynesse,  
 But eek, whan that the cas required it, 430  
 The commune profit koudé she redresse;  
 Ther nas discord, rancore, ne hevynesse,  
 In al that land, that she ne koude apese,  
 And wisely bryngé hem alle in reste  
 and ese.

Though that hire housbonde absent were  
 anon,  
 If gentil men or othere of hire contree  
 Were wrothé, she wolde bryngen hem aton;  
 So wise and rypé wordés haddé she,  
 And juggementz of so greet equitee,  
 That she from hevene sent was, as men  
 wende, 440  
 Peplé to save and every wrong tamende.

Nat longé tyme after that this Grisild  
 Was wedded, she a doghter hath y-bore,  
 Al had hire levere have born a knavé child.  
 Glad was this markys and the folk ther-  
 fore,

For though a maydé child coome al bifore,  
 She may unto a knavé child atteyne,  
 By liklihedé, syn she nys nat bareyne.

## PART III

Ther fil, as it bifalleth tymés mo,  
 Whan that this child had souked but a  
 throwe, 450

415. *bountee, E. beautee.*

This markys in his herté longéth so  
 To tempte his wyf, hir sadnesse for  
 knowe,  
 That he ne myghte out of his herté thr  
 This merveillous desir his wyf tassyne  
 Nedeles, God woot, he thoughte hire  
 taffraye.

He hadde assayed hire ynogh bifore,  
 And foond hire ever goode,—  
 neded it  
 Hire for to tempte, and alwey moore  
 moore?  
 Though som men preise it for a subtil  
 But as for me, I seye that yvele it sit  
 To assaye a wyf whan that it is no n  
 And putten hire in angwyssh and in d

For which this markys wroghte in  
 manere;  
 He cam allone a nyght, ther as she  
 With stierne face and with ful tr  
 cheere,  
 And seyde thus: 'Grisilde,' quod  
 'that day  
 That I yow took out of youre poure  
 And putte yow in estaat of  
 noblesse,—  
 Ye have nat that forgeten, as I gess

I seye, Grisilde, this present dignite  
 In which that I have put yow, as I t  
 Maketh yow nat forgetful for to be  
 That I yow took in poure estaat ful  
 For any wele ye moot youreselfen k  
 Taak heede of every word that I yow  
 Ther is no wight that hereth it b  
 tweye.

Ye woot youreself wel how that y  
 heere  
 Into this hous, it is nat longe ago,  
 And though to me that ye be li  
 deere,  
 Unto my gentils ye be no thyng sc  
 They seyn to hem it is greet shame  
 For to be subgetz, and been in ser  
 To thee, that born art of a smal v

460. Chaucer is here much more emphatic  
 Petrarch.

And namely sith thy doghter was y-bore  
 Thise wordes han they spoken, doutelees ;  
 But I desire, as I have doon bifore,  
 To lyve my lyf with hem in reste and pees ;  
 I may nat in this caas be recchelees,  
 I moot doon with thy doghter for the  
 beste,  
 Nat as I wolde, but as my peple leste ; 490

And yet, God woot, this is ful looth to  
 me ;

But nathelees withoute youre wityng  
 wol nat doon, but this wol I, quod he,  
 That ye to me assente, as in this thyng.  
 Shewe now youre pacience in youre  
 werkynge,  
 That ye me highte and swore in youre  
 village,  
 That day that makéd was oure mariage.'

Whan she had herd al this she noght  
 ameved,  
 Neithir in word, or chiere, or coun-  
 tenaunce,  
 For as it seméd she was nat agreved. 500  
 She seyde, 'Lord, al lyth in youre  
 plesaunce ;  
 My child and I, with hertely obeisaunce,  
 Been yourés al, and ye mowe save or spille  
 Youré owene thyng ; werketh after youré  
 wille.

Ther may no-thing, God so my soule  
 save !

Liken to yow that may displese me ;  
 Ne I desire no-thing for to have,  
 Ne dredé for to leese, save oonly yee ;  
 This wyl is in myn herte, and ay shal be.  
 No lengthe of tyme, or deeth, may this  
 deface, 510  
 Ne chaunge my corage to another place.'

Glad was this markys of hire answeyng,  
 but yet he feynéd as he were nat so ;  
 Al dreary was his cheere and his lookyng,  
 Whan that he sholde out of the chambre  
 go.

Soone after this, a furlong wey or two,  
 He prively hath toold al his entent  
 Unto a man, and to his wyf hym sente.

A maner sergeant was this privee man,  
 The which that feithful ofte he founden  
 hadde 520  
 In thynges grete, and eek swich folk wel  
 kan  
 Doon execucioun in thynges badde ;  
 The lord knew wel that he hym loved  
 and dradde :  
 And whan this sergeant wiste his lordés  
 wille,  
 Into the chambre he stalkéd hym ful stille.

'Madame,' he seyde, 'ye moote foryeve  
 it me, -  
 Though I do thyng to which I am  
 constreynéd ;  
 Ye been so wys, that ful wel knowe ye  
 That lordés heestés mowe nat been  
 y-feyned :  
 They mowe wel been biwaitléd and  
 compleynéd, 530  
 But men moote nede unto hire lust obeye,  
 And so wol I ; ther is namore to seye.

This child I am comanded for to take, -  
 And spak namore but out the child he  
 hente  
 Despitously, and gan a cheert make  
 As though he wolde han slayn it er he  
 wente.  
 Grisildis moot al suffren and consente ;  
 And as a lamb she sitteth meke and  
 stille,  
 And leet this cruel sergeant doon his  
 wille.

Suspicious was the diffame of this man,  
 Suspect his face, suspect his word also, 540  
 Suspect the tyme in which he this bigan ;  
 Allas, hir doghter that she lovéd so,  
 She wende he wolde han slawen it right  
 tho ;  
 But nathelees she neither weepe ne syked  
 Consentynge hire to that the markys lyked ;

But atté laste to speken she bigan,  
 And mekely she to the sergeant preyde,

546. *Consentyng, H<sup>o</sup> Conforming.*

So as he was a worthy gentil man,  
That she moste kisse hire child er that it  
deyde.

And in hir barm this litel child she<sup>550</sup> leyde  
With ful sad face, and gan the child to  
blisse,

And lulled it, and after gan it kisse ;

And thus she seyde in hire benigne voys,  
'Fareweel, my child, I shal thee never  
see !

But sith I thee have markéd with the croys,  
Of thilké Fader, blessed moote he be,  
That for us deyde up on a croys of tree.  
Thy soulé, litel child, I hym bitake, <sup>559</sup>  
For this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake.'

I trowe that to a norice in this cas  
It had been hard this reuthé for to se ;  
Wel myghte a mooder thanne han cryd,  
allas !

But natheless, so sad stidefast was she,  
That she endured al adversitee,  
And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,  
'Have heer agayn youre litel yongé  
mayde ;

Gooth now,' quod she, 'and dooth my  
lordés heeste ;

But o thyng wol I prey yow of youre grace,  
That, but my lord forbad yow, atté leeste  
Burieth this litel body in som place <sup>571</sup>  
That beestés, ne no briddés, it to-race' ;  
But he no word wol to that purpos seye,  
But took the child and wente upon his  
weye.

This sergeant cam unto his lord ageyn,  
And of Grisildis wordés and hire cheere  
He tolde hym point for point, in short  
and pleyn,

And hym presenteth with his doghter  
'deere.

Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his  
manere,

But natheless his purpos heeld he stille, <sup>580</sup>

<sup>554-560.</sup> Chaucer's addition, though Petrarch  
mentions the signing with the cross.

<sup>567.</sup> This pretty line is Chaucer's addition.

As lordés doon whan they wol han  
wille ;

And bad his sergeant that he pryvely  
Sholdé this child ful softé wynde  
wrappe

With allé circumstances, tendrely,  
And carie it in a cofre, or in a lappe ;  
But, upon peyne his heed of for to swap  
That no man sholdé knowe of his enter  
Ne whenne he cam, ne whider that  
wente ;

But at Boloigné to his suster deere,  
That thilké tyme of Panik was counte  
He sholde it take, and shewe hire  
mateere,

Bisekyng hire to doon hire bisynesse  
This child to fostre in allé gentillesse  
And whos child that it was he bad hir h  
From every wight for oght that may bity

The sergeant gooth, and hath fu  
this thyng ;

But to this markys now retourné we,  
For now gooth he ful faste ymaginyng  
If by his wyvés cheere he myghté se,  
Or by hire word aperceyvé, that she  
Were chaungéd ; but he never hire k  
fynde

But ever in oon yliké sad and kynde,

As glad, as humble, as bisy in servys  
And eek in love, as she was wont to  
Was she to hym in every maner wys  
Ne of hir doghter noght a word spak  
Noon accident for noon adversitee  
Was seyn in hire, ne never hir dog  
name

Ne nempnéd she, in ernest nor in ga

#### PART IV

In this estaat ther passéd been foure  
Er she with childé was ; but, as God w

<sup>581.</sup> Chaucer's comment.

<sup>589.</sup> *Boloigne*, Bologna.

<sup>590.</sup> *Panik*, *Es Pavyk*, *Pavis* ; 'Comi  
Panico' in Petrarch.

<sup>607-609.</sup> An unhappy translation of Petrarch  
'nunquam sius ex proposito sius incidenter  
eius ex ore matris auditum.'

A knave child she bar by this Walter,  
 Ful gracious and fair for to biholde;  
 And whan that folk it to his fader tolde,  
 Nat oonly he, but al his contree, merye  
 Was for this child, and God they thanke  
 and herye.

Whan it was two year old, and fro the brest  
 Departed of his norice, on a day  
 This markys caughte yet another lest  
 To tempte his wyf yet ofter, if he may. 620  
 O, nedeless was she tempted in assay!  
 But wedded men ne knowe no mesure  
 Than that they fynde a pacient creature!

'Wyf,' quod this markys, 'ye han  
 herd er this

My peple sikly berth oure mariage,  
 And namely sith my sone y-boren is,  
 Yow is it worse than ever in al oure age.  
 The murmure sleeth myn herte and my  
 corage;

For to myne eris comth the voys so smerte  
 That it wel ny destroyed hath myn herte.

'Now sey they thus: "Whan Walter  
 is agon 631

Thanne shal the blood of Janicle succede,  
 And been oure lord, for oother have we  
 noon";

Swiche wordes seith my peple, out of drede,  
 Weloughte I of swich murmur taken heede,  
 For certainly I dreded swich sentence,  
 Though they nat pleyn speke in myn  
 audience.

I wolde lyve in pees, if that I myghte,  
 Wherefore I am disposid outrily,  
 As I his suster servid by nyghte, 640  
 Right so thanke I to serve hym pryvely.  
 This warne I yow, that ye nat sodeynly  
 Out of youreself for no wosholde outreye—  
 Beth pacient, and ther-of I yow preye.'

'I have,' quod she, 'seyd thus, and  
 ever shal,

I wol no thyng, ne nyl no thyng, certayn,  
 But as yow list; naught greveth me at al

Though that my doughter and my sone  
 be slayn

At youre comandement; this is to sayn,  
 I have noght had no part of children  
 tweyne, 650

But first siknesse and after wo and peyne.

Ye been oure lord, dooth with youre  
 owene thyng

Right as yow list,—axeth no reed at me,  
 For as I lefte at hoom al my clothynge  
 Whan I first cam to yow, right so, quod she,  
 'Lefte I my wyl, and al my libertee,  
 And took youre clothynge; wherfore I  
 yow preye,

Dooth youre plesance, I wol youre lust  
 obeye.

And certes, if I haddé prescience  
 Youré wyl to knowe er ye youré lust me  
 tolde, 660

I wolde it doon withouten negligence;  
 But now I woot youré lust and what ye  
 wolde,

Al youré plesance ferme and stable I holde;  
 For wiste I that my deeth wolde do yow ease,  
 Right gladly wolde I dyen, yow to plesse;

Deth may noght maké no comparisoun  
 Unto youré love; and whan this markys say  
 The constance of his wyf, he caste adoun  
 His eyen two, and wondreth that she may  
 In paciencé suffre al this array; 670  
 And forth he goth with drery contenance,  
 But to his herte it was ful greet plesance.

This ugly sergeant, in the samé wyse  
 That he hire doughter caughte, right so he,  
 Or worse, if men worsé kan devyse,  
 Hath hent hire sone that ful was of beautee.  
 And ever in oon so pacient was she  
 That she no chieré maade of hevynesse,  
 But kiste hir sone, and after gan it blesse;

Save this: she preyde hym, that, if he  
 myghte, 680

Hir litel sone he wolde in erthe grave,  
 His tendré lymés, delicaat to sighte,

667. *yours*, Corp.<sup>3</sup> *our*, supported by Petrarch's  
 'nec mors ipsa nostra fuerit par amor.'

Fro fowels and fro beestés for to save ;  
 But she noon answer of hym myghte have ;  
 He wente his wey, as hym nothyng ne  
     roghte,  
 But to Boloigne he tendrely it broghte.

This markys wondred ever lenger the  
     moore

Upon hir pacience, and if that he  
 Ne haddé soothly knowen ther-bifoore  
 That parfitly hir children lovéd she, 690  
 He wolde have wend that of som subtiltee,  
 And of malice, or for cruell corage,  
 That she hadde suffred this with sad visage ;

But wel he knew, that next hymself, certayn  
 She loved hir children best in every wyse.  
 But now of wommen wolde I axen fayn  
 If this assayés myghté nat suffice ?  
 What koude a sturdy housbonde moore  
     devyse

To preeve hire wyfshod and hir stedefast-  
     nesse, 699  
 And he continuynge ever in sturdinesse ?

But ther been folk of swich condicioun  
 That whan they have a certein purpos take,  
 They kan nat stynte of hire entencioun,  
 But, right as they were bounden to that  
     stake,

They wol nat of that firsté purpos slake.  
 Right so this markys fulliche hath purposed  
 To tempte his wyf as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by word or contenance,  
 That she to hym was changed of corage ;  
 But never koude he fynde variance : 710  
 She was ay oon in herte and in visage,  
 And ay the forther that she was in age  
 The mooré trewe, if that it were possible,  
 She was to hym in love, and moore penyble ;

For which it seméd thus that of hem two  
 Ther nas but o wyl, for as Walter leste,  
 The samé lust was hire plesance also ;  
 And, God be thanked, al fil for the beste.  
 And shewd wel, for no worldly unreste  
 In hymself, no thing ne sholde 720  
 In his herte, but as hir housbonde wolde.

696. 1. Chaucer who addresses the query to

The sclandre of Walter offé and w  
     spradde,  
 That of a cruell herte he wikkedly,  
 For he a pouré womman wedded ha  
 Hath mordred bothe his children priv  
 Swich murmure was among hem comu  
 No wonder is, for to the peplés ere  
 Ther cam no word but that they mor  
     were ;

For which, where-as his peplé ther-b  
 Hadde loved hym wel, the sclandre  
     his diffame  
 Made hem that they hym hatedé ther  
 To been a mordreré is an hateful na  
 But nathéless, for earnest ne for game  
 He of his cruell purpos noldé stente  
 To tempte his wyf was set al his enté

Whan that his doghter twelf yee  
     of age  
 He to the court of Rome, in subtil  
 Enforméd of his wyl, sente his mess  
 Comaundyng hem swiche bullés to d  
 As to his cruell purpos may suffyse,  
 How that the pope, as for his peplés  
 Bad hym to wedde another, if hym

I seye, he bad they sholdé countrefé  
 The popés bullés, makyng menciou  
 That he hath leve his firsté wyf to l  
 As by the popés dispensacioun,  
 To stynté rancour and dissencioun  
 Bitwixe his peple and hym ; thus  
     the bulle,  
 The which they han publicéd atté fi

The rudé peple, as it no wonder is  
 Wenden ful wel that it hadde be rig  
 But whan this tidynges cam to Gri  
 I deemé that hire herté was ful wo  
 But she—yliké sad for evermo—  
 Disposéd was, this humble créature  
 The adversiteé of Fortune al tendu

Abidyng ever his lust and his ples  
 To whom that she was yeven herte a  
 As to hire verray worldly suffiance

754. sad, constant ; Petrarch's 'inconst'

But, shortly if this storie I tellen shal,  
This markys written hath in special  
A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,  
And secreely he to Boloigne it sente.

To the erl of Panyk, which that haddé tho  
Wedded his suster, preyde he specially  
To bryngen hoom agayn his children two  
In honourable estaat al openly ;  
But o thyng he hym preyde outrely,  
That he to no wight, though men wolde  
enquere, 769  
Sholdé nat tellé whos children they were

But seye, the mayden sholde y-wedded be  
Unto the markys of Saluce anon.

And as this erl was preyed, so dide he ;  
For at day set he on his way is goon  
Toward Saluce, and lordés many oon  
In riche array, this mayden for to gyde,  
Hir yongé brother ridynge hire bisyde.

Arrayed was toward hir mariage  
This fresshé maydē ful of gemmés cleere.  
Hir brother, which that seven year was  
of age, 780

Arrayed eek ful fresch in his manere ;  
And thus in greet noblesse and with glad  
cheere,

Toward Saluces shapyngē hir journey,  
Fro day to day they ryden in hir way.

## PART V

Among al this, after his wikke usage,  
This markys, yet his wyf to tempté moore,  
To the utterest preeve of hir corage,  
Fully to han experience and loore  
If that she were as stidefast as bifoore,  
He on a day, in open audience, 790  
Ful boistously hath seyde hire this sentence :

' Certés, Grisilde, I hadde ynogh plesance  
To han yow to my wyf for youre goodnesse,  
As for youre trouthe and for youre obeis-  
ance,

764. Panyk, H<sup>5</sup> Panyk, Pavis.

770. they, E that they.

777. hire blynde, H<sup>5</sup> by hir syde.

Noght for youre lynage, ne for youre  
richesse :

But now knowe I in verray soothfastnesse  
That in greet lordshipe, if I wel avyse,  
Ther is greet servitude, in sondry wyse.

I may nat doon as every plowman may,—  
My peplé me constreyneth for to take 800  
Another wyf, and crien day by day,  
And eek the pope, rancour for to alake,  
Consenteth it, that dar I undertake ;  
And treweliche thusmuche I wol yow seye,  
My newé wyf is comynge by the weye.

Bestrong of herte, and voyde anon hir place,  
And thilké dowerē that ye broghten me,  
Taak it agayn, I graunte it of my grace.  
Retourneth to youre fadrés hous, quod he,  
' No man may alwey han prosperitee. 810  
With evene herte I redé yow tendure  
This strook of Fortune or of aventure.'

And she answerde agayn in pacience :  
' My lord, quod she, ' I woot and wiste  
alway

How that bitwixen youre magnificence  
And my poverté no wight kan ne may  
Maken comparisoun, it is no nay ;  
I ne heeld me never digne in no manere  
To be youre wyf, no, ne youre chamberere ;

And in this hous they me lady maade, 820  
The heighé God take I for my witnesse,  
And also wysly he my soulé glaade !  
I never heeld me lady, ne maistresse,  
But humble servant to youre worthynesse,  
And ever shal, whil that my lyf may dure,  
Aboven every worldly creature.

That ye so longe, of youre benignitee,  
Han holden me in honour and nobleye,  
Where as I was noght worthy for to bee,  
That thanke I God, and yow, to whom I  
preye 830

Foryelde it yow ; ther is namore to seye ;  
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende  
And with hym dwelle unto my lyves ende

808. I graunte it of my grace. Fullsch only has 'dotam tuam referens.'

821, 822. Chaucer's expansion of 'sequa mente.'

Ther I was fostréd of a child ful smal,  
Til I be deed my lyf ther wol I lede,  
A wydwé clene, in body, herte and al ;  
For sith I yaf to yow my maydenhede,  
And am youre trewé wyf, it is no drede,  
God shildé swich a lordés wyf to take 839  
Another man to housbonde or to make ;

And of youre newé wyf God of his grace  
So graunté yow wele and prosperitee ;  
For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,  
In which that I was blisful wont to bee ;  
For sith it liketh yow, my lord, 'quod shee,  
' That whilom weren al myn hertés reste,  
That I shal goon, I wol goon whan yow leste.

But ther as ye me profré swich dowaire  
As I first broghte, it is wel in my mynde  
It were my wrecchéd clothés, no thyng faire,  
The whiche to me were hard now for to  
fynde. 851

O goodé God, how gentil and how kynde  
Ye seméd by youre speche and youre visage  
The day that makéd was oure mariage !

But sooth is seyde, algate I fynde it trewe,  
For in effect it preevéd is on me,  
Love is noght oold as whan that it is newe !  
But certés, lord, for noon adversitee,  
To dyén in the cas, it shal nat bee 859  
That ever in word or werk I shal repente  
That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente.

My lord, ye woot that in my fadrés place  
Ye didé me streepe out of my pouré weede,  
And richély me cladden of youre grace.  
To yow broghte I noght ellés, out of drede,  
But feithand nakednesse and maydenhede ;  
And heere agayn my clothyng I restoore,  
And eek my wedding ryng, for evermore.

The remenant of youre jules redy be 869  
In-with youre chambré, dar I saufly sayn.  
Naked out of my fadrés hous, 'quod shee,  
' I cam and naked moot I turne agayn ;  
Al youre plesancé wol I folwen fayn ;

856-840. Expanded from Petrarch's 'Felix  
scilicet et honorabilis vidua, quae viri talis uxor  
fuerim.'

853-860. Chaucer's addition.

860. *nakedness*, H<sup>2</sup> *malice*.

But yet I hope it be nat youré enten  
That I smoklees out of youre paleys w

Ye koude nat doon so dishoneste a th  
That thilké wombe in which youre chil  
leye

Sholdé biforn the peple, in my walk  
Be seyn al baré, wherfore I yow pre  
Lat me nat lyk a worm go by the w  
Remembre yow, myn owene lord, sod  
I was youre wyf, though I unworthy w

Wherfore in gerdoun of my maydeni  
Which that I broghte, and noght ag  
bere,

As vouchethsauf to yeve me to my n  
But swich a smok as I was wont to  
That I ther-with may wrye the wom  
here

That was youre wyf ; and heer take  
leeve

Of yow, myn owene lord, lest I yow g

' The smok, ' quod he, ' that thou h  
thy bak,

Lat it be stille, and bere it forth with  
But wel unnethés thilké word he sp  
But wente his wey, for routhe and for

Biforn the folk hirselves strepeth  
And in her smok, with heed and f  
bare,

Toward hir fader hous forth is she f

The folk hire folwé wepyng in hir  
And Fortune ay they cursen as they  
But she fro wepyng kepte hire eyén  
Ne in this tymé word ne spak she

Hir fader, that this tidynge herde  
Curseth the day and tymé that nat  
Shoope hym to been a lyvés creatu

For out of doute this oldé pouré m  
Was ever in suspect of hir mariage  
For ever he deméd, sith that it big  
That whan the lord fulfild hadde his c  
Hym woldé thynke it were a dispa  
To his estaat, so lowé for talighte,  
And voyden hire as soone as e  
myghte.

888. *and heer*, etc., Chaucer's additi

Agayns his doghter hastiliche goth he,  
 For he by noyse of folk knew hire  
 comynge,  
 And with hire oldé coote, as it myghte be,  
 He covered hire ful sorwefully wepyng; ;  
 But on hire body myghte he it nat brynge,  
 For rudé was the clooth and moore of age  
 By deyés fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader, for a certeyn space,  
 Dwelleth this flour of wyfly pacience, 919  
 That neither by hire wordés ne hire face,  
 Bifrom the folk, ne eek in hire absence,  
 Ne shewed she that hire was doon offence;  
 Ne of hire heighe estaat no remembraunce  
 Ne haddé she, as by hire contenaunce.

No wonder is, for in hire grete estaat,  
 Hire goost was ever in pleyn humylitee;  
 No tendré mouth, noon herté delicaat,  
 No pompé, no semblant of roialtee;  
 But ful of pacient benyngnytee,  
 Discreet and pridéles, ay honourable, 930  
 And to hire housbonde ever meke and  
 stable.

Men speke of Job, and moost for his  
 humblesse,  
 As clerkés, whan hem list, konne wel  
 endite,  
 Namely of men, but as in soothfastnesse,  
 Though clerkés preisé women but a lite,  
 Ther kan no man in humblesse hym  
 acquite  
 As women kan, ne kan been half so  
 trewe  
 As women been, but it be falle of newe.

## PART VI

Fro Boloigne is this erl of Panyk come,  
 Of which the fame up sprang to moore  
 and lesse, 940  
 And to the peplés erés, alle and some,  
 Was kouth eek that a newé markysesse

<sup>915-977</sup> Chaucer's perverse expansion of  
 'attritum senio.'  
<sup>930-938</sup> Chaucer's addition, in apparent forget-  
 fulness that it is a Clerk who is speaking.

He with hym broghte, in swich pompe  
 and richesse,  
 That never was ther seyn with mannés eye  
 So noble array in al West Lumbardye.

The markys, which that shoope and  
 knew al this,  
 Er that this erl was come, sente his message  
 For thilké sely, pouré Grisildis;  
 And she with humblé herte and glad visage,  
 Nat with no swollen thought in hire corage,  
 Cam at his heste, and on hire knees hire  
 sette, 951  
 And reverently and wisely she hym grette.

'Grisilde,' quod he, 'my wyl is, outrelly,  
 This mayden, that shal wedded been to me,  
 Reccived be to-morwe as roially  
 As it possible is in myn hous to be,  
 And eek that every wight in his degree  
 Have his estaat in sitting and servyse  
 And heigh plesaunce as I kan best devyse.

I have no women suffisaunt, certayn, 960  
 The chambrés for tarraye in ordinaunce  
 After my lust, and therefore wolde I fayn  
 That thyn were al swich manere govern-  
 aunce;  
 Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce;  
 Though thyn array be badde and yvel biseye,  
 Do thou thy devoir at the leesté weye.'

'Nat oonly, lord, that I am glad,' quod  
 she,  
 'To doon youre lust, but I desire also  
 Yow for to serve and plesse in my degree  
 Withouten feynting, and shal evermo;  
 Ne never for no welé, ne no wo, 971  
 Ne shal the goost withinne myn herté  
 stente  
 To love yow best, with al my trewe  
 entente.'

And with that word she gan the hous to  
 dighte,  
 And tables for to sette and beddés make  
 And peynéd hire to doon al that shab  
 myghte,  
 Preyng the chambrés for Goddés sak



To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake;  
And she the mooste servysable of alle  
Hath every chambre arrayed and his halle.

Abouten undern gan this erl alighte 98  
That with him broghte thise noble children  
tweye,

For which the peple ran to seen the sighte  
Of hire array, so richely biseye;  
And thanne at erst amonges hem theyseye,  
That Walter was no fool, thogh that hym  
leste

To chaunge his wyf, for it was for the  
beste;

For she is fairer, as they deemen alle,  
Than is Grisilde, and moore tendre of age,  
And fairer fruyt bitwene hem sholdé falle,  
And moore plesant, for hire heigh lynage;  
Hir brother eek so faire was of visage  
That hem to seen the peple hath caught  
plesaunce,  
Commendynge now the markys govern-  
aunce.—

*Auctor.* 'O stormy peple! unsad, and  
ever untrewé!

Ay undiscreet, and chaungynge as a vane,  
Delityng ever in rumbul that is newe;  
For lyk the moone ay wexe ye and wane!  
Ay ful of clappyng, deere ynogh a jane!  
Youre doom is fals, youre constance yvele  
preeveth, 1000

A ful greet fool is he that on yow leeveth.

Thus seyden saddé folk in that citee  
Whan that the peple gazed up and down,—  
For they were glad, right for the noveltee,  
To han a newé lady of hir toun.  
Namoure of this make I now mencion,  
But to Grisilde agayn wol I me dresse,  
And telle hir constance and hir bisynesse.—

Ful bisy was Grisilde in every thyng  
That to the feesté was apertinent; 1010  
Right noght was she abayst of hire clothyng,

*the peple.* Petrarch merely says 'crantque  
et discrent'. The next two stanzas are Chaucer's  
addition (marked *Auctor* in E<sup>2</sup>), inserted in revis-  
ing the tale.

Thogh it were rude and somdeél eek to  
rent,

But with glad cheere to the gate is went  
With oother folk to greeté the markysesse,  
And after that dooth forth hire bisynesse.

With so glad chiere his gestés she re-  
ceyeveth,  
And konnyngly, everich in his degree,  
That no défauté no man aperceyeveth,  
But ay they wondren what she myghté bee  
That in so poure array was for to see, 1020  
And koudé swich honour and reverence,  
And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In al this meene-while she ne stente  
This mayde, and eek hir brother, to com-  
mende

With al hir herte, in ful benyngne entente,  
Sowel that no man koude hir pris amende;  
But atté laste whan that thise lordés wende  
To sitten down to mete, he gan to calle  
Grisilde, as she was bisy in his halle.

'Grisilde,' quod he, as it were in his pley,  
'How liketh thee my wyf, and hire beauteer'  
'Right wel,' quod she, 'my lord, for in  
good fey

A fairer saugh I never noon than she;  
I prey to God yve hire prosperitee;  
And so hope I that he wol to yow sende  
Plesance ynogh unto youre lyvés ende.

O thyng biseke I yow, and warne also,  
That ye ne prikké with no tormentynge.  
This tendré mayden, as ye han doon mo;  
For she is fostréd in hire norissynge 1040  
Moore tendrely, and, to my supposynge,  
She koudé nat adversitee endure  
As koude a pouré fostréd creature.'

And whan this Walter saugh hire paciepe,  
Hir gladd chiere, and no malice at al,  
And he so ofte had doon to hire offence  
And she ay sad and constant as a wal,  
Continuyng ever hire innocence overal,

1020. *me, more, others*; cp. Petrarch 'ne hanc  
illius aculeis agites, quibus alteram agitant'.  
Even now she will not say 'me.'

This sturdy markys gan his herte dresse  
To rewen upon hire wyfly stedfastnesse.

'This is ynogh, Grisildé myn,' quod he,  
'Be now namoore agast, ne yvele apayed;  
I have thy feith and thy benyngnytee,  
As wel as ever womman was, assayed,  
In greet estaat and pouréliche arrayed.  
Now knowe I, goodé wyf, thy stedfast-  
nesse';

And hire in armés took, and gan hire kesse.

And she for wonder took of it no keepe,  
She herdé nat what thyng he to hire seyde,  
She ferde, as she had stert out of a sleepe,  
Til she out of hire mazédnesse abreyde. 1061  
'Grisilde,' quod he, 'by God that for us  
deyde,  
Thou art my wyf, ne noon oother I have,  
Ne never hadde, as God my soule save !

This is thy doghter, which thou hast  
supposed

To be my wyf,—that oother feithfully  
Shal be myn heir, as I have ay purposed;  
Thou bare hym in thy body trewely;  
At Boloigne have I kept hem prively.  
Taak hem agayn, for now maystow nat seye  
That thou hast lorn noon of thy children  
tweye; 1071

And folk that ootherweys han seyde of me,  
I warne hem wel that I have doon this deede  
For no malice, ne for no crueltee,  
But for tassaye in thee thy wommanheede,  
And nat to sleen my children, God forbeede!  
But for to kepe hem pryvely and stille  
Til I thy purpos knewe and al thy wille.'

Whan she this herde, aswowné doun she  
falleth 1079

For pitous joye, and after hire swownyng  
She bothe hire yongé children to hire  
calleft,

And in hire armés, pitously wepyng,  
Embraceth hem, and tendrély kissyng,  
Ful lyk a mooder, with hire salté teeres  
She bathéd bothe hire visage and hire  
heeres.

1076. *goodé*, H<sup>2</sup> *deve*.

1084. *ful lyk a mooder*, Chaucer's phrase.

O which a pitous thyng it was to se  
Hir swownyng, and hire humble voys to  
heere !

'*Graunt mercy*, lord ! that thanke I yow,'  
quod she,

'That ye han saved me my children deere.  
Now rekke I never to been deed right  
heere, 1090

Sith I stonde in youre love and in youre  
grace.

No fors of deeth, ne whan my spirit pace !

Otendre, O deere, O yongé children myne!  
Your woful mooder wendé stedfastly  
That cruel boundés, or som foul vermyne,  
Hadde eten yow; but God, of his mercy,  
And youre benyngné fader, tendrély  
Hath doon yow kept'—and in that samé  
stounde

Al sodeynly she swapte adoun to grounde;

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she  
Hire children two, whan she gan hem  
tembrace,  
That with greet sleighte, and greet  
difficultee

The children from hire arm they goone  
arace.

O many a teere on many a pitous face  
Doun ran, of hem that stooden hire bisyde;  
Unnethe abouten hire myghte they abyde!

Walter hire gladeth, and hire sorwéslaketh;  
She riseth up, abayséd, from hire traunce,  
And every wight hire joye and feesté  
maketh, 1109

Til she hath caught agayn hire contenance.  
Walter hire dooth so feithfully plesaunce  
That it was deyntee for to seen the cheere  
Bitwixe hem two, now they been met yfeere.

Thise ladyes, whan that they hir tyméseye,  
Han taken hire and into chambré gon,  
And strepen hire out of hire rude array,  
And in a clooth of gold that brighté shoon,  
With a coroune of many a riché stoon

1086-1113. Chaucer's addition.

1088. *that thanks I yow*, H<sup>2</sup> *God thank it*  
(*thanks*) *you*, *God I thank it (thanks) you*.

Upon hire heed, they into halle hire  
broughte, 1119  
And ther she was honouréd as hire oghte.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende,  
For every man and womman dooth his  
myght

This day in murthe and revel to dispende,  
Til on the welkné shoon the sterres lyght;  
For more solempne in every mannés syght  
This festé was, and gretter of costage,  
Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yeer in heigh prosperitee  
Lyven thise two in concord and in reste,  
And richely his doghter maryed he 1130  
Unto a lord, oon' of the worthieste  
Of al Ytaille; and thanne in pees and reste,  
His wyvés fader in his court he kepeth,  
Til that the soule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage  
In reste and pees after his fader day,  
And fortunat was cek in mariage;  
Al putte he nat his wyf in greet assay.  
This world is nat so strong, it is no nay,  
As it hath been of oldé tymés yore; 1140  
And herketh what this auctour seith  
therfore.

This storie is seyð, nat for that wyvés  
sholde

Folwen Grisilde as in humylitee,  
For it were inportable, though they  
wolde,—

But for that every wight in his degree  
Sholdé be constant in adversitee  
As was Grisildé, therfore Petrak writeth  
This storie, which with heigh stile he  
enditeth;

For sith a womman was so patient 1149  
Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oghte  
Receyven al in gree that God us sent,  
Forgreet skilè he preevè that he wroghte.

1124. *bright, H<sup>6</sup> bright.*

1140. *of, H<sup>6</sup> in.*

1141. *this auctour*, Petrarch, who added the  
story of the next three stanzas to Boccaccio's  
tale.

But he ne tempteth noman that he boghte,  
As seith Seint Jame, if ye his pistol rede.  
He preeveth folk al day, it is no drede,

And suffreth us, as for oure exercise,  
With sharpe scourges of adversitee  
Ful ofté to be bete in sondry wise,  
Nat for to know oure wyl, for certès he,  
Er we were born, knew al oure frelétée;  
And for oure beste is al his governaunce;  
Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

But o word, lordynges, herkneth, er I go:  
It were ful hard to fynde now-a-days  
In al a toun Grisildis thre or two;  
For if that they were put to swiche assayes,  
The gold of hem hath now so badde alayes  
With bras, that thogh the coyne be fair at eye  
It woldé rather breste a-two than plye;

For which heere, for the Wyvés love of  
Bathe,— 1179

Whos lyf and al hire secté God mayntene  
In heigh maistrie, and ellés were it scathe,—  
I wol with lusty herté, fressh and grene,  
Seyn yow a song, to gladdé yow, I wene;  
And lat us stynte of earnestful matere:  
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere.

### *Lenvoy de Chaucer*

Grisilde is deed, and eek hire pacience,  
And bothe stonés buried in Ytaille;  
For which I crie in open audience,  
No wedded man so hardy be tassaille 1180  
His wyvés pacience in hope to fynde  
Grisildis, for in certein he shal faille!

O noble wyvés, ful of heigh prudence,  
Lat noon humylitee youre tongé nail,  
Ne lat no clerk have cause or diligence  
To write of yow a storie of swich mervaille  
As of Grisildis patient and kynde,  
Lest *Chichivache* yow swelwe in hirt  
entraille!

1163. *But a word.* What follows is all Chaucer's  
Its unsuitableness to the Clerk has often been  
noticed.

1188. *Chichivache*, the lean cow who fed a  
patient wive, while her mate Bycorne grew fat on  
humble husbands. A corruption of *chiche/ache*  
lean-faced.

Folweth Ekko, that holdeth no silence,  
But ever answereth at the countretaille.  
Beth nat bidafted for youre innocence, 1197  
But sharply taak on yow the governaille.  
Emprunte, wel this lessoun in youre mynde  
For commune profit sith it may availle.

Ye archiwyvès stondeþ at defense,  
Syn ye be strong as is a greet camaille,  
Ne suffreth nat that men yow doon offense;  
And sklendré wyvès, fieble, as in bataille,  
Beth egre as is a tygré yond in Ynde; 1199  
Ay clappeth as a mille, I yow consaille;

Ne dreed hem nat, doth hem no reverence,  
For though thyn housbonde arméd be in  
maille,

The arwès of thy crabbéd eloquence  
Shal perce his brest, and eek his aventaille.  
In jalousie I rede eek thou hym bynde,  
And thou shalt make hym couche as  
dooth a quaille.

If thou be fair, ther folk been in presence  
Shewe thou thy visage and thyn apparaille;  
If thou be foul, be fre of thy dispence, 1209  
To gete thee freendès ay do thy travaille;  
Be ay of chiere, as light as leef on lynde,  
And lat hym care and wepe, and wryng  
and waille!

### *The Prologe of the Marchantes Tale*

'Weping and waylyng, care and oother  
sorwe

I knowe ynogh, on even and a-morwe,'  
Quod the Marchant, 'and so doon othere mo  
That wedded been, I trowe that it be so;  
For wel I woot it fareth so with me.  
I have a wyf, the worsté that may be,  
For thogh the feend to hire y-coupled were,  
She wolde hym overmacche, I dar wel  
swere. 1220

What sholde I yow reherce in special  
Hir hye malice? She is a shrewe at al.  
Ther is a long and largé difference  
Bitwix Grisildis greté pacience,  
And of my wyf the passyng crueltee.  
Were I unbonden, al so moot I thee!

I woldé never eft comen in the snare.  
We wedded men lyven in sorwe and care.  
Assayé who so wole and he shal fynde 1229  
I seyéd sooth, by Seint Thomas of Ynde!  
As for the mooré part, I sey nat alle;  
God shildé that it sholdé so bifalle!

'A! good sire Hoost! I have y-  
wedded bee

Thise monthés two, and mooré nat, *pardee!*  
And yet, I trowé, he that al his lyve  
Wyffees hath been, though that men wolde  
him ryve

Unto the herte, ne koude in no manere  
Tellen so muchel sorwe as I now heere  
Koude tellen of my wyvès cursednesse!

'Now,' quod our Hoost, 'Marchant,  
so God yow blesse! 1240

Syn ye so muchel knowen of that art,  
Ful hertely I pray yow telle us part.'

'Gladly,' quod he, 'but of myn owené  
soore,

For soory herte, I tellé may namoore.'

### MERCHANT'S TALE

#### *Heere bigynneth The Marchantes Tale*

Whilom ther was dwellynge in Lum-  
bardye

A worthy knyght that born was of Pavye,  
In which he lyved in greet prosperitee;  
And sixty year a wyffees man was hee,  
And folwed ay his bodily delyt  
On wommen ther as was his appetyt, 1250  
As doon thise foolés that been seculer;  
And whan that he was passéd sixty year,  
Were it for hoolynesse or for dotage  
I kan nat seye, but swich a greet corage  
Haddé this knyght to been a wedded man  
That day and nyght he dooth al that he  
kan

Tespien where he myghté wedded be;  
Preyinge oure Lord to granten him that he

*The Marchantes Tale.* The Fear-tree incident  
in this story is the subject of the ninth novel of  
the seventh day in Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, and  
is found also in a collection of Latin fables by one  
Adolphus, written in 1325, and elsewhere. It has  
probably an Eastern origin.  
1248. *sixty*, H<sup>2</sup> *fourty*; so H in 2252.

Mighte onés knowe of thilké blisful lyf 1259  
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf,  
And for to lyve under that hooly bond  
With which that first God man and  
womman bond.

'Noon oother lyf,' seyde he, 'is worth a  
bene,

For wedlok is so esy, and so clene,  
That in this world it is a paradys';  
Thus seyde this oldé knyght, that was so  
wys.

And certainly, as sooth as God is kyng,  
To take a wyf it is a glorious thyng,  
And namely whana man is oold and hoor,—  
Thanne is a wyf the fruyt of his tresor,—  
Thannesholde hetake a yong wyf and a feir,  
On which he myghte engendren hym an  
heir,

And lede his lyf in joye and in solas;  
Where as thise bacheléris synge, 'Allas!'  
Whan that they fynden any adversitee  
In love, which nys but childyssh vanytee;  
And trewely it sit wel to be so  
That bacheléris have often payne and wo;  
On brotel ground they buylde, and brotel-  
nesse 1279

They fyndé whan they wené sikernesse.  
They lyve but as a bryd, or as a beest,  
In libertee and under noon arreest,  
Ther as a wedded man, in his estaat,  
Lyveth a lyf blisful and ordinaat,  
Under this yok of mariage y-bounde.  
Wel may his herte in joye and blisse ha-  
bounde,

For who can be so buxom as a wyf?  
Who is so trewe and eek so ententyf  
To kepe hym, syk and hool, as is his make?  
For wele or wo she wole hym nat forsake;  
She nys nat wery hym to love and serve,  
Thogh that he lye bedredé til he sterve.

And yet somme clerkesseyn it nys nat so,  
Of whiche he, Theofraste, is oon of tho.  
What force though Theofraste listé lye?  
'Ne take no wyf,' quod he, 'for hous-  
bondrye,

As for to spare in household thy dispence;  
A trewe servant dooth moore diligence

Thy good to kepe, than thyn owené wyf  
For she wol claymé half partal hir lyf; 1300  
And if that thou be syk, so God me save  
Thy verray freendés, or a trewe knave,  
Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth  
After thy good, and hath doon many a day,  
And if thou take a wyf unto thyn hoold,  
Ful lightly maystow been a cokéwold.'  
This sentence, and an hundred thynges  
worse,

Writeth this man, ther God his bonés conseil  
But take no kepe of al swich vanytee;  
Deffié Theofraste and herké me. 1305

A wyf is Goddés yifté verraily;  
Alle othere manere yiftés hardily,  
As londés, rentés, pasture, or commune,  
Or moeblés, alle been yiftés of Fortune,  
That passen as a shadwe upon a wal;  
But dredéless, if pleynly speke I shal,  
A wyf wol laste and in thyn hous endure,  
Wel lenger than thee list, paraventure.

Marriage is a ful greet sacrament;  
He which that hath no wyf I holde hym  
shent;

He lyveth helplees and al desolat,—  
I speke of folk in seculer estaat;  
And herké why, I sey nat this for noght  
That womman is for mannés helpe y-  
wroght.

The hyé God whan he hadde Adam naked,  
And saugh him al alloné, bely naked,  
God of his greté goodnesse seyde than,  
'Lat us now make an helpe unto this man,  
Lyk to hymself'; and thanne he made  
him Eve. 1320

Heere may yese, and heerby mayye preve;  
That wyf is mannés helpe and his confort,  
His Paradys terrestre, and his disport;  
So buxom and so vertuous is she,  
They mosté nedés lyve in unitee.  
O flessch they been, and o flessch, as I gesse,  
Hath but oon herte in wele and in distresse.

A wyf! a! Seinté Marie, *benedicite*,  
How myghte a man han any adversitee  
That hath a wyf? Certés, I kan nat seye.  
The blissé which that is bitwixe hem  
tweye 1340

Ther may no tongé telle or herté thyneke  
If he be poure she helpeth hym to swynke

1316. *dredelless*, H<sup>o</sup> *dredes not*.

1272. *joye*, H *mirthe*.  
1304. *Theofraste*. See Wife of Bath's Tale, ll.  
63b, 671.

he kepeth his good and wasteth never  
a deel ;

That hire housbonde lust hire liketh  
weel ;

He seith not onés, 'nay,' whan he  
seith, 'ye.'

Do this, seith he ; 'Al redy, sire,' seith  
she.

O blisful ordre of wedlok precious !  
Thou art so murye, and eek so vertuous,  
and so commended and apprevéd eek,  
that every man that halt hym worth a  
leek, 1350

Jpon his bare knees, oughte, al his lyf,  
thankan his God that hym hath sent a  
wyf ;

Dr ellés preye to God hym for to sende  
A wyf, to laste unto his lyvès ende ;  
For thanne his lyf is set in sikernesne ;  
He may nat be deceyvd, as I gesse,  
So that he werke after his wyvès reede.  
Thanne may he boldely kepen up his heed,  
They been so trewe, and therewithal so  
wyse ;

For which, if thou wolt werken as the  
wyse, 1360

Do alwey so as wommen wol thee reede.  
Lo, how that Jacob, as thise clerkés  
rede,

By good conseil of his mooder Rebekke,  
Boondé the kydés skyn aboute his nekke,  
Thurgh which his fadrés benysoun he  
wan.

Lo Judith, as the storie tellé kan,  
By wys conseil she Goddés peple kepte,  
And slow hym Oloferus, whil he slepte.

Lo Abigayl, by good conseil how she  
Savéd hir housbonde, Nabal, whan that he  
Sholde han be slayn ; and looke Ester  
also, 1371

By good conseil delyvered out of wo  
The peple of God, and made hym Mar-  
dochee

Of Assuere enhauncéd for to be.  
Ther nys no thyng in gree superlatyf,  
As seith Senek, above an humble wyf.

1366. *storie, E4 storie ech.*

1375. Glossed in E and Heng. : 'Seneca: Sicut  
nichil est superius (om. E) benigna conjuge, ita  
nichil crudelius est infesta muliere.'

Suffre thy wyvès tonge, as Catoun bit,  
Sheshal comande, and thou shalt suffren it,  
And yet she wole obeye of curteisye ;  
A wyf is kepere of thyn housbondrye. 1380  
Wel may the siké man biwaille and wepe,  
Ther as ther nys no wyf the hous to kepe.  
I warné thee if wisely thou wolt wirche,  
Love wel thy wyf, as Crist lovéd his  
chirche.

If thou lovest thyself thou lovest thy wyf.  
No man hateth his flessch, but in his lyf  
He fostreth it, and therefore bidde I thee  
Cherisse thy wyf, or thou shalt never  
thee.

Housbonde and wyf, what so men jape  
or pleye,

Of worldly folk holden the siker weye ; 1390  
They been so knyght ther may noon harm  
bityde,

And namély upon the wyvès syde ;  
For which this Januarie, of whom I tolde,  
Considered hath, inwith his dayés olde,  
The lusty lyf, the vertuous quyete,  
That is in mariagé hony sweete ;  
And for his freendés on a day he sente,  
To tellen hem theeffect of his entente.

With facé sad his tale he hath hem  
toold. 1399

He seyde, 'Freendés, I am hoor and oold,  
And almoost, God woot, on my pittés  
brynke ;

Upon the soule somewhat moste I thynke.  
I have my body folily despended ;  
Blesséd be God ! that it shal been  
amended,

For I wol be certeyn a wedded man,  
And that anoön, in al the haste I kan.  
Unto som maydé, fair and tendre of age,  
I prey yow shapeth for my mariage.  
Al sodeynly, for I wol nat abyde ;  
And I wol fonde tespian on my syde 1410  
To whom I may be wedded hastily ;  
But for as muche as ye been mo than I,  
Ye shullen rather swich a thyng espyen  
Than I, and where me best were to allyen.

1377. Glossed, 'Cato: Uxoris linguam, si  
frugi est, ferre memento.'

1387. *bidde, H warns.*

1390. *siker, H rights.*

1408. *shapeth, H helpeth.*

But o thyng warne I yow, my freendés  
deere,

I wol noon oold wyf han in no manere.  
She shal nat passé twenty yeer certayn,  
Oold fishh and yongé flessch wolde I  
have fayn.

Bet is, quod he, 'a pyk than a pykerel,  
And bet than olde boef is the tendré veel.

I wol no womman thritty yeer of age,—  
It is but benéstraw and greet forage ;

And eek thise oldé wydwrés, God it woot,  
They konne so muchel craft on Wadés  
boot,

So muchel broken harm, whan that hem  
leste,

That with hem sholde I never lyve in  
reste ;

For sondry scolés maken sotile clerkis.  
Womman of manye scolés half a clerk is ;

But certeynly a yonge thyng may men gye,  
Right as men may warm wex with handés  
plye.

Wherfore I sey yow pleynly in a clause,  
I wol noon oold wyf han right for this  
cause ;

For if so were that I hadde swich mys-  
chaunce

That I in hire ne koude han no plesaunce,  
Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in avoutrye,  
And go streight to the devel, whan I dye ;

Ne children sholde I none upon hire  
geten ;

Yet were me levere houndés had me eten,  
Than that myn heritagé sholde falle

In straungé hand, and this I telle yow alle.  
I doté nat ; I woot the causé why

Men sholdé wedde, and forthermoore  
woot I

Ther speketh many a man of mariage,  
That woot namoore of it than woot my  
page,

For whiché causés man sholde take a wyf.  
Sithné he may nat lyven chaast his lyf,  
Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

Take hym a wyf with greet devocioun,

By cause of leveful procreacioun  
Of children, to thonour of God above,

And nat oonly for paramour or love ;  
And for they sholdé leccherye eschue,

And yelde hir dettés whan that they  
ben due ;

Or for that ech of hem sholde helpen  
oother

In meschief, as a suster shal the brother,  
And lyve in chastitee ful holly ;

But, sirés, by youre leve, that am nat I,  
For, God be thankéd, I dar make avaunt,

I feele my lymés stark and suffisaunt  
To do al that a man bilongeth to ;

I woot my-selven best what I may do.  
Though I be hoor, I fare as dooth a tree

That blosmeth, er that fruyt y-woxen bee ;  
And blosmy tree nys neither drye ne deed.

I feele me nowhere hoor but on myn heed ;  
Myn herte and alle my lymés been as  
grene

As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene ;  
And syn that ye han herd al myn entente,

I prey yow to my wyl ye wole assente.  
Diversé men diversely hym tolde

Of mariagé manye ensamples olde.  
Somme blaméd it, somme preyséd it

certeyn,  
But atté lasté, shortly for to seyn,

As al day falleth altercacioun  
Bitwixen freendés in disputioun,

Ther fil a stryf bitwixe his bretheren two,  
Of whiche that oon was clepéd Placebo,

Justinus soothly calléd was that oother.  
Placebo seyde, 'O Januarie brother,

Ful litel nede hadde ye, my lord so deere,  
Conseil to axe of any that is heere,

But that ye been so ful of sapience  
That yow ne liketh, for youre heighe  
prudence,

To weyven for the word of Salomon.  
This word seyde he unto us everychon,

'Wirk allé thyng by conseil,' thus seyde he,  
'And thanné shaltow nat repenté thee' ;

But thogh that Salomon spak swich  
a word,

Myn owen déeré brother, and my lord,  
So wysly God my soule brynge at reste,

\* 1417. twenty, H<sup>4</sup> sixtine.

1418. fayn, H<sup>4</sup> ful fayn, Pet. certayn.

1421. thrity, H<sup>4</sup> twenty.

1424. on Wades boot. The legend of Wade and his adventures in his boat Guingelot has perished.

1446. H<sup>4</sup> If he ne (om. Corp.<sup>2</sup>) may not chaste be by his life.

1455. holly, H<sup>4</sup> heavenly.

1477. called, H<sup>4</sup> cleped.

holde youre owene conseil is the beste ;  
 For, brother myn, of me tak this motyf,  
 have now been a court-man al my lyf,  
 And, God it woot, though I unworthy be,  
 I have stonde in ful greet degree  
 Abouten lordes of ful heigh estaat ;  
 Yet hadde I never with noon of hem  
 debat ;

I never hem contraried trewely.  
 I woot wel that my lord kan moore  
 than I ;

What that he seith I holde it ferme and  
 stable ;

I seye the same, or ellés thyng semblable. <sup>1499</sup>  
 A ful greet fool is any conseilour,  
 That serveth any lord of heigh honour,  
 That dar presume, or ellés thenken it,  
 That his conseil sholde passe his lordes wit.  
 Nay, lordes been no foolés, by my fay !  
 Ye han youreselven shewed heer to-day  
 So heigh sentence, so holly and weel,  
 That I consente and conferme everydeel  
 Yourre wordes alle, and youre opinioun.  
 By God, ther nys no man in al this toun,  
 Ne in Ytaillé, koudé bet han sayd. <sup>1511</sup>  
 Crist halt hym of this conseil wel apayd ;  
 And trewely it is an heigh corage,  
 Of any man that stapen is in age,  
 To take a yong wyf ; by my fader kyn,  
 Yourre herté hangeth on a joly pyn !  
 Dooth now in this matiere right as yow leste,  
 For, finally, I holde it for the beste.

Justinus, that ay stillé sat and herde,  
 Right in this wiseto Placebo answerde: <sup>1520</sup>  
 'Now, brother myn, be patient I preye,  
 Syn ye han seyde, and herkneth what I seye.

'Senek among his othere wordés wyse  
 Seith that a man oghte hym right wel avyse  
 To whom he yeveth his lond or his catel ;  
 And syn I oghte avysé me right wel  
 To whom I yeve my good away fro me,  
 Wel muchel moore I oghte avysé be  
 To whom I yeve my body for alwey.  
 I warne yow wel, it is no childés pley <sup>1530</sup>  
 To take a wyf withoute avysement.

Men mooste enqueré, this is myn assent,  
 Wher she be wys, or sobre, or dronkélewe,  
 Or proude, or ellés ootherweys a shrewe,

A chidestere, or a wastour of thy good,  
 Or riche, or poore, or ellés mannyssh wol.  
 Al be it so that no man fynden shal  
 Noon in this world that trotteth hool in al,  
 Ne man ne beest, which as men koude  
 devyse,

But natheles it oghte ynough suffise <sup>1540</sup>  
 With any wyf, if so were that she hadde  
 Mo goodé thewés than hire vices badde ;  
 And al this axeth leyser for tenquere,—  
 For, God it woot, I have wept many a teere  
 Ful prively, syn I have had a wyf.

Preyse who-so wole a wedded mannés lyf,  
 Certein I fynde in it but cost and care,  
 And observance of allé blisses bare ;  
 And yet, God woot, my neighébores aboute,  
 And namely of wommen many a route, <sup>1550</sup>  
 Seyn that I have the moosté stedefast wyf,  
 And eek the mekeste oon that bereth lyf ;  
 But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho.  
 Ye mowe, for me, right as yow liketh do.  
 Avyseth yow, ye been a man of age,  
 How that ye entren into mariage,  
 And namely with a yong wyf and a fair.  
 By hym that madé water, erthe, and air,  
 The yongeste man that is in al this route  
 Is bisy ynough to bryngen it aboute <sup>1560</sup>  
 To han his wyf alloné ; trusteth me,  
 Ye shul nat plesen hire fully yerés thre,—  
 This is to seyn, to doon hire ful plesaunce.  
 A wyf axeth ful many an observaunce.  
 I prey yow that ye be nat yvele apayd.

'Wel,' quod this Januarie, 'and hastow  
 sayd ?

Straw for thy Senek, and for thy proverbes !  
 I counté nat a panyer ful of herbes  
 Of scolé termés ; wyser men than thou,  
 As thou hast herd, assenteden right now  
 To my purpos. Placebo, what sey ye ?

'I seye it is a curséd man,' quod he,  
 'That letteth matrimoigné sikerly !'  
 And with that word they rysen sodnyly,  
 And been assented fully that he sholde  
 Be wedded whanne hym list and where  
 he wolde.

Heigh fantasye and curious bisynece ;  
 Fro day to day gan in the soule impress  
 Of Januarie, aboute his mariage. <sup>1579</sup>  
 Many fair shape and many a fair visage

<sup>1499.</sup> *heigh*, H<sup>3</sup> *grat*.  
<sup>1509.</sup> *elles*, H<sup>4</sup> *comes*.

<sup>1542.</sup> *observaunce*, E<sup>2</sup> *observaunce*.



Ther passeth thurgh his herté nyght by  
nyght,

As whoso tooke a mirour polissed bryght  
And sette it in a commune market-place,  
Thanne shoulde he se ful many a figure pace  
By his mirour ; and in the samé wyse  
Gan Januarie inwith his thought devyse  
Of maydens whiche that dwellen hym  
bisyde.

He wisté nat wher that he myghte abyde,  
For, if that oon have beaute in hir face,  
Another stant so in the peples grace 1590  
For hire sadnesse and hire benyngnytee,  
That of the peple grettest voys hath she ;  
And somme were riche, and hadden  
baddé name ;

But natheles, bitwixe earnest and game,  
He atté laste apoynted hym on oon,  
And leet alle othere from his herté goon,  
And chees hire of his owene auctoritee ;  
For love is blynd al day, and may nat see.  
And whan that he was in his bed y-brought  
He purtreied in his herte and in his thought  
Hir fresshé beautee, and hir agé tendre, 1601  
Hir myddel smal, hire armés longe and  
aklendre,

Hir wisé governaunce, hir gentillesse,  
Hir wommanly berynge, and hire sadnesse.  
And whan that he on hire was condescended  
Hym thoughte his choys myghté nat  
ben amended ;

For whan that he hym self concluded hadde,  
Hym thoughte ech oother mannés wit so  
badde

That impossible it weré to repplye 1609  
Agayn his choys,—this was his fantasye.  
His freendés sente he to, at his instaunce,  
And prayéd hem to doon hym that ples-  
saunce,

That hastily they wolden to hym come ;  
He wolde abregge hir labour, alle and some ;  
Nedeth namoore for hym to go ne ryde,  
He was apoynted ther he wolde abyde.

Placebo cam, and eek his freendés  
soone,

And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone,  
That noon of hem none argumentés make  
Agayn the purpos which that he hath take,  
Which purpos was pleasant to God, seyde he,  
And verray ground of his prosperitee.

Heseyde ther was a mayden in the town,  
Which that of beautee haddé greet renoun,  
Al were it so she were of smal degree,  
Suffiseth hym hir yowthe, and hir beautee ;  
Which mayde, he seyde, he wolde han  
to his wyf,

To lede in ese and hoolynesse his lyf ;  
And thanked God that he myghte han  
hire al, 1609

Thát no wight his blissé parten shal ;  
And preyéd hem to laboure in this nede  
And shapen that he faille nat to spede ;  
For thanne he seyde his spirit was at ese.  
'Thanne is,' quod he, 'no-thing may me  
displese,

Save o thyng priketh in my conscience,  
The which I wol rehere in youre presence.

'I have,' quod he, 'herd seyde, ful  
yoore ago,

Ther may no man han parfite blissés two,—  
This is to seye, in erthe and eek in hevene,—  
For though he kepe hym fro the synnés  
sevene, 1610

And eek from every branche of thilké tree,  
Yet is ther so parfite felicitye

And so greet ese and lust in mariáge,  
That ever I am agast now in myn age,  
That I shal ledé now so myrie a lyf,  
So delicat, withouten wo and stryf,  
That I shal have myn hevene in erthé heere ;  
For sith that verray hevene is boght so  
deere,

With tribulacioun and greet penaunce,  
How shoulde I thanne, that lyve in swich  
plessaunce 1619

As allé wedded men doon with hire wvys,  
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on  
lyve ys ?

This is my drede, and ye my bretheren  
tweye,

Assoilleth me this questioun, I preye.'

Justinus, which that hated his folye,  
Answerde anon right in his japerye ;  
And for he wolde his longé tale abregge,  
He woldé noon auctoritee allegge,  
But seyde, 'Sire, so ther be noon obstacle  
Oother than this, God of his hygh myracle,  
And of his mercy, may so for yow wirche  
That er ye have youre right of hooly chirche,  
Ye may repente of wedded mannés lyf,

1 which ye seyn ther is no wo ne  
stryf;  
nd ellés, God forbedé, but he sente  
wedded man hym gracé to repeite  
Vel ofté rather than a sengle man;  
nd therefore, sire,—the besté reed I  
kan,—

Xispeire yow noght, but have in youre  
memorie, 1669

Paraunter she may be youre purgatorie;  
she may be Goddés meene, and Goddés  
whippe!

Thanne shal youre soulé up to hevene  
skippe

Swifter than doothan arwe out of the bowe.  
I hope to God herafter shul ye knowe  
That ther nys no so greet felicitée  
In mariage, ne never mo shal bee,  
That yow shal lette of youre savacioun,  
So that ye use, as skile is and resoun,  
The lustés of youre wyf attemprely, 1679  
And that ye plesse hire nat to amorously,  
And that ye kepe yow eek from oother  
synne.

My tale is doon, for my witte is thynne;  
Beth nat agast her-of, my brother deere,  
But lat us waden out of this mateere.  
(The Wyf of Bathe, if ye han understonde,  
Of mariagé, which ye have on honde,  
Declared hath ful wel in litel space.)  
Fareth now wel, God have yow in his  
grace.

And with this word this Justyn and his  
brother

Han take hir leve, and ech of hem of  
oother; 1690

For whan they saughe that it moste  
needis be,

They wroghten so, by sly and wys trecte,  
That she, this mayden, which that Mayus  
highte,

As hastily as ever that she myghte,  
Shal wedded be unto this Januarie.  
I trowe it were to longé yow to tarie,  
If I yow tolde of every scrit and bond  
By which that she was fessed in his lond,  
Or for to herknen of hir riche array.

But finally y-comen is the day 1700  
That to the chirche bothé be they went,  
For to receive the hooly sacrament.

Forth comth the preest, with stole aboute  
his nekke,

And bad hire be lyk Sarra and Rebekke  
In wysdom and in trouthe of mariage,  
And seyde his orisons as is usagé,  
And croucheth hem and bad God sholde  
hem blesse,

And made al siker ynogh with hoolynesse.  
Thus been they wedded with solempn-  
nitee,

And at the feesté sitteth he and she, 1710  
With othere worthy folk, up on the deys.  
Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleys,  
And ful of instrumentz, and of vitaille  
The mosté deyntéuous of all Ytaille.

Biform hem stode swich instrumentz of  
soun

That Orpheus, ne of Thebés Amphion,  
Ne maden never swich a melodye.

At every cours thanne cam loud  
mynstralcy

That never trompéd Joab for to heere,  
Nor he Theodomas yet half so cleere 1720  
At Thebés, whan the citee was in doute.  
Bacus the wyn hem skynketh al aboute,  
And Venus laugheth upon every right,  
For Januarie was bicome hir knyght,  
And woldé bothe assayen his corage  
In libertee, and eek in mariagé;  
And with hire fyrbond in hire hand aboute  
Daunceth biform the bryde and al the  
route;

And certainly I dar right wel seyn this  
Yménéus, that god of weddyng is, 1730  
Saugh never his lyf so myrie a wedded  
man.

Hoold thou thypees, thou poete Marcjan,—  
That writest us that ilké weddyng murie  
Of hire Philologie and hym Mercurie,  
And of the songes that the Muses songe,—  
To smal is bothe thy penne and eek thy  
tonge,

For to descryven of this mariagé,

1722. Cp. *House of Fame*, l. 1245, on which Professor Skeat points out that Chaucer takes his mention of Theodamas from Statius, *Thebaid*, viii. 343.

1732. *Marcjan*, Martianus Capella, a writer of the 5th century, whose *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* was a treatise on the liberal arts in nine books.

Whan tendré youthe hath wedded stonp-  
yng age;

Ther is swich myrthe that it may nat be  
written. 1739

Assayeth it youre self, thanne maye witen  
If that I lye or noon in this matiere.

Mayus, that sit with so benyngne a chiere,  
Hire to biholde it semed fairye.

Queene Ester looked never with swich  
an eye

On Assuer, so meke a look hath she.  
I may yow nat devyse al hir beautee,  
But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may,  
That she was lyk the brighte morwe of May  
Fulfid of allé beautee and plesaunce. 1749

This Januarie is ravysshed in a traunce  
At every tyme he lookéd on hir face;  
But in his herte he gan hire to manace,  
That he that nyght in armés wolde hire  
streyne

Harder than ever Parys dide Eleyne;  
But nathelees yet hadde he greet pitee  
That thilké nyght offenden hire moste he;  
And thoughte, 'Allas! O tendré creature!  
Now wolde God ye myghté wel endure  
Al my corage, it is so sharpe and keene!  
I am agast ye shul it nat susteine; 1760  
But God forbode that I dide al my myght,  
Now wolde God that it were woxen nyght,  
And that the nyght wolde lasten evermo.  
I wolde that al this peple were ago!  
And finally he dooth al his labour,  
As he best myghté, savyng his honour,  
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse.

The tymé cam that resoun was to ryse,  
And after that men daunce and drynken  
faste, 1769

And spices al aboute the hous they caste,  
And ful of joye and blisse is every man,—  
All but a squyer highté Damyan,  
Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a  
day.

He was so ravysshed on his lady May  
That for the verray peyne he was ny wood.  
Almoost he swelte and swownéd ther he  
stood,

So soore hath Venus hurt hym with hire  
brond

As that she bar it daunsynge in hire hond;  
And to his bed he wente hym hastily.

Namoore of hym as at this tyfne speke!  
But there I lete hym wepe ynogh an  
pleyne 1771

Til fresshé May wol rewen on his peyne  
O perilous fyr that in the bedstraw  
bredeth!

O famulier foo, that his servyce bedeth!  
O servant traytour, falsé, hoomly hewe,  
Lyk to the naddre in bosom, aly, untrewé,  
God shilde us allé from youre équeyntance  
O Januarie, drenken in plesance  
In mariége, se how thy Damyan, 1781  
Thyn owené squier and thy borné man,  
Entendeth for to do thee vileynye!  
God graunté thee thyn hoomly fo tespye  
For in this world nys worsé pestilence  
Than hoomly foo al day in thy presence

Parfournéd hath the sonne his al  
diurne,

No lenger may the body of hym sojurne  
On thorisonte, as in that latitude.  
Nicht with his mantel, that is derk and rude,  
Gan oversprede the hemysperie aboute,  
For which departed is this lusty route 1800  
Fro Januarie, with thank on every syde.  
Hoom to hir houses lustily they ryde,  
Where-as they doon hir thyngés as hem  
leste,

And, whan theysye hir tymé, goon to reste  
Soone after that, this hastif Januarie  
Wolde go to bedde, he wolde no lenge  
tarye.

He drynketh yprocras, clarree and vernége  
Of spices hooite, tencressen his corage;  
And many a letuarie hath he ful fyn  
Swiche as the curséd monk, Daw 1811

Constantyn,  
Hath written in his book, *De Coitis*;  
To eten hem alle he nas no thyng eschu  
And to his privee freendés thus seyde he  
'For Goddés love, as soone as it may be  
Lat voyden al this hous in curteys wyse'  
And they han doon right as he wol devys  
Men drynken and the travers drawe anon  
The bryde was brought a-bedde as stil  
as stoon,  
And whan the bed was with the preé  
y-blessed,

1810. *Dawn Constantyn*, a monk of Mon  
Cassino. Cp. Gen. Prologue, 433.

Out of the chambre hath every wight hym  
dressed ; 1830

And Januarie hath faste in armés take  
His fresshé May, his paradys, his make.  
He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful ofte,  
With thikke brustles of his berd unsofte,  
Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh, sharpe as  
breere ;

For he was shave al newe in his manere.  
He rubbeth hire aboute hir tendre face  
And seyde thus, ' Allas ! I moot trespass  
To yow, my spouse, and yow greatly  
offende, 1839

Er tyme come that I wil doun descende ;  
But natheles, considereth this, ' quod he,  
' Ther nys no werkman, whatsoever he be,  
That may bothe werké wel and hastily.  
This wol be doon at leyser parfitly,  
It is no fors how longé that we pleye ;  
In trewe wedlok coupled be we tweye,  
And blessed be the yok that we been inne !  
For in oure actés we mowe do no synne.  
A man may do no synné with his wyf,  
Ne hurte hymselfen with his owene knyf ;  
For we han leve to pleye us, by the lawe.  
Thus laboureth he til that the day gan dawé,  
And thanne he taketh a sope in fyne claree,  
And upright in his bed thanne sitteth he ;  
And after that he sang ful loude and cleere,  
And kiste his wyf, and madé wantowne  
cheere.

He was al coltiish, ful of ragerye,  
And ful of jargon as a flekkéd pye.  
The slakké skyn aboute his nekké shaketh  
Whil that he sang, so chaunteth he and  
craketh ; 1850

But God woot what that May thoughte  
in hire herte

Whan she hym saugh up-sittyng in his  
sherte,

In his nyght-cappe, and with his nekké  
lene !

She preyseth nat his pleying worth a bene.

Thanne seide he thus, ' My resté wol

I take ;

Now day is come, I may no lenger wake ;  
And doun he leyde his heed and sleepe til  
pryme.

And afterward, whan that he saugh his  
tyme,

Up ryseth Januarie, but fresshé May 1839  
Heeld hire chambre unto the fourthé day,  
As usage is of wyvés, for the beste ;  
For every labour som tyme moot han reate,  
Or ellés longé may he nat endure ;  
This is to seyn, no lyvés creature,  
Be it of fyssh, or bryd, or beest, or man.

Now wol I speke of woful Damyan,  
That langwissheth for love, as yeshul heere ;  
Therefore I speke to hym in this manere.

I seye, O sely Damyan, allas ! 1869  
Andswere to my demaunde as in this cas.  
How shaltow to thy lady, fresshé May,  
Tellé thy wo ? She wole alwey seye nay.  
Eek if thou speke, she wol thy wo biwreye.  
God be thyn helpe, I kan no bettré seye.

This siké Damyan in Venus fyr  
So brenneth, that he dyeth for desyr ;  
For which he putte his lyf in aventure.  
No lenger myghte he in this wise endure,  
But prively a penner gan he borwe, 1879  
And in a lettré wroot he al his sorwe,—  
In manere of a compleynte or a lay,—  
Unto his fairé, fresshé lady May ;  
And in a purs of sylk, heng on his sherte,  
He hath it put and leyde it at his herte.

The mooné, that at noon was thilké day  
That Januarie hath wedded fresshé May  
In two of Tawr, was into Cancere glyden,  
So longe hath Mayus in hir chambre byden,  
As custume is unto this nobles alle.  
A brydéd shal nat eten in the halle 1890  
Til dayés foure, or thre dayes atte leeste,  
Y-passéd been ; thanne lat hire go to feeste.  
The fourthé day compleet fro noon to noon,  
Whan that the heighé massé was y-doon,  
In hallé sit this Januarie and May,  
As fressh as is the brighté someres day ;  
And so bifel, how that this goodé man  
Remembred hym upon this Damyan,  
And seyde, ' Seynté Marie ! how may  
this be

That Damyan entendeth nat to me ? 1900  
Is he ay syk ? or how may this bityde ?'  
His squieres, whiche that stooden ther  
bisyde,

1887. In two of Tawr. The moon could pass  
through Taurus and Gemini into Cancer in four  
days.

Excused hym by cause of his siknesse,  
Which letted hym to doon his bisynesse,—  
Noon oother causé myghté make hym  
tarye.

'That me forthynketh,' quod this  
Januarie,

'He is a gentil squier, by my trouthe !  
If that he deyde, it weré harm and routhe ;  
He is as wys, discreet, and eek secree,  
As any man I woot, of his degree ; 1910  
And therto manly and eek servysable,  
And for to been a thrifty man right able ;  
But after mete, as soone as ever I may,  
I wol myself visite hym, and eek May,  
To doon hym al the confort that I kan' ;  
And for that word hym blessed every man,  
That of his bountee and his gentillesse  
He woldé so conforten in siknesse  
His squier, for it was a gentil dede.

'Dame,' quod this Januarie, 'taak good  
hede 1920

At after mete ye with youre wohmen alle,  
Whan ye han been in chambre out of  
this halle,

That allé ye go se this Damyan.  
Dooth hym disport, he is a gentil man,  
And telleth hym that I wol hym visite,  
Have I no thyng but rested me a lite ;  
And spede yow fasté, for I wole abyde  
Til that ye slepé fasté by my syde' ;  
And with that word he gan unto hym calle  
A squier, that was marchal of his halle,  
And tolde hym certeyn thyngés, what he  
wolde. 1931

This fresshé May hath streight hir wey  
y-holde,

With alle hir wommen, unto Damyan.  
Doun by his beddés sydé sit she than,  
Confortyng hym as goodly as she may.  
This Damyan, whan that his tyme he say,  
In secree wise, his purs and eek his bille,  
In which that he y-written hadde his wille,  
Hath put into hire hand, withouten moore,  
Save that he siketh wonder depe and soore,  
And softly to hire right thus seyde he :  
'Mercy ! and that ye nat discovere me,  
For I am deed, if that this thyng be kyd.'  
This purs hath she inwith hir bosom hyd,  
And wente hire wey—ye gete namoore  
of me ;

But unto Januarie y-comen is she  
That on his beddés sydé sit ful softe.  
He taketh hire and kisseth hire ful ofte,  
And leyde hym doun to slepe, and that  
anon. 1949

She feynéd hire as that she mosté gon  
Ther as ye woot that every wight moot  
neede ;

And whan she of this bille hath taken  
heede,

She rente it al to cloutés atté laste,  
And in the pryvee softly it caste.

Who studieth now, but fairé, fresshé  
May ?

Adoun by oldé Januarie she lay,  
That sleep til that the coughe hath hym  
awaked.

Anon he preyde hire strepen hire al naked,  
He wolde of hire, he seyde, han som  
plesaunce ;

And seyde hir clothés dide hym encom-  
braunce. 1960

And she obeyeth, be hire lief or looth ;  
But, lest that precious folk be with me  
wrooth,

How that he wroghte I darnat to yow telle,  
Or whether hire thoughte it paradys or  
helle ;

But heere I lete hem werken in hir wyse,  
Til evensong rong, and than they moste  
aryse.

Were it by destynée or aventure,  
Were it by influence or by nature, 1968  
Or constellacioun, that in swich estaat  
The hevене stood, that tyme fortunat  
Was, for to putte a bille of Venus werkes  
(For allé thyng hath tyme, as seyn thise  
clerkes)

To any woman for to get hire love,  
I kan nat seye ; but greté God above  
That knoweth that noon act is causélees,  
He deme of al, for I wole holde my pees ;  
But sooth is this, how that this fresshé May  
Hath také swich impressioun that day,  
For pitee of this siké Damyan, 1975  
That from hire herté she ne dryvé kan  
The remembrancé, for to doon hym ese.  
'Certeyn,' thoughte she, 'whom that this  
thyng displese

1966. than, 23. that.

[ rekké nōght, for heere I hym assure  
To love hym best of any créature,  
Though he namooré haddé than his sherte.<sup>1</sup>  
Lo, pitee renneeth soone in gentil herte !

Heere mayye se how excellent franchise  
In wommen is, whan they hem narweayse.  
Som tyrant is, as ther be many oon, 1989  
That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,  
Which wolde han lat hym storven in the  
place,

Wel rather than han graunted hym hire  
grace ;

And hem rejoycen in hire crueel pryde,  
And rekké nat to been an homycide.

This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee,  
Right of hire hand a lettré madé she,  
In which she graunteth hym hire verray  
grace.

Ther lakketh noght, only but day and  
place

Wher that she myghte unto his lust suffice,  
For it shal be right as he wole devyse ; 2000  
And whan she saugh hir tyme, upon a day,  
To visité this Damyán gooth May,  
And sotilly this lettré down she threste  
Under his pilwe, reue it if hym leste !  
She taketh hym by the hand and harde  
hym twiste,

So secrély that no wight of it wiste,  
And bad hym been al hool ; and forth  
she wente

To Januarie, whan that he for hire sente.

Up riseth Damyán the nexté morwe ;  
Al passéd was his siknesse and his sorwe.  
He kembeth hym, he preyneth hym and  
pyketh, 2011

He dooth al that his lady lust and lyketh ;  
And eek to Januarie he gooth as lowe  
As ever dide a doggè for the bowe.

He is so plesant unto every man,—  
For craft is al, whoso that do it kan,—  
That every wight is fayn to speke hym good,  
And fully in his lady grace he stood.  
Thus lete I Damyán aboute his nede, 2020  
And in my talé forth I wol procede.

Somme clerkés holden that felicitye  
Stant in delit, and therfore certeyn he,

2014. *for the dogge*, a dog used in shooting.

2018. *lady*, the possessive case.

2021. *Somme* — 1982. Cp. General Prologue,  
337, 338.

This noble Januarie with al his myght,  
In honeste wyse, as longeth to a knyght,  
Shoope hym to lyvè ful deliciously.  
His housynge, his array, as honestly  
To his degree was makéd as a kynges.  
Amongés othere of his honeste thynges  
He made a gardyn walléd al with stoon.  
So fair a gardyn woot I nowher noon, 2030  
For out of doute, I verrailly suppose  
That he that wroot the Romance of the Rose  
Ne koude of it the beautee wel devyse ;  
Ne Priapus ne myghté nat suffice,  
Though he be god of gardyns, for to telle  
The beautee of the gardyn, and the welle,  
That stood under a laurer, alwey grene,  
Ful ofté tyme he Pluto, and his queene  
Proserpina, and al hire fairye,  
Disporten hem and maken melodye 2040  
Aboute that welle, and dauncéd as men  
tolde.

This noble knyght, this Januarie the  
olde,

Swich deyntee hath in it to walke and pleye  
That he wol no wight suffren bere the keye,  
Save he hymself, for of the smale wykét  
He baar alwey of silves a clykét,  
With which, whan that hym leste, he it  
unshette ;

And whan he woldé paye his wyf hir dette  
In somer sesoun, thider wolde he go,  
And May his wyf, and no wight but  
they two, 2050

And thyngés whiche that were nat doon  
a bedde

He in the gardyn parfourned hem and  
spedde ;

And in this wysé many a murye day  
Lyvéd this Januarie and fresshé May ;  
But worldly joyé may nat alwey dure  
To Januarie, ne to no créature.

Osodeyn hape ! O thou Fortune instable !  
Lyk to the scorpion so deceyvable  
That flaterest with thynd heed whan thou  
wolt styngé ;

Thy tayl is deeth, thurgh thynd envenym-  
ynge ! 2060

O brotil joye ! O sweeté venym queynte !  
O monstre, that so subtilly kanst peynte  
Thy yiftés, under hewe of stidefastnesse,

That thou deceyvest bothé moore and lesse,  
Why hastow Januarie thus deceyved,  
That haddest hym for thy ful freend  
receyved?

And now thou hast biraft hym bothe his  
eyen,  
For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Allas ! this noble Januarie free,  
Amydde his lust and his prosperitee, 2070  
Is woxen blynd, and that al sodeynly !  
He wepeth and he wayleth pitously,  
And therewithal the fyr ofalousie—  
Lest that his wyf sholdefalle in som folye—  
So brente his herté, that he woldé fayn  
That som man bothé hym and hire had  
slayn ;

For neither after his deeth nor in his lyf,  
Ne wolde he that she weré love ne wyf,  
But ever lyve as wydwe in clothés blake,  
Soul as the turtle that lost hath hire make.

But atté laste, after a monthe or tweye,  
His sorwe gan aswagé, sooth to seye,  
For than he wiste it may noon oother be  
He patiently took his adversitee,  
Save, out of douté, he may nat forgoon  
That he nas jalous evermoore in oon.  
Which jalousye it was so outrageous,  
That neither in hallé, nyn noon oother hous,  
Ne in noon oother placé never-the-mo,  
He noldé suffré hire to ryde or go, 2090  
But if that he had hond on hire alway ;  
For which ful ofté wepeth fresshé May,  
That loveth Damyan so benyngnély  
That she moot oother dyen sodeynly,  
Or ellés she moot han hym as hir leste ;  
She wayteth whan hir herté woldé breste.

Upon that oother sydé Damyan  
Bicomén is the sorwefullesté man  
That ever was, for neither nyght ne day  
Ne myghte he spekea word to fresshé May,  
As to his purpos, of no swich mateere, 2102  
But if that Januarie moste it heere,  
That hadde an hand upon hire evermo ;  
But nathelees, by writyng to and fro,  
And privee signés, wiste he what she mente,  
And she knew eek the fyn of his entente.

¶ O Januarie ! what myghte it thee availle

2106. *fyn, sum*

Thogh thou myghtest se as fer as shippes  
saile ?

For al-so good is blynd deceyved be 2109  
As to be deceyved whan a man may se.

Lo Argus, which that hadde an hondred  
eyen,

For al that ever he koudé poure or pryen,  
Yet was he blent, and, God woot, so  
been mo,

That wenen wisly that it be nat so ;  
'Passe-over is an ese,'—I sey namoore.

This fresshé May, that I spak of so  
yoore,

In warm wex hath emprented the clykét  
That Januarie bar of the smale wykét,  
By which into his gardyn ofte he wente ;  
And Damyan, that knew al hire entente,  
The cliket countrefeted pryvely. 2122

Ther nys namoore to seye ; but hastily  
Som wonder by this clykét shal bityde,  
Which ye shul heeren, if ye wole abyde.

O noble Ovyde ! ful sooth seystou,  
God woot,  
What sleighte is it, thogh it be long and  
hoot,

That he nyl fynde it out in som manere.  
By Piramus and Tesbee may men leere,  
Thogh they were kept ful longe streit  
overal,

They been accorded, rownynge thurgh  
a wal, 2135

Ther no wight koude han founde ou  
swich a sleighte.

But now to purpos,—er that dayés eight  
Were passéd er the monthé of Juny bifille  
That Januarie hath caught so greet a wille  
Thurgh eggying of his wyf, hym for to pley  
In his gardyn, and no wight but the  
tweye,

That in a morwe unto this May seith he  
'Rys up, my wyf, my love, my lady free  
The turtle voys is herd, my dowvé sweete  
The wynter is goon with alle his reyné  
weete ;

2132. *Juny, MSS. July, but see l. 2222 ; it  
mistake may be Chaucer's.*

2136. January had been reading the *Song  
Solomon.*

Com forth now with thyne eyen columbyn !  
How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn !  
The gardyn is enclosed al aboute ;  
Com forth, my whitte spouse ! out of doute  
hou hast ene wounded in myn herte, O  
wyf !

So spot of thee ne knew I al my lyf ;  
Come forth, and lat us taken som disport ;  
chees thee for my wyf and my comfort !  
wiche oldé lewéd wordés used he.

On Damyan a signé madé she, <sup>2150</sup>  
That he sholde go biforn with his klikét.  
This Damyan thanne hath openéd the  
wykét,

And in he stirte, and that in swich manere  
That no wright myght it se, neither y-heere ;  
And stille he sit under a bussh anon.

This Januarie, as blynd as is a stoon,  
With Mayus in his hand and no wight mo,  
Into his fresshé gardyn is ago,  
And clapté to the wyket sodelynly.

'Now, wyf,' quod he, 'heere nys but  
thou and I, <sup>2160</sup>

That art the créature that I best love ;  
'For, by that Lord that sit in hevene above,  
Levere ich hadde to dyen on a knyf,  
Than thee offendé, trewé, deeré wyf.

For Goddés saké, thank how I thee chees  
Noght for no coveitisé doutléces,  
But oonly for the love I had to thee ;  
And though that I be oold and may nat  
see,

Beth to me trewe, and I shal telle yow  
why.

Threthyngés, certés, shal ye wynnetherby ;  
First, love of Crist, and to yourself honour,  
And al myn heritagé, toum and tour ;  
I yeve it yow ; maketh chartres as yow leste.  
This shal be doon tomorwe er sonnè reste,  
So wialy God my soulé brynge in blisse !  
I prey yow first in covenant ye me kisse,  
And though that I be jalous, wyte me  
noght.

Ye been so depe enprented in my thought,  
That whan that I considere youre beautee,  
And therewithal the unlikely elde of me,  
I may nat certés, though I sholdé dye,  
Forbere to been out of youre compaignye ;

1144. while, H. sweete.  
1247. som, H. sure.

For verray love this is, withouten doute.  
Now kys me, wyf, and lat us rome aboute.'

This fresshé May, whan she thise wordés  
herde,

Benyngnely to Januarie answerde ;  
But first and forward, she bigan to wepe ;  
'I have,' quod she, 'a soule for to kepe  
As wel as ye, and also myn honour ;  
And of my wyfhod thilké tendré flour <sup>2190</sup>  
Which that I have assuréd in youre bond,  
Whan that the preest to yow my body  
bond ;

Wherefore I wole answer in this manere,  
By the leve of yow, my lord so deere ;  
I prey to God that never dawe the day  
That I ne sterve, as foule as womman may,  
If ever I do unto my kyn that shame,  
Or ellés I empeyre so my name,  
That I be fals ; and if I do that lakke,  
Do strepé me, and put me in a sakke, <sup>2200</sup>  
And in the nexté ryver do me drenche,—  
I am a gentil womman and no wenche !  
Whyspeke ye thus ? But men been ever  
untrewe,

And wommen have repreve of yow ay  
newe.

Ye han noon oother contenance, I levee,  
But speke to us of untrust and repreve.  
And with that word she saugh wher Damyan  
Sat in the bussh, and coughen she bigan,  
And with hir fynger signés madé she  
That Damyan sholde clymbe upon a tree  
That chargéd was with fruyt, and up he  
wente ; <sup>2211</sup>

For verrailly he knew al hire entente,  
And every signé that she koudé make  
Wel bet than Januarie, hir owené make ;  
For in a lettré she hadde toold hym al  
Of this matéré, how he werchen shal ;  
And thus I lete hym sitte upon the pyrie,  
And Januarie and May romyngé myrie.

Bright was the day, and blew the firma-  
ment ; <sup>2219</sup>  
Phebus of gold doun hath his stremés sent  
To gladen every flour with his warmnesse,  
He was that tyme in Geminis, as I gease,  
But litel fro his declynacioun

2222. The sun would pass from Gemini into  
Cancer about June 21 or 22, attaining at that time  
its greatest northern declination.



Of Cancer, Jovis exaltacioun ;  
 And so bifel, that brighte morwé tyde,  
 That in that gardyn, in the ferther syde,  
 Pluto, that is the kyng of fairye,  
 And many a lady in his compaignye,  
 Folwyng his wyf, the queene Proserpyne,  
 Ech agher oother, right as ony lyne,— 2230  
 While that she gadered flourés in the mede,  
 In Claudyan ye may the stories rede,  
 How in his grisely carté he hire fette.  
 This kyng of fairye thanne adoun hym sette

Upon a bench of turvés, fressh and grene,  
 And right anon thus seyde he to his queene :  
 ' My wyf, ' quod he, ' ther may no wight  
 seye nay,

The experience so preveth every day  
 The tresons whiche that wommen doon  
 to man. 2239

Ten hondred thousand [tales] tellen I kan  
 Notable of youre untrouthe and brotil-  
 nesse.

O Salomon ! wys, and richest of richesse,  
 Fulfid of sapience and of worldly glorie,  
 Ful worthy been thy wordés to mémorie  
 To every wight that wit and reson kan !  
 Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man :  
 ' Amonges a thousand men yet foond I oon,  
 Bút of wommen allé foond I noon.'

' Thus seith the kyng that knoweth youre  
 wikkednesse,

And Jhesus *filius* Syrak, as I gesse, 2250  
 Ne speketh of yow but seeldé reverence.  
 A wyldé fyr and corrupt pestilence,  
 So falle upon youre bodies yet to-nyght !  
 Ne se ye nat this honourable knyght ?  
 By-cause, alas ! that he is blynd and old  
 His owené man shal make hym cokéwold.  
 Lo, heere he sit, the lechour, in the tree !  
 Now wol I graunten of my magestee  
 Unto this oldé, blyndé, worthy knyght,  
 That he shal have ageyn his eyen syght,  
 Whan that his wyf wold doon hym vileynye.  
 Thanne shal he knowen al hire harlotrye  
 Bothe in repreve of hire and othere mo.'

' Ye shal ? ' quod Proserpyne ; ' and  
 wol ye so ?

2230. In Claudyan, i.e. in the *De Raptu Proserpinae*.

2247 See Ecclesiastes vii. 39.

Now by my moodres sirs soule ! I swene  
 That I shal yeven hire sufficient answeré,  
 And allé wommen after, for hir sake,  
 That though they be in any gilt y-take,  
 With face boold they shulle hemself excuse,  
 And bere hem down that wolden hem  
 accuse ; 2272

For lakke of answeré noon of hem shal  
 dyen.

Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe  
 his eyen,

Yit shul we wommen visage it hardily,  
 And wepe, and swere, and chidé subtilly.  
 So that ye men shul been as lewed as  
 gees.

What rekketh me of youre auctoritees ?

' I woot wel that this Jew, this Salomon  
 Foond of us wommen foolés many oon,  
 But though that he ne foond no goo  
 womman, 2277

Yet hath ther foundé many another man  
 Wommenful trewe, ful goode and vertuuous  
 Witnesse on hem that dwelle in Cristi  
 hous ;

With martirdom they prevéd hire cor-  
 stance.

The Romayn Geestés eek make remen-  
 brance

Of many a verray trewé wyf also ;  
 But, sire, ne be nat wrooth,—al be it s  
 Though that he seyde he foond no goo  
 womman,

I prey yow take the sentence of the ma  
 He menté thus, that in sovereyn bonte  
 Nis noon but God that sit in Trinitee. 22  
 Ey, for verray God, that nys but oon,  
 What maké ye so muche of Salomon ?  
 What though he made a temple, Godd  
 hous ?

What though he weré riche and gloriou  
 So made he eek a temple of false godd  
 How myghte he do a thyng that mo  
 forbode is ?

*Pardée* ! as faire as ye his name emplas  
 He was a lecchour and an ydolastre,  
 And in his elde he verray God forsook  
 And if that God ne hadde, as seith  
 book, 2285

2265. moodres sirs soule, i.e. Saturn's,  
 sirs is probably a blunder for *Corvus*.

Y spared for his fadres sake, he sholde  
Have lost his regné rather than he wolde.  
[ sette right noght, of al the vileynye  
That ye of wommen write, a boterfiye !  
I am a woman, nedés moot I speke,  
Or ellés swelle til myn herté breke ;  
For sithen he seyde that we been jangler-  
esses,

As ever hool I mooté brouke my tresses !  
I shal nat spare for no curteisye  
'o speke hym harm that wolde us vil-  
eynye !' 2310

' Dame,' quod this Pluto, ' be no lenger  
wrooth,  
yeve it up ! but sith I swoor myn ooth  
that I wolde graunten hym his sighte  
ageyn,

My word shal stonde, I warné yow certeyn.  
I am a kyng, it sit me noght to lye !'

' And I,' quod she, ' a queene of falery !  
Hir answeré shal she have, I undertake.  
Lat us namooré wordés heer-of make,  
For sothe I wol no lenger yow contrarie.'

Now lat us turne agayn to Januarie, 2320  
That in the gardyn with his fairé May  
Syngeth ful murier than the papéjay :  
' Yow love I best, and shal, and oother  
noon.'

So longe aboute the aleyes is he goon,  
Til he was come agayns thilké pyrie  
Where-as this Damyan sitteth ful myrie,  
Anheigh among the fresshé levés grene.

This fresshé May, that is so bright and  
sheene,

Gan for to syke and seyde, ' Allas, my  
syde !

Now, sire,' quod she, ' for aught that may  
bityde,' 2330

I moste han of the perés that I see,  
Or I moot dye, so sooré longeth me  
To eten of the smalé perés grene.  
Help, for hir love that is of hevené queene !  
I telle yow wel, a woman in my plit  
May han to fruyt so greet an appetit  
That she may dyen, but she of it have.'

' Allas !' quod he, ' that I ne had heer  
a knave

That koudé clymbé ! Allas, allas !' quod he,  
' That I am bynd !' ' Ye, sire, no fors,'  
quod she ! 2340

' But wolde ye vouché-sauf, for Goddés  
sake,

The pyrie in with youre armés for to take,—  
For wel I woot that ye mystrusté me,—  
Thanne sholde I clymbé wel ynogh,  
quod she,

' So I my foot myghte sette upon youre  
bak.'

' Certés,' quod he, ' theron shal be no  
lak,

Mighte I yow helpen with myn herté  
blood !'

Hestoupeth down, and on his bak she stood,  
And caught hire by a twisté, and up she  
gooth,—

Ladies, I prey yow that ye be nat wrooth,  
I kan nat glose, I am a rudé man,— 2350

And sodeynly anon this Damyan  
Gan pullen up the smok, and in he throng.

And whan that Pluto saugh this greté  
wrong,

To Januarie he yaf agayn his sighte,  
And made hym se as wel as ever he myghte ;  
And whan that he hadde caught his sighte  
ageyn,

Ne was ther never man of thyng so fayn ;  
But on his wyf his thought was evermo.

Up to the tree he caste his eyen two, 2360  
And saugh that Damyan his wyf had dressed  
In swich manere it may nat been expressed,  
But if I woldé speke uncurteisly ;

And up he yaf a roryng and a cry,  
As dooth the mooder whan the child shal  
dye.

' Out ! helpe ! allas ! harrow !' he gan to  
crye ;

' O strongé lady, stooré, what dostow ?'  
And she answerdé, ' Sire, what eyleth  
yow ?

Have pacience and resoun in youre mynde.  
I have yow holpe on bothe youre eyen  
blynde,— 2370

Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lyen,—  
As me was taught to heelé with youre  
eyen,

Was no thyng bet to maké yow to see  
Than struggle with a man upon a tree.

God woot, I dide it in ful good entente.'

' Struggle,' quod he, ' ye, algate in it  
wente !

God yeve yow bothe on shamés deth to  
dyen !

He swyved thee ; I saugh it with myne  
eyen ;

And ellés be I hangéd by the hals !'

'Thanne is,' quod she, 'my medicyné  
fals, 2380

For certeinly, if that ye myghté se,  
Ye wolde nat seyn this wordés unto me ;  
Yehansom glymsyng, and no parfit sighte.'

'I se,' quod he, 'as wel asever I myghte,  
Thonkéd be God ! with bothe myne eyen  
two,

And, by my trouthe, me thoughte he  
dide thee so.'

'Ye mazé, mazé, goodé sire,' quod she ;  
'This thank have I for I have maad yow  
see.

Allas !' quod she, 'that ever I was so  
kynde.'

'Now, dame,' quod he, 'lat al passe  
out of mynde. 2390

Com down, my lief, and if I have myssayd,  
God helpe me so, as I am yvele apayd.  
But, by my fader soule ! I wende han scyn  
How that this Damyan hadde by thee  
leyn,

And that thy smok hadde leyn upon his  
brest.'

'Ye, sire,' quod she, 'ye may wene as  
yow lest,

But, sire, a man that waketh out of his  
sleepe,

He may nat sodeynly wel taken keepe  
Upon a thyng, ne seen it parfitly,  
Til that he be adawéd verrailly. 2400

Right so a man that longe hath blynd y-be,  
Ne may nat sodeynly so wel y-se,  
First whan his sighte is newé come ageyn,  
As he that hath a day or two y-seyn.

Til that youre sighte y-satled be a while,  
Ther may ful many a sighté yow bigile.  
Beth war, I prey yow, for, by hevené kyng,

2405. *y-satled*, H<sup>5</sup> *y-stablid*.

Ful many a man weneth to seen a thyng  
And it is al another than it semeth.  
Hethatmysconceyveth, hemysdemeth,  
And with that word she leepe down fro  
the tree. 2410

This Januarie, who is glad but he ?  
He kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful ofte  
And on hire wombe he stroketh hire fu  
softe ;

And to his palays hoom he hath hire lad  
Now, goodé men, I pray yow to be glad  
Thus endeth heere my tale of Januarie.  
God blesse us, and his mooder Seint  
Marie !

'Ey, Goddés mercy,' seyde oure Host  
tho,

'Now swich a wyf, I pray God kepe m  
fro ! 2420

Lo, whiché sleightés and subtilitees  
In women been ! for ay as bisy as be  
Been they, us sely men for to deceyve ;  
And from a sooth ever wol they weyve  
By this Marchauntés tale it preveth wee  
But doutélees, as trewe as any steel  
I have a wyf, though that she pouré be  
But of hir tonge a labbyng shrewe is sh  
And yet she hath an heepe of vicés mo  
Therof no fors, lat alle swiche thyng  
go ;

But wyte ye what ? In conseil be it sey  
Me reweth soore I am unto hire teyd ;  
For, and I sholdé rekenen every vice  
Which that she hath, y-wis I were to nyce  
And causé why, it sholde reported be,  
And toold to hire of somme of this meyn  
Of whom it nedeth nat for to declare  
(Syn women konnen outen swich ch  
fare),

And eek my wit suffiseth nat therto, '  
To tellen al, wherfore my tale is do.'

2419. E heads this *The Prologue of the Squi  
Tale*, printing with it the first eight lines of Gr  
F. Camb., Corp. and Lansd. omit.

## TALES OF THE FOURTH DAY

## GROUP F

*Words of the Host to the Squire*

'SQUIER, come neer, if it youre will be,  
And sey somwhat of love; for certès yc  
Konnen theron as muche as any man.'

'Nay, sire,' quod he, 'but I wol seye  
as I kan

With hertly wyl,—for I wol nat rebelle  
Agayn youre lust. A talé wol I telle.  
Have me excused, if I speke amys,  
My wyl is good, and lo, my tale is this.'

## SQUIRE'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Squieres Tale*

At Sarray, in the land of Tartarye,  
Ther dwelte a kyng that werreyed Russye,  
Thurgh which ther dyde many a doughty  
man.

This noble kyng was cleped Cambyuskan,  
Which in his tyme was of so greet renoun  
That ther was nowher in no regioun  
So excellent a lord in allé thyng.

Hym lakked noght that longeth to a kyng;  
As of the secte of which that he was born,  
He kepte his lay, to which that he was  
sworn;

And therto he was hardy, wys, and riche,  
Pitous and just, and evermore yliche; so  
Sooth of his word, benigne and honourable,

1. *Squier*, H *Sir Squier*; Heng., Pet. *Sire Frankelene*. Camb., Corp. and Lansd. omit these lines.

2. *sey somwhat of love*, H *say us a tale*. *Squire's Tale*. Keightley in his *Tales and Popular Fictions* (1834) suggested that the local colour of this Tale was derived from Marco Polo, and Col. Yule notes that Cambyuskan is only a corruption of Chinghis (or 'the great') Khan. Dr. Skeat has quoted passages from Marco Polo's descriptions of Kublai Khan as the sources of some of Chaucer's details, but the resemblances are not at all close. Of magic horses, rings and mirrors Mr. Clouston has written a whole book for the Chaucer Society.

16. *longe*, H *longed*.

Of his corage as any centre stable;  
Yong, fressh, and strong, in armés desirous  
As any bachelor of al his hous.  
A fair persone he was, and fortunat,  
And kepte alwey so wel roial estat  
That ther was nowher swich another man.

This noble kyng, this Tartre Cambyus-  
kan,

IIaddé two sones on Elpheta his wyf,  
Of whiché the eldeste highté Algarsyf; 30  
That oother sone was cleped Cambalo,  
A doghter hadde this worthy kyng also  
That yongest was, and highté Canacee,  
But for to tellé yow al hir beautee  
It lyth nat in my tonge, nyn my konnyng;  
I dar nat undertake so heigh a thyng;  
Myn Englissh eek is insufficient;  
It mosté been a rethor excellent,  
That koude his colours longynge for that  
art,

If he sholdé hire discryven every part; 40  
I am noon swich, I moot speke as I kan,  
And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan

IIaith twenty wynter born his diademe,  
As he was wont fro yeer to yeer, I deme,  
He leet the feeste of his nativitee  
Doon cryen thurghout Sarray his citee,  
The last Idus of March after the yeer.

Phcebus, the sonne, ful joly was and  
cleer,

For he was neigh his exaltacioun  
In Martés face, and in his mansioun 50  
In Aries, the colerik hooté signe.  
Ful lusty was the weder and benigne,  
For which the foweles agayn the sonnè  
sheene,

What for the sesoun and the yongé grene,  
Ful loudé songen hire affeccions,

31. *Cambalo*. Keightley suggests that the name was taken from Kublai Khan's capital, Cambaluc.  
47. *The last Idus*, March 15. On this day the sun would be in the 4th degree of Aries, approaching his highest exaltation in the 19th degree. The first ten degrees of Aries were called the face of Mars.

Hem semed han geten hem protecciouns  
Agayn the swerd of wynter, keene and  
coold.

This Cambyuskan—of which I have  
yow toold—

In roial vestiment sit on his deys,  
With diademe, ful heighe in his paleys, 60  
And halt his feeste so solempne and so  
ryche,

That in this world ne was ther noon it lyche;  
Of which, if I shal tellen al tharray,  
Thanne wolde it occupie a someres day;  
And eek it nedeth nat for to devyse  
At every cours the ordre of hire servyse.  
I wol nat tellen of hir strangé sewes,  
Ne of hir swannes, ne of hire heronsewes.  
Eek in that lond, as tellen knyghtés olde,  
Ther is som mete that is ful deynté holde 70  
That in this lond men recche of it but smal;  
Ther nys no man that may reporten al.

I wol nat taryen yow, for it is pryme,  
And for it is no fruyt, but los of tyme;  
Unto my fyrste I wole have my recours.

And so bifel that after the thridde cours,  
Whil that this kyng sit thus in his nobleye,  
Herknyng his mynstralés hir thyngés pleye  
Biforn hym at the bord deliciously,  
In at the hallé dore, al sodeynly, 80  
Ther cam a knyght upon a steede of bras,  
And in his hand a brood mirour of glas;  
Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,  
And by his syde a naked swerd hangyng;  
And up he rideth to the heighe bord.  
In al the halle ne was ther spoken a word,  
For merveille of this knyght; hym to  
biholde

Ful bisily ther wayten yonge and olde.

This strangé knyght that cam thus  
sodeynly,

Al arméd, save his heed, ful richély, 90  
Saleweth kyng and queene, and lordés alle,  
By ordre, as they seten in the halle,  
With so heigh reverence and obeisaunce,  
As wel in speché as in contenaunce,  
That Gawayn, with his oldé curteisye,  
Though he were comen ageyn out of fairye,  
Ne koude hym nat amendé with a word;  
And after this, biforn the heighe bord,  
He with a manly voys seith his message  
After the forme used in his langage, 100

Withouten vice of sillable, or of lettre  
And for his talé sholdé seme the bette  
Accordant to his wordés was his cheere  
As techeth art of speche hem that it leete  
Al be it that I kan nat sowne this stile,  
Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style,  
Yet seye I this, as to commune entente,  
Thus muche amounteth al that ever he  
mente,

If it so be that I have it in mynde.

He seyde, 'The kyng of Arabe and of  
Inde, 110

My ligé lord, on this solempné day  
Saleweth yow, as he best kan and may,  
And sendeth yow, in honour of youre feeste,  
By me, that am al redy at youre heeste,  
This steede of bras, that esily and wel  
Kan in the space of o day natureel,—  
This is to seyn, in foure and twent  
houres,—

Wher so yow lyst, in droghte or ellé  
shoures,

Beren youre body into every place 11  
To which youre herté wilneth for to pace  
Withouten wem of yow, thurgh foul or fish  
Or, if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air  
As dooth an egle whan hym list to soon  
This same steede shal bere yow evermoore  
Withouten harm, til ye be ther yow lest  
Though that ye slepen on his bak, or rest  
And turne ageyn with writhyng of a py  
He that it wroghté koude ful many a gy  
He wayted many a constellacioun  
Er he had doon this operacioun, 1  
And knew ful many a seel, and many a bon  
'This mirroure eek, that I have in my  
hond,

Hath swich a myght that men may in it s  
Whan ther shal fallen any adversitee  
Unto youre regne, or to youre self also,  
And openly who is youre freend or foe  
And over al this, if any lady bright  
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight  
If he be fals she shal his tresoun see,  
His newé love, and al his subtiltee,  
So openly that ther shal no thyng hid  
Wherfore, ageyn this lusty someres tyde  
This mirour and this ryng that ye may  
He hath sent to my lady Canacee,  
Your excelléte doghter that is heert

the vertu of the ryng, if ye wol heere,  
that if hire lust it for to were  
hir thombe, or in hir purs it bere,  
no fowel that fleeth under the hevene  
that she ene shal wel understonde his  
stevene, 150

And knowe his menyng openly and pleyn,  
And answer hym in his langage ageyn;  
And every gras that groweth upon roote  
She shal eek knowe and whom it wol do  
boote,

Al be his woundes never so depe and  
wyde.

'This naked swerd that hangeth by my  
syde

Swich vertu hath that what man so yesmyte,  
Thurghout his armure it wol kerve and  
byte,

Were it as thikke as is a branched ook;  
And what man that is wounded with the  
strook 160

Shal never behool, til that yow list of grace  
To stroke hym with the plat in thilk place  
Ther he is hurt; this is as muche to seyn,  
Ye moot with the platté swerd ageyn  
Strike hym in the wounde and it wol close.  
This is a verray sooth, withouten glose,  
It willeth nat whil it is in youre hoold.'

And whan this knyght hath thus his  
talé toold,

He rideth out of halle, and doun he lighte.  
His steedé, which that shoon as sonnè  
bryghte, 170

Stant in the court as stille as any stoon.  
This knyght is to his chambré lad anon,  
And is unarmed and unto mete y-set.

The presentes been ful roially y-fet,—  
This is to seyn, the swerd and the mirour,—  
And born anon into the heighè tour,  
With certeine officers ordeyned therfore;  
And unto Canacee this ryng was bore  
Solempnly, ther she sit at the table;  
But she, withouten any fable, 180  
The swerd, that may nat be remewed,  
It sturte doun to the ground y-glewed;  
That swerd, that out of the place it dryve  
For sovereyn of wyndas ne polyve;  
And the mirour, for they kan nat the craft;  
And the place in the place they han it laft,

180. *the, H<sup>o</sup> stroke.*

Til that the knyght hath taught hem the  
manere

To voyden hym, as ye shal after heere.

Greet was the pces that swarmeth to  
and fro 189

To gauren on this hors that stondeth so;  
For it so heigh was, and so brood and long,  
So wel proporcioned for to been strong,  
Right as it were a steede of Lumbardye;  
Ther-with so horsly, and so quyk of eye,  
As it a gentil Poilleys coursour were;  
For certès, fro his tayl unto his ere,  
Nature ne art ne koude hym nat amende  
In no degree, as al the peple wende.

But evermoore hir moosté wonder was  
How that it koudé go, and was of bras!  
It was of fairye, as al the peple semed. 202  
Diversé folk diversely they demed;  
As many heddes as many wittes ther been.  
They murmureden as dooth a swarm of  
been,

And maden skiles after hir fantasies,  
Rehersynge of thise oldé poetries;  
And seyde that it was lyk the Pegasee,  
The hors that haddé wynges for to flee;  
Or elles it was the Grekès hors, Synoun,  
That broughté Troiè to destruccioun, 210  
As men may in thise oldé geestes rede.

'Myn herte,' quod oon, 'is evermoore  
in drede;

I trowe som men of armés been ther-inne,  
That shapen hem this citee for to wynne;  
It were right good that al swich thyng  
were knowe.'

Another rowndé to his felawe lowé,  
And seyde, 'He lyeth! it is rather lyk  
An apparence, y-maad by som magyk;  
As jogelours pleyen at thise feestés grete.'  
Of sondry doutés thus they jangle and trete,  
As lewéd peple demeth comunly 221  
Of thyngés that been maad moore subtilly  
Than they kan in hir lewednese compre-  
hende,

They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And somme of hem wondred on the  
mirour

That born was up into the hyé tour,

195. *Poilleys, Apulian.*

201. *the peple, H<sup>o</sup> al the peple.*

210. *it, H<sup>o</sup> for it.*

220. *hye, H<sup>o</sup> maistre.*

How men myghte in it swiché thynges se.  
Another answerde and seyde it myghte  
wel be

Naturally, by composicouns  
Of angles, and of slye reflexiouns; <sup>230</sup>  
And seyden that in Romé was swich oon.  
They speken of Alocen and Vitulon,  
And Aristotle, that writen in hir lyves  
Of queynté mirours, and of prospectives,  
As knowen they that han hir bookés herd.

And oother folk han wondred on the  
swerd

That woldé percen thurghout every thyng;  
And fille in speche of Thelophus the kyng,  
And of Achilles with his queynté spere,  
For he koude with it bothé heele and dere,  
Right in swich wise as men may with the  
swerd <sup>242</sup>

Of which right now ye han youre-selven  
herd.

They speken of sondry hardyng of metal,  
And speke of medicynés therewithal,  
And how and whanne it sholdey-harded be,  
Which is unknowe, alगतés unto me.

Tho speeké they of Canacées ryng,  
And seyden alle that swich a wonder thyng  
Of craft of ryngés herde they never noon;  
Save that he Moyyses and kyng Salomon  
Hadden a name of konnyng in swich art;  
Thus seyn the peple and drawn hem  
apart.

But nathelees somme seiden that it was  
Wonder to maken of fern-asshen glas,  
And yet nys glas nat lyk asshen of fern,  
But for they han i-knowen it so fern  
Therefore cesseth hir janglyng and hir  
wonder.

As sooré wondren somme on cause of  
thonder,  
On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on  
myst, <sup>259</sup>

And on alle thyng til that the cause is wyst,  
Thus jangle they, and demen and devyse,  
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse.

<sup>231.</sup> *in Rome*, an allusion to the wizardries attributed to Virgil.

<sup>232.</sup> *Alocen and Vitulon*. Alhazen was an Arab astronomer of the 11th century, and Vitellio a Polish one of the 15th.

<sup>233.</sup> *Thelophus*, Telephus of Mysia, wounded and healed by the spear of Achilles.

Phebus hath laft the angle meridional  
And yet ascendyng was the best  
The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,  
Whan that this Tarré kyng Cambyse  
Roos fro his bord, ther as he set ful hye  
Toform hym gooth the loudé mynstralcy  
Til he cam to his chambre of parementz;  
Ther as they sownen diverse instrumentz  
That it is lyk an hevene for to heere. <sup>271</sup>  
Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere,  
For in the Fyssh hir lady sat ful hye,  
And looketh on hem with a freendly eye.

This noble kyng is set up in his trone;  
This strangé knyght is fet to hym ful soone,  
And on the daunce he gooth with Canacee.  
Heere is the revel and the jolitee  
That is nat able a dul man to devyse; <sup>279</sup>  
Hemoste han knowen love and his servyse,  
And been a feestlych man, as fressh as May,  
That sholdé yow devysen swich array.

Who koude tellé yow the forme of  
daunces

So unkouthé, and so fresshé contenaunces,  
Swich subtil looking and dissymulynge  
For drede of jalouse mennes apercey-  
ynges?

No man but Launcelet, and he is deed.  
Therefore I passe of al this lustiheed;  
I sey namoore, but in this jolynesse  
I lete hem til men to the soper dresse.

The styward byt the spices for to hye,  
And eek the wyn, in al this melodye.  
The usshers and the squiers been y-goön,  
The spices and the wyn is come anon.  
They ete and drynke, and whan this hadde  
an ende,

Unto the temple, as reson was, they wende.

The service doon they soupen al by day;  
What nedeth yow rehercen hire array?

Éch man woot wel that a kyngés feeste <sup>289</sup>  
Hath plentee to the mooste and to the ceste,  
And deyntees mothan been in my knowyng.

At after soper gooth this noble kyng  
To seen this hors of bras, with all the  
route

Of lordés and of ladyes hye aboute.

<sup>263.</sup> *angle meridional*. The southern angle answered to the time from 10 A.M. to noon.

<sup>264.</sup> *Aldrian*, or Aldiran, the star marking the Lion's fore-paw.

<sup>273.</sup> *the Fyssh*. Venus is represented in Pisces.

kyng was ther on this hors of  
as

the grette sege of Troie was,—  
men wondredien on an hors also,—  
was ther swich a wondryng as was tho.  
at fynally, the kyng axeth this knyght  
the vertu of this courser, and the myght,  
and preyde hym to telle his governaunce.

This hors anon bigan to trippe and  
daunce

Whan that this knyght leyde hand upon  
his reyne,

And seyde, 'Sire, ther is namore to seyne,  
But whan yow list to ryden anywhere  
Ye mooten trille a pyn, stant in his ere,  
Which I shal tellé yow bitwix us two.

Ye mooté nempne hym to what place also,  
to what contree, that yow list to ryde;  
whan ye come ther as yow list abyde,  
hym descende, and trille another  
pyn,—  
321

Merin lith theeffect of al the gyn,—  
and he wol doun descende and doon youre  
wille,

and in that placé he wol stonde stille.  
ough al the world the contrarie hadde  
y-swore,

He shal nat thennés been y-draweney-borc;  
Or, if yow listé bidde hym thennés goon,  
trille this pyn, and he wol vanysshe anon  
out of the sighte of every maner wight,  
And come agayn, be it by day or nyght, 330  
Whan that yow list to clepen hym ageyn  
In swich a gyse as I shal to yow seyn,  
Bitwixé yow and me, and that ful soone.  
Ride whan yow list, ther is namore to  
doone.'

Enforméd whan the kyng was of that  
knyght,

And hath conceyved in his wit aright  
The manere and the forme of al this thyng,  
ful glad he blithe this noble doughty kyng  
Revel as bifore.

unto the tour y-born 340  
his jueles leeve and deere,  
ed, I noot in what manere,  
—ye gete namore of me;  
in lust and jolitee

in his lordes festeiynge,  
Ther he bigan to sprynge.

[PART II]

The norice of digestioun, the sleepe,  
Gan on hem wyne, and bad hem taken  
keepe

That muchel drynke and labour wolde  
han reste;

And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he  
keste, 350

And seyde, it was tyme to lye adoun,  
For blood was in his domynacioun.

'Cherisseth blood, natúrs freend,' quod he.  
They thanken hym galpynge, by two, by  
thre,

And every wight gan drawe hym to his reste,  
As sleepe hem bad; they tokke it for the  
beste.

Hire dremés shul nat been y-toold for me;  
Ful were hire heddés of fumositée,  
That causeth drem, of which ther nys no  
charge.

They slepen til that it was prymé large, 360  
The moosté part, but it were Canacee.

She was ful mesurable, as women be;  
For of hir fader hadde she také leve  
To goon to reste, soone after it was eve.

Ilir listé nat appalléd for to be,  
Ne on the morwe unfeestlich for to se,  
And slepte hire firsté sleepe and thanne  
awook;

For swich a joyé she in hir herté took, 370  
Bothe of hir queynté ryng and hire mirour,  
That twenty tyme she changéd hir colour,  
And in hire sleepe, right for impressioun  
Of hire mirour, she hadde a visioun.

Wherefore er that the sonné gan up glyde  
She clepéd on hir maistresse hire bisyde,  
And seyde that hire listé for to ryse.

This oldé women that been gladly  
wyse,

As is hire maistresse, answerde hire anon,  
And seyde, 'Madame, whider wil ye goon  
Thus erly, for the folk been alle on reste?'

'I wol,' quod she, 'arisé,—for me leste  
No longer for to slepe,—and walke  
abouté.' 381

352. blood, etc. The blood was supposed to be  
'in domination' from 9 P.M. to 3 A.M.  
360. pryme large, full prime, i.e. 9 A.M.



Hire maistresse clepeth wommen a  
greet route,  
And up they rysen, wel a ten or twelve;  
Up riseth fresshe Canacee hir-selve,  
Asrodyand bright as dooth the yongé sonne  
That in the Ram is foure degrees up ronne.  
Noon hyer was he when she redy was,  
And forth she walketh esily a pas,  
Arrayed after the lusty sesoun soote 389  
Lightly, for to pleye and walke on foote,  
Nat but with fyve or sixe of hir meynce,  
And in a trench, forth in the park, gooth  
she.

The vapour, which that fro the erthé blood,  
Madé the sonne to semé rody and brood,  
But nathéles it was so fair a sighte  
That it made alle hire hertés for to lighte,—

What for the sesoun, and the morwényng,  
And for the fowles that she herdé synge;  
For right anon she wisté what they mente  
Right by hirsong, and knewal hire entente.

The knotté why that every tale is toold,  
If it be taried til that lust be coold  
Of hem that han it after herkned yoore,  
The savour passeth ever lenger the moore,  
For fulsomnesse of his prolixitee;  
And by the samé resoun thynketh me,  
I sholdé to the knotte condescende  
And maken of hir walkyng soone an ende.

Anydde a tree fordrye, as whit as chalk,  
Canacee was pleying in hir walk, 410  
That a faukon over hire heed ful hie,  
With a pitous voys so gan to crye  
That all the wode resounéd of hire cry.  
Y-beten hath she hir-self so pitously  
With bothe hir wyngés til the redé blood  
Ran endélong the tree ther as she stood,  
And ever in oon she cryde alwey and  
shrighte,

And with hir beek hir-selven so she prighte,  
That ther nystygre, nenoon so cruell beest,  
That dwelleth outhér in wode or in forest,  
That nolde han wept, if that he wepé koude,  
For sorwe of hire, she shrighte alwey so  
loude;

For ther nas never yet no man on lyve,—

386. *fourre* (H<sup>4</sup> *ten*), on 4. *fourre* *ten*. At its  
ising on the 16th March the sun would be passing  
from the 4th degree to the 5th.

If that I koude a faukon  
That herde of swich a fowle of  
As wel of plumage as of gentille  
Of shape; and al that mighte y-reke  
A faukon peregryn thanne seméd she  
Of fremde land, and evermoore, as she  
stood,  
She swowneth now and now for lakke of  
blood, 439

Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree.  
This fairé kyngés doghter, Canacee,  
That on hir fynger bear the queynté ryng,  
Thurgh which she understood wel every  
thyng

That any fowel may in his leden seyn,  
And koude answeré hym in his ledene  
ageyn,

Hath understandé what this faukon seyde,  
And wel neigh for the routhe almoost  
deyde;

And to the tree she gooth ful hastily  
And on this faukon looketh pitously  
And heeld hir lappe abrood, for wel to  
wiste

The faukon mosté fallen fro the twisté  
Whan that it swowned next, for lakke of  
blood.

A longe while to wayten hire she stode  
Til atté laste she spak in this manere  
Unto the hawk, as ye shal after heere

‘What is the cause, if it be for to tellen  
That ye be in this furial pyne of helle?’  
Quod Canacee unto the hawk above. 449

‘Is this for sorwe of deeth, or los of love?  
For, as I trowé, thisé been causes two  
That causen moost a gentil herté wo.  
Of oother harm it nedeth nat to speke,  
For ye youre-self upon your-self yow wreke,  
Which proveth well that outhér love or  
drede

Moot been enchesoun of youre cruel dede,  
Syn that I seen noon oother wight in this chace.  
For love of God, as dooth the chace,  
grace,

Or what may been youre  
nor Est

448. *peregryn*, the pilgrim  
because it keeps away from its

436. *answere*, E *answering*  
455. *love*, H<sup>4</sup> *ten*.

I never, er now, no bryd ne  
 beest 460  
 dé with hymself so pitously.  
 me with youre sorwé, verrailly ;  
 have of yow so greet compassioun.  
 for Goddés love, com fro the tree adoun ;  
 and, as I am a kyngés doghter trewe,  
 if that I verrailly the causé knewe  
 of youre disese, if it lay in my myght,  
 wolde amenden it er it were nyght,  
 as wisly helpe me grete God of kynde !  
 and herbés shal I right ynowe y-fynde  
 to heelé with youre hurtés hastily.' 471  
 Tho shrighte this faucon yet moore  
 pitously

than ever she dide, and fil to groundeanon,  
 and lith aswowné, deed, and lyk a stoon,  
 Canacee hath in hire lappe hire take  
 to the tyme she gan of swough awake ;  
 after that she of hir swough gan breyde  
 in hir haukés ledene thus she seyde :  
 that pitee renneth soone in gentil herte,  
 to lyngé his similitude in peynés smerte,  
 prevéd al day, as men may it see, 481  
 wel by werk as by auctoritee ;  
 until herté kitheth gentillesse.  
 wel that ye han of my distresse  
 compassioun, my fairé Canacee,  
 verray wommanly benignytee  
 that nature in youre principles hath set ;  
 for noon hopé for to fare the bet,  
 but for to obeie unto youre herté free,  
 and for to maken othere be war by me,  
 as by the whelpe chastid is the leoun, 491  
 right for that cause and that conclusioun,  
 whil that I have a leyser and a space,  
 myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace.  
 And ever whil that oon hir sorwe tolde  
 that oother weepe as she to water wolde,  
 that the faucon bad hire to be stille,  
 and, with a syk, right thus she seyde hir

'bred, allas ! that hardé 499  
 roche of marbul gray  
 no thyng eyléd me,—  
 was adversitee  
 and hie under the sky—  
 let me fasté by,

That seméd welle of allé gentillesse ;  
 Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse,  
 It was so wrappéd under humble cheere,  
 And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,  
 Under plesance, and under bisy payne,  
 That I ne koude han wend he koudé feyne,  
 So depe in greyn he dyéd his coloures.  
 Right as a serpent hit hym under floures  
 Til he may seen his tymé for to byte,  
 Right so this god of love, this ypocryte,  
 Dooth so his cerymonyes and obeisaunces,  
 And kepeþ in semblant alle his obser-  
 vaunces

That sowneth into gentillesse of love.  
 As in a tounge is al the faire above,  
 And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,  
 Swich was the ypocrite, bothe coold and  
 hoot, 500  
 And in this wise he servéd his entente,  
 That save the feend, noon wisté what he  
 mente

Til he so longe hadde wopen and com-  
 pleynd,  
 And many a yeer his service to me feyned,  
 Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,  
 Al innocent of his corouned malice,  
 For-feréd of his deeth, as thoughté me,  
 Upon his othés and his seurtee,  
 Graunted hym love upon this condicioun,  
 That evermoore myn honour and renoun  
 Were savéd, bothé privee and apert : 511  
 This is to seyn, that after his desert,  
 I yaf hym al myn herté and my thought,—  
 God woot, and he, that otherwisé noght,—  
 And took his herte in chaunge for myn  
 for ay ;

But sooth is seyð, goon sithen many a day,  
 "A trewe wight and a theef thenken nat  
 oon" ;  
 And whan he saugh the thyng so fer y-goon  
 That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,  
 In swich a gyse as I have seyð above, 520  
 And yeven hym my trewé herte as fre  
 As he swoor he yaf his herté to me ;  
 Anon this tigre ful of doubleness  
 Fil on his knees with so devout hum-  
 blesse,

510. I ne, H<sup>5</sup> no wight.  
 522. obeisaunces, H observances, reading in  
 next line, Under subtil colour and aqueynsaunce.

With so heigh reverence, and, as by his  
cheere,

So lyk a gentil love of manere,  
So ravysshed, as it semed, for the joye,  
That never Jason, ne Parys of Troye,—  
Jason? Certés, ne noon oother man  
Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan 550  
To loven two, as writen folk biforn;  
Ne never, syn the firste man was born,  
Ne koudé man, by twenty thousand part,  
Countrefeté the sophymes of his art,  
Ne weré worthy unbokelen his galoche  
Ther doublenesse or feynnyng sholde  
approche,

Ne so koude thanke a wight as he dide me!  
His manere was an hevene for to see  
Til any womman, were she never so wys,  
So peynted he, and kembde at point-  
devys, 560

As wel his wordés as his contenance;  
And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce,  
And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,  
That if so were that any thyng hym smerte,  
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste,  
Methoughte I felté deeth myn herté twiste;  
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng is went,  
That my wyl was his willes instrument,—  
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl  
In allé thyng, as fer as resoun fil, 570  
Kepyng the boundés of my worshiþe ever;  
Ne never hadde I thyng so lief, ne lever,  
As hym, God woot! ne never shal namo.  
This lasteth longer than a yeer or two  
That I supposed of hym noght but good;  
But finally thus, atté laste it stood,  
That Fortune wolde that he mosté twynne  
Out of that placé which that I was inne.  
Wher me was wo, that is no questioun;  
I kan nat make of it discrisioun, 580  
For o thyng dare I tellen boldely,  
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth ther-by;  
Swich harme I felte for he ne myghte  
bileve!

So on a day of me he took his leve,  
So sorwful eek that I wende verrailly  
That he had felt as muché harm as I,

548. Jason, E<sup>2</sup> *Troilus*, an impossible reading.

550. Lameth, Genesis iv. 19.

582. he, E I

585. sorwful, E<sup>2</sup> *sorowfully*.

Whan that I herde hym speke a  
his hewe;

But natheles I thoughte he was so  
And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn  
Withinne a litel while, sooth to seyn,  
And resoun wolde eek that he mosté go  
For his honour, as ofte it happeth so,  
That I made vertu of necessitee,  
And took it wel, syn that it mosté be.  
As I best myghte I hidde fro hym mysowre  
And took hym by the hond, Seint John  
borwe,

And seyde hym thus: "Lo, I am yourés al,  
Bethswich as I to yow have been and shal."  
What heanswerde it nedeth noght reherce,  
Who kan sey bet than he, who kan de-  
werse? 600

Whan he hath al i-seyd, thanne hath he  
doon.

"Therefore bihoveth hire a ful long space  
That shal ete with a feend," thus herde  
seye;

So atté laste he mosté forth his weye,  
And forth he fleeth til he cam ther by  
leste,

Whan it cam hym to purpos for to rest  
I trowe he haddé thilké text in mynde,  
That "Allé thyng repeyrynge to his kynde  
Gladeth hymself,"—thus seyn men, as  
gesse.

Men loven of propre kynde newefangel-  
nesse, 610

As briddés doon that men in cages fede;  
For though thou nyght and day take of  
hem hede,

And strawe hir cage faire, and softe as silk,  
And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,  
Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe,  
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,  
And to the wode he wole, and wormes ete,  
So newefangel been they of hire mete  
And loven novelrie of propre kynde,  
No gentillesse of blood he may hem  
bynde. 620

'So ferde this terciet, after the daye  
Though he were gentil born, rich and gay,  
And goodlich for to seen, and for to preye,  
He saugh upon a tyme a newefangel,

601. i-seyd, E<sup>2</sup> *seide*  
602. hewe, E<sup>2</sup> *hewe*

And feely he loved this kyté so  
 With this love is cleue for me ago,  
 With his trouthe falsed in this wyse.  
 'Bath the kyte my love in hire servyse,  
 And I am for withouten remedie.' 629  
 And with that word this faucon gan to crie,  
 And swowned eft in Canacees barm.  
 Greet was the sorwe for the haukes harm  
 That Canacee and alle hir wommen made;  
 They nyste how they myghte the faucon  
 glade,

But Canacee hom bereth hire in hir lappe,  
 And softly in plastres gan hire wrappe,  
 Ther as she with hire beek hadde hurt hir-  
 selve.

Now kan nat Canacee but herbés delve  
 Out of the ground, and maké salvés newe  
 Of herbés preciose, and fyne of hewe, 640  
 Heelen with this hawk; fro day to nyght  
 In flooth hire bisynesse and al hir myght,  
 And by hire beddes heed she made a mewe,  
 And covered it with veluettés blewe,  
 In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene,  
 And al withoute themewe is peynted grene,  
 Which were peynted alle thise falsé  
 fowles,

With thise tidyves, tercèlletes and owles;  
 And pyes, on hem for to crie and chyde,  
 Right for despit, were peynted hem bisyde.

Thus lete I Canacee, hir hawk kepyng,  
 Wyl namore as now speke of hir ryng  
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn

How that this faucon gat hire love ageyn,  
 Repentant, as the storie telleth us,  
 By mediacioun of Cambalus,

The kyng's sone, of whiché I yow tolde;  
 And hennés-forth I wol my proces holde  
 To speken of aventures and of batailles,  
 That never yet was herd so greet mer-  
 vailes. 660

First wol I tellé yow of Cambyuskan,  
 That in his tyme many a citee was;  
 And after that I speke of Algarsif,  
 Somewhat he wan Theodora to his wif,  
 As whiche was ofte in greet peril he was,  
 And how he ben holpé by the steede of

And after that I speke of Cambalo,

And after that I speke of Cambalo,  
 And after that I speke of Cambalo,  
 And after that I speke of Cambalo.

That faught in lystés with the bretheren two  
 For Canacee, er that he myghte hire wynne;  
 And ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne. 670

[PART III]

Appollo whirleth up his chaar so' hye,  
 Til that the god Mercurius hous, the slye—

*Here folowen the wordes of the Frankelyn  
 to the Squier, and the wordes of the  
 Hoost to the Frankelyn*

'In feith, Squier, thou hast thee wel  
 y-quit

And gentilly, I preisé wel thy wit,'  
 Quod the Frankelēyn, 'consideryng thy  
 yowthe

So feelyngly thou spekest, sire, I allowe the,  
 As to my doom ther is noon that is heere  
 Of eloquencé that shal be thy peere,  
 If that thou lyve! God yevé thee good  
 chaunce,

And in vertu sende thee continuance; 680  
 For of thy speche I havé greet deyntee.  
 I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee!  
 I haddé levere than twenty pound worth  
 lond,

Though it right now were fallen in myn  
 hond,

He were a man of swich discrecioun  
 As that ye been; fy on possessioun,  
 But if a man be vertuous withal!

I have my soné snybbéd and yet shal,  
 For he to vertu listeth nat entende, 689  
 But for to pleye at dees, and to despende

And lese al that he hath, is his usage;  
 And he hath levere talken with a page  
 Than to comune with any gentil wight,  
 There he myghte lerné gentillesse aright.'

'Straw for youre "gentillessé," quod  
 our Hoost.

'What! Frankelēyn, pardes, sire, wel  
 thou woost

That ech of yow moot tellen atté leste  
 A tale or two, or breken his biheste.'

'That knowe I wel, sire,' quod the  
 Frankelēyn,

'I prey yow haveth me nat in desdeyn 700  
 Though to this man I speke a word or two.'

67a. The 'half-told' tale breaks off here.

'Telle on thy tale, withouten wordés mo !'

'Gladly, sire Hoost,' quod he, 'I wole obeye

Unto your wyl; now herkneþ what I seye.  
I wol yow nat contrarian in no wyse  
As fer as that my wittés wol suffyse;  
I prey to God that it may plesen yow,  
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow.'

### *The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale*

Thise oldé, gentil Britons, in hir dayes,  
Of diverse áventurés maden layes, 710  
Rymeyéd in hir firsté Briton tonge,  
Whiche layés with hir instrumentz they songe,

Or ellés reddén hem for hir plesaunce,  
And oon of hem have I in rémembraunce,  
Which I shal seyn with good wyl as I kan.

But, sires, by-cause I am a burel man,  
At my bigynnyng first I yow biseche,  
Have me excuséd of my rudé speche.  
I lernéd never rethoric certeyn;  
Thyng that I speke it moot be bare and pleyn. 720

I sleepe never on the Mount of Pernaso,  
Ne lernéd Marcus Tullius Scithero.  
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede,  
But swiché colours as growen in the mede,  
Or ellés swiché as men dye or peynte.  
Colours of rethoryk been me to queynte;  
My spirit feeleth noght of swich mateere,  
But if yow list my talé shul ye heere.

## FRANKLIN'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth The Frankeleyns Tale*

In Armorik, that calléd is Britayne,  
Ther was a knyght that loved and dide his payne 730  
To serve a lady in his besté wise;  
And many a labour, many a greet emprise,

714. oon of hem, etc. This distinct statement (cp. l. 813) leaves no doubt that this tale follows, probably with some closeness, a French or Breton story, unluckily now lost.

721. To disprove his claim of lack of letters he quotes Persius (Prolog. l. 2).

He for his lady wroghte, er she were wone.  
For she was oon the faireste under the sonne.  
And eek therto come of so heigh kynne  
That wel unnethés dorste this knyght drede,

Telle hire his wo, his peyne, and his distresse;

But atté laste she for his worthynesse,  
And namely for his meke obeysaunce,  
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,  
That pryvély she fil of his accord, 740  
To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,  
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves,

And for to lede the moore in blisse hir lyves,  
Of his free wyl he swoor hire as a knyght,  
That never in al his lyf he, day ne nyght,  
Ne sholde upon hym také no maistrie  
Agayn hir wyl, ne kithe hire jalousie;  
But hire obeye and folwe hir wyl in al,  
As any lover to his lady shal, 750

Save that the name of soveraynété,  
That wolde he have, for shame of his degré.

She thankéd hym and with ful greet humblesse,

She seyde, 'Sire, sith of youre gentillesse  
Ye proffe me to have so large a pitee,  
Ne wolde never God bitwixe us twayne,  
As in my gilt, were outhér werre or stry.  
Sire, I wol be youre humble, trewe wyl;  
I have heer my trouthe, til that myn herte breste';

Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.

For o thyng, sirés, sauþy dar I seye, 760  
That freendés everych outhér moot obeye,  
If they wol longé holden compaignye.  
Love wol nat been constreynéd by maistrie;  
Whan maistrie comth, the god of love anon,

Beteth his wynges and, farewel, he is gon!  
Love is a thyng as any spirit free.  
Wommen of kynde desiren libertee,  
And nat to been constreynéd as a thral;  
And so doon men, if I sooth aȝen shal.  
Looke, who that is moost pacient in love,  
He is at his advantage al above.  
Paciencie is an heigh vertu, certeyn,  
For it venquyaseth, as thise clerkés seyn,  
Thynges that rigour sholdé never atteyne!

739. namely, especially.

For every word men may nat childe or  
pleyne.

Let men to suffre, or elles so moot I goon,  
Ye shul it lerne, wher-so ye wole or noon;  
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is  
That he ne dooth, or seith, som tyme amys.  
Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun, 781  
Wyn, wo, or chaungynge of complexioun,  
Causeth ful ofte to doon amys or speken.  
In every wrong a man may nat be wreken;  
After the tyme moste be temperaunce  
To every wight that kan on governaunce;  
And therefore hath this wisé, worthy  
knyght,—

To lyve in esé,—suffraunce hire bihight,  
And she to hym ful wisly gan to swere  
That never sholde ther be defaut in here.

Heere may men seen an humble, wys  
accord; 791  
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir  
lord,—

Servant in love, and lord in mariage,—  
Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and  
servage.

Servagé? nay, but in lordshipe above;  
With he hath both his lady and his love;  
His lady, certés, and his wyf also,  
The which that lawe of love acordeth to;  
And whan he was in this prosperitee 799  
Room with his wyf he gooth to his contree,  
Nat fer fro Pedmark, ther his dwelling was,  
Wher as he lyveth in blisse and in solas.

Who koudé telle, but he hadde wedded  
be,

The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee  
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?

A yeer and moore lastéd this blisful lyf,  
Til that the knyght of which I speke of thus,  
That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,  
Shoope him to goon and dwelle a yeer or  
tweyne 809

In Engeland, that cleped was eek Briteyne,  
To seke in armés worshipe and honour,  
For al the just he sette in swich labour;  
And dwelled there two yeer,—the book  
telle thus.

Now wol I stynten of this Arveragus,

Bot. *Pedmark*, Penmark, on the west coast of  
Britany.  
Bot. *Kayrrud*, the Red City.

And spoken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,  
That loveth hire housbonde as hire hertés  
lyf;

For his absencé wepeth she and siketh,  
As doon thise noble wyvés, whan hem  
liketh;

She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth,  
pleyneth; 819

Desir of his presence hire so distreyneth,  
That al this wyde world she sette at noght.  
Hire freendés, whiche that knewe hir hevvy  
thought,

Conforten hire in al that ever they may.  
They prechen hire, they telle hire, nyght  
and day,

That causéles she sleeth herself, allas!  
And every confort possible in this cas  
They doon to hire with all hire bisynesse,  
Al for to make hire leve hire hevynesse.

By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,  
Men may so longé graven in a stoon 839  
Til som figure therinne emprented be.

So longe han they comforted hire, til she  
Receyved hath, by hope and by resoun,  
The emprenting of hire consolacioun,  
Thurgh which hir greté sorwé gan aswage;  
She may nat alway duren in swich rage.

And eek Arveragus in al this care  
Hath sent hire lettres hoom of his welfare;  
And that he wol come hastily agayn;  
Or ellés hadde this sorwe hir herté slayn.

Hire freendés sawe hir sorwé gan to  
slake, 841  
And preyedé hir on knees, for Goddés  
sake,

To come and romen hire in compaignye,  
Awey to dryve hire derké fantasye;  
And finally she graunted that requeste,  
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hire castel fasté by the see,  
And often with hire freendés walketh shee,  
Hire to disporte upon the bank an heigh,  
Where as she many a shipe and barge seigh  
Seillynge hir cours, where as hem listé go;  
But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo,  
For to herself ful ofte 'Allas!' seith she,  
'Is ther no shipe, of so manye as I see,  
Wol bryngen hom my lord? Thanne were  
myn herte

Al warished of his bittré peynés smerte.'

Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and  
thynke,  
And caste hir eyen downward fro the  
brynke ;

But whan she saugh the grisly rokkés blake,  
For verray feere so wolde hir herté quake  
That on hire feet she myghte hire noght  
sustene ; 862

Thanne wolde she sitte adoun upon the  
grene,

And pitously into the see biholde,  
And seyn right thus, with sorweful sikés  
colde,

‘ Eterné God, that thurgh thy purvei-  
aunce,

Ledest the world by certein governaunce,  
In ydel, as men seyn, ye nothyng make ;  
But, Lord, thise grisly, feendly, rokkés  
blake,

That semen rather a foul confusioun  
Of werk than any fair creacioun 870  
Of swich a parfit wys God, and a stable,—  
Why hanye wrought this werk unresonable?  
For by this werk south, north, ne west,  
ne est,

Ther nys y-fostred man, ne bryd, ne beste ;  
It dooth no good, to my wit, but anyeth ;  
Se ye nat, Lord, how mankynde it de-  
stroyeth ?

An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde  
Han rokkés slayn, al be they nat in mynde,  
Which mankynde is so fair part of thy werk,  
That thou it madest lyk to thyn owen merk.  
‘ Thanne seméd it ye hadde a greet  
chiertee 882

Toward mankynde, but how thanne may  
it bee,

That ye swiche meenés make it to de-  
stroyen,

Whiche meenés do no good, but ever  
anoyen ?

I woot wel clerkés wol seyn as hem leste,  
By argumentz, that al is for the beste,  
Though I ne kan the causes nat y-knowe ;  
But, thilké God that madé wynd to blowe,  
As kepe my lord ; this is my conclusioun.  
To clerkés lete I al disputisoun ; 890

But woldé God that alle thise rokkés blake  
Were sonken into hellé for his sake.  
Thise rokkés aleen myn herté for the feere.’

Thus wolde she seyn with many a pitou  
teere.

Hire freendéssawe that it was no chere  
To romen by the see, but disconfort,  
And shopen for to pleyen somwher elles,  
They leden hire by ryveres, and by welles,  
And eek in othere places delitable ;  
They dauncen, and they pleyen at che-  
and tables. 900

So on a day, right in the morwe tyde,  
Unto a gardyn that was ther bisyde,  
In which that they hadde maad hir or-  
dinaunce

Of vitaille, and of oother purveiaunce,  
They goon and pleye hem al the longéday ;  
And this was on the sixté morwe of May,  
Which May hadde peynted with his softé  
shoures

This gardyn, full of levés and of floures,  
And craft of mannés hand so curiously  
Arrayed hadde this gardyn, trewely, 910  
That never was ther gardyn of swich pry-  
But if it were the verray Paradys.  
The odour of floures and the fresshé sight  
Woldé han makéd any herté light  
That ever was born, but if to greet sickness,  
Or to greet sorwé, helde it in distresse ;  
So full it was of beautee with plessaunce.

At after dyner gonné they to daunce,  
And synge also, save Dorigen allone,  
Which made alwey hir compleint and hir  
moone, 920

For she ne saugh hym on the dauncé go  
That was hir housbonde, and hir love also ;  
But natheles she moste a tyme abyde  
And with good hopé lete hir sorwe slyde

Upon this daunce, amongés othere men,  
Dauncéd a squier biforn Dorigen,  
That fresher was, and jolyer of array,  
As to my doom, than is the monthe of May ;  
He syngeth, daunceth, passyngé any man  
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.  
Therwith he was, if men sholde hym  
discryve, 932

Oon of the besté farynge man on lyve,  
Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche  
and wys,

And wel biloved, and holden in greet pry-  
And, shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,  
Unwityng of this Dorigen at al,

This lusty squier, servant to Venus,  
Which that y-cleped was Aurelius,  
Hadde loved hire best of any creature  
Two yeer and moore, as was his aventure;  
But never, dorste he tellen hire his  
grevaunce; 947

Withouten coppe hedrankal his penaunce.  
He was despayréd, nothyng dorste he seye,  
Save in his songes somewhat wolde he wreye  
His wo, as in a general compleynnyng;  
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no  
thyng.

Of swich matéré made he manye layes,  
Songes, complaintes, roundels, vielayes;  
How that he dorsté nat his sorwe telle,  
But langwischethi as a furye dooth in helle;  
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko  
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.  
In oother manere than ye heere me seye  
Ne dorst he nat to hire his wo biwreye,  
Save that paraventure somtyme at daunces,  
Ther yongé folk kepen hir observaunces,  
It may wel be he lookéd on hir face  
In swich a wise as man that asketh grace;  
But no thyng wisté she of his entente;  
Mathelées it happéd, er they thennés wente,  
By-cause that he was hire neighébour, 961  
And was a man of worshippe and honour,  
And hadde y-knowen hym of tyme yooore,  
They fille in speche, and forthé, moore  
and moore,

Unto this purpos drough Aurelius.  
And whan hesaugh his tyme hesaydé thus:  
'Madame,' quod he, 'by God that  
this world made,

So that I wiste it myghte youre herté glade,  
I wolde that day that youre Arveragus  
Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius, 970  
Hadde went ther never I sholde have  
come again;

For wel I woot my servyce is in vayn,  
My gerdoun is but brestyng of myn herte.  
Madame, reweth upon my peynés smerte,  
For with a word ye may me sleen or save;  
Heere at youre feet God wolde that I  
were grave!

I ne have, as now, no leyser moore to  
seye,—

950. *seye*, Heng. 4. *seyre*, *seyr*, perhaps a better reading.

Have mercy, sweete, or ye wol do me deye!'

She gan to looke upon Aurelius:

'Is this your wyl,' quod she, 'and sey ye  
thus? 980

Never erst,' quod she, 'ne wiste I what  
ye mente;

But now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente,  
By thilké God that yaf me soule and lyf!  
Ne shal I never been untrewé wyf,

In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit,  
I wol been his to whom that I am knyht!  
Taak this for fynal answer, as for me';  
But after that in playt thus seyde she:

'Aurelie,' quod she, 'by heighé God  
above!

Yet wolde I graunté yow to been youre love,  
Syn I yow se so pitously complayne. 991  
Looké, what day that endéloug Britayne,  
Ye remoevealle the rokkés, stoon bystoon,  
That they ne letté shipe ne boot to goon,—  
I seye whan ye han maad the coost so clene  
Of rokkés, that ther nys no stoon y-sene,  
Thanne wol I love yow best of any man.  
Have heer my trouthe, in al that ever I  
kan.'

'Is ther noon oother grace in yow?'  
quod he.

'No, by that Lord,' quod she, 'that  
makéd me! 1000

For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.  
Lat swiché folies out of youre herté slyde;  
What deyntee sholde a man han in his lyf  
For to go love another mannés wyf,  
That hath hir body whan so that hym  
lyketh?'

Aurelius ful ofté sooré siketh.

Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,  
And with a sorweful herte he thus answerde:

'Madame,' quod he, 'this were an in-  
possible! 1009

Thanne moot I dye of sodeyn deth horrible!'  
And with that word he turned hym anon.

Tho come hir othere freendés many oon.  
And in the aleyes romeden up and down,  
And no thyng wiste of this conclusioun;  
But sodeynly bigonné revel newe,  
Til that the brighté sonné lost his hewe,  
For thorisonte hath refit the sonne his  
● lyght,—

This is as muche to seye, as it was nyght;



And hoom they goon in joye and in soles,  
 Save onoly wrecche Aurelius, allas ! 1020  
 Heto his hous is goon with sorweful herte;  
 He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte,  
 Hym semed that he felte his herté colde.  
 Up to the hevene his handes he gan holde,  
 And on his knowes bare he sette hym  
 doum,

And in his ravynge seyde his orisoun.  
 For verray wo out of his wlt he breyde,  
 He nysté what he spak, but thus he seyde.  
 With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigonne  
 Unto the goddes, and first unto the sonne.

He seyde, 'Appollo, god and governour,  
 Of every plaunté, herbé, tree and flour,  
 That yevest after thy declinacioun  
 To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,  
 As thyn herberwé chaungeth lowe or  
 heighe;

Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eigne  
 On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but  
 lorn !

Lo, lord, my lady hath my deeth y-sworn  
 Withouté gilt, but thy benignytee  
 Upon my dedly herte have som pitee; 1040  
 For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest  
 He may me helpen, save my lady, best.

Now vouchethsauf that I may yow devyse  
 How that I may been holpen and in what  
 wyse.

'Youre blisful suster, Lucina thesheene,  
 That of the see is chief goddesse and  
 queene,—

Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,  
 Yet emperisse aboven hym is she,—  
 Ye knowe wel, lord, that right as hir desir  
 Is to be quyked, and lightned of youre fir,  
 For which she folweth yow ful bisily, 1051  
 Right so the see desireth naturelly  
 To folwen hire, as she that is goddesse,  
 Bothe in the see and ryveres moore and  
 lesse.

Wherefore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste,  
 Do this miracle, or do myn herté breste;  
 That now next at this oposicioun,  
 Which in the signe shal be of the Lequén,  
 As preieth hire so greet a flood to brynge,  
 That fyre fadme at the leeste it over-  
 sprynge 1060

1045. *Lucina*, or *Diana*, the moon.

The hyste rokke in Armoric Briteyne;  
 And lat this flood enduret yerés tweyne,  
 Thanne certés to my lady may I seye,  
 "Holdeth youre heste, the rokkés been  
 awaye."

'Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me;  
 Preye hire she go no faster cours than ye;  
 I seye, preyeth your suster that she go  
 No faster cours than ye thise yerés two;  
 Thanne shal she been evene atté fulle  
 alway,

And sprynge-flood lasté bothé nyght and  
 day; 1070

And, but she vouchesauf in swich manere  
 To graunté me my sovereyn lady deere,  
 Prey hire to synken every rok adoun  
 Into hir owene dirké regioun  
 Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth  
 inne,

Or never-mo shal I my lady wyne.  
 Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot  
 seke,—

Lord Phebus, se the teeris on my cheke,  
 And of my payne have som compassioun!  
 And with that word in swowne he fil adoun,  
 And longé tyme he lay forth in a trauunce.

His brother, which that knew of his  
 penaunce,  
 Up caughte hym, and to bedde he hath  
 hym brought.

Dispeyréd in this torment and this thoght,  
 Lete I this woful créaturé lye;  
 Chese he, for me, wher he wol lyve or dye.

Arveragus with heele and greet honour,  
 As he that was of chivalrie the flour,  
 Is comen hoom, and othere worthy men. 1090  
 O, blisful artow now, thou Dorigen!  
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne  
 armes,

The fresshé knyght, the worthy man of  
 armes,

That loveth thee as his owene hertés lyf.  
 Nothyng list hym to been ymaginatyf,  
 If any wight had spoke, whil he was oute,  
 To hire of love; he hadde of it no doute.  
 He noght entendeth to no swich mateere,  
 But daunceth, justeth, maketh hire good  
 cheere;

1074. Under her name of *Hecate* *Diana* ruled  
 also in the underworld.

And thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,

And of the sike Aurelius wol I telle. 1100

In langour and in torment furyus,  
Two yer and moore, lay wrecche Aurelius  
Er any foot he myghte on erthe gon;  
Ne confort in this tymé hadde he noon,  
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk.  
He knew of al this wo and al this werk;  
For to noon oother creature, certeyn,  
Of this matere he dorsté no word seyn;  
Under his brest he baar it moore secree  
Than ever dide Pamphilus for Gala-  
thee. 1110

His brest was hool withouté for to sene,  
But in his herte ay was the arwé kene;  
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure  
In surgerye is perilous the cure,  
But men myghte touche the arwe, or come  
therby.

His brother weepe and wayléd pryvély,  
Til atté laste hym fil in remembrance  
That whiles he was at Orlens in Fraunce,—  
As yongé clerkés, that been lykerous  
To reden artés that been curious, 1120  
Seken in every halke and every herne  
Particler sciénces for to lerne,—  
He hym remembred that, upon a day,  
At Orlens in studie a book he say  
Of magyk natureel, which his felawe,  
That was that tyme a bachelor of lawe,—  
Al were he ther to lerne another craft,—  
Hadde pryvély upon his desk y-laft,  
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns  
Touchyng the eighte and twenty man-  
siouns 1130

That longen to the moone, and swich folye  
As in oure dayés is nat worth a flye,—  
For hooly churchés feith, in oure bileve,  
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve;  
And when this book was in his remem-  
braunce,

Anon for joye his herté gan to daunce,  
And to hymself he seyde pryvély,  
'My brother shal be warissheed hastily,  
For I am sikker that ther be sciénces 1139  
By whiché men maken diverse apperences,

1110. *Pamphilus*, etc., a reference to the poem *Pamphilus de Amore*, of which Galatea was the heroine.

Swiche as thise subtille tregetourés pleye.  
For ofte at feestés have I wel herd seye  
That tregetours withinne an hallé large  
Have maad come in a water and a barge,  
And in the hallé rowen up and doun.  
Somytyme hath seméd come a grym leoun,  
And somtyme flourés sprynges in a mede;  
Somytyme a vyne, and grapés white and rede;  
Somytyme a castel, al of lym and stoon,  
And when hem lykéd voyded it anon,—  
Thus seméd it to everymannés sighte. 1151  
Now thanne conclude I thus, that if I  
myghte

At Orlens som old felawe y-fynde,  
That hadde these moonés mansions in  
mynde,

Or other magyk natureel above,  
He sholde wel make my brother han his  
love;

For with an apparence a clerk may make,  
To mannés sighte, that alle the rokkés blake  
Of Britaigne weren y-voyled everichon,  
And shippés by the brynké comen and gon;  
And in swich forme enduren a wowke or  
two. 1160

Thanne were my brother warissheed of his  
wo;

Thanne moste she nedés holden him  
biheste,

Or ellés he shal shame hire atté leeste.

What sholde I make a lenger tale of  
this?

Unto his brotheres bed he comen is,  
And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon  
To Orlens, that he up stirte anon,  
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare  
In hope for to been lisséd of his care.

When they were come almoost to that  
citee, 1171

But if it were a two furlong or thre,  
A yong clerk romynge by hymself they  
mette,

Which that in Latyn thriftilly hem grette,  
And after that he seyde a wonder thyng:  
'I knowe,' quod he, 'the cause of youre  
comyng,'—

And er they ferther any footé wente,  
He tolde hem al that was in hire entente.

This Briton clérk hym asked of felawes

1161. *woonke* (week), *Hang. 3 day*, *Corp. 3 year*.

The whiche that he had knowe in oldē dawes ; 1180

And he answerde hym that they dede were,  
For which he weep ful oftē many a teere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte, anon,  
And forth with this magicien is he gon  
Hoom to his hous, and maden hem wel  
at ese ;

Hem lakkéd no vitaille that myghte hem  
plese,

So wel arrayéd hous as ther was oon  
Aurelius in his lyf saugh never noon.

He shewed hym, er he wenté to sopeur,  
Forestés, parkés ful of wildē deer ; 1190  
Ther saugh he hertés with hir hornés hye,  
The gretteste that were ever seyn with  
eye,—

He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with  
houndes,

And somme with arwés blede of bittré  
woundes.

He saugh, whan voyded were thise wildē  
deer,

Thise fauconers upon a fair ryver,  
That with hir haukés han the herounslayn.

Tho saugh he knyghtés justyng in a playn,  
And after this he hidde hym swich ples-  
saunce 1199

That he hym shewed his lady on a daunce,  
On which hymself he dauncéd, as hym  
thoughte ;

And whan this maister that this magyk  
wroughte

Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handés  
two,

And, farewell ! al oure revel was ago.

And yet removede they never out of the  
hous

Whil they saugh al this sighté merveillous ;  
But in his studie, ther as his bookés be,  
They seten stille, and no wight but they  
thre.

To hym this maister calléd his squier,  
And seyde hym thus : ' Is redy oure soper ?  
Almoost an houre it is, I undertake, 1211  
Sith I yow bad oure soper for to make,  
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with  
me

Into my studie, ther as my bookés be. '

1205. was ago, Corp. <sup>3</sup> is y-do.

'Sire,' quod this squier, 'whan it liketh  
yow

It is al redy, though ye wol right now.'

'Go we thanne soupe,' quod he, 'as for  
the beste ;

This amorous folk somtyme moote han  
hir reste.'

At after soper fille they in trettee  
What sommé sholde this maistrés gerdown  
be 1220

To remoeven alle the rokkés of Britayne,  
And eek from Gerounde to the mouth of  
Sayne.

He made it straunge, and swoor, so  
God hym save !

Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde  
nat have,

Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat  
goon.

Aurelius, with blisful herte anon,  
Answerde thus : ' Fy on a thousand  
pound !

This wyde world, which that men seye  
is round,

I wolde it yeve, if I were lord of it !

This bargayn is ful dryve, for we becn  
knyt 1230

Ye shal be payéd trewely, by my trouthe,  
But looketh now, for no negligence or  
slouthe

Ye tarie us heere no lenger than to morwe.'

'Nay,' quod this clerk, 'have heer my  
feith to borwe.'

To bedde is goon Aurelius whan hym  
leste,

And wel ny al that nyght he hadde his  
reste.

What for his labour, and his hope of  
blisse,

His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.

Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,  
To Britaigne tooké they the righté way,—

Aurelius and this magicien bisyde ; 1241

And been descended ther they wolde abyde ;

And this was, as thise bookés me remembre,

The coldé, frosty sesoun of Decembre.

Phebus wox old, and hewed lyk latoun,

That in his hooté declynacioun

Shoon as the burnéd gold, with stremés  
brighthe ;

But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,  
Where as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.  
The bitter frostes with the sleet and reyn  
Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd ;  
Janus sit by the fyr with double berd,  
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn ;  
Biforn hym stant brawn of the tuskéd swyn,  
And 'Nowel' crieth every lusty man.

Aurelius in al that ever he kan  
Dooth to his maister chiere and reverence,  
And preyeth hym to doon his diligence  
To bryngen hym out of his peynés smerte,  
Or with a sword that he wolde slitte his  
herte. 1260

This subtil clerk swich routhe had of  
this man,

That nyght and day he spedde hym that  
he kan

To wayten a tyme of his conclusioun,  
This is to seye, to maken illusion  
By swich an apparencce or jogelrye,—  
I ne kan no termés of astrologye,—  
That she and every wight sholde wene  
and seye

That of Britaigne the rokkés were aweye,  
Or ellés they were sonken under grounde.  
So atté laste he hath his tyme y-founde  
To maken his japés and his wrecchednesse  
Of swich a superstitious cursédnesse.

His tables Tolletanés forth he brought  
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakkéd nought,  
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeeris,  
Né his rootés, ne his othere geeris,  
As been his centris, and his argumentz,  
And his proporcioneles convenientz

For his equacions in every thyng ; 1279  
And by his eighté speere in his wirkyng  
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove  
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above,  
That in the nynté speere considered is ;

1248. *in Capricorn*. This would be on Dec. 13.  
1273. *tables Tolletanes*, the astronomical tables,  
drawn up by order of Alphonso X. of Castille,  
and primarily adapted to the city of Toledo.

1275. *collect*, a table of a planet's motion during  
a round number of years, as opposed to the *expans*,  
or separate, years.

1280. *And by his eighté speere*. The astrologer  
was calculating the precession of the equinoxes  
by the distance between the true equinoctial  
point—the head of the fixed Aries—and the nearest  
convenient bright star, for which Alnath was  
chosen.

Ful subtilly he kalkuléd al this.

When he hadde founde his firsté  
mansiou, 1290

He knew the remenaunt by proporcioun,  
And knew the arisyng of his mooné weel,  
And in whos face, and terme, and every-  
deel,

And knew ful weel the moonés mansiou  
Acordaunt to his operacioun ;  
And knew also his othere observaunces,  
For swiche illusiouns and swiche mes-  
chaunces

As hethen folk useden in thilké dayes ;  
For which no lenger makéd he delayes ;  
But thurgh his magik for a wyke or tweye  
It semed that alle the rokkés were aweye.

Aurelius, which that yet despaired is  
Wher he shal han his love or fare amys,  
Awaiteth nyght and day on this myracle ;  
And whan he knew that ther was noon  
obstacle, 1300

That voyded were thise rokkés everychon,  
Doun to his maistrés feet he fil anon,  
And seyde, 'I, woful, wrecche Aurelius,  
Thanké yow, lord, and lady myn, Venus,  
That me han holpen fro my carés colde ;  
And to the temple his wey forth bath he  
holde,

Where as he knew he sholde his lady see ;  
And whan hesaugh his tyme anon right hee,  
With dredful herte and with ful humble  
cheere, 1309

Salewed hath his sovereyn lady deere.  
'My righté lady,' quod this woful man,  
'Whom I mooste drede, and love as I  
best kan,

And lothest were of al this world displese,  
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese  
That I moste dyen heereat youre footanon ;  
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon,  
But certés, outhur moste I dye or pleyne.  
Ye sle me giltéles for verray payne,  
But of my deeth thogh that ye have no  
routhe,

Avyseth yow, er that ye breke youre  
trouthe. 1320

Repenteth yow, for thilké God above,  
Er ye me sleen by-cause that I yow love,  
For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han  
hight,—

Nat that I chalange anythyng of right,  
Of yow, my sovereyn lady, but youre  
grace,—

But in a gardyn yond, at swich a place,  
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me,  
And in myn hand youre trouthe pligheten ye  
To love me best,—God woot ye seyde so,  
Al be that I unworthy be therto. 1330

Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,  
Moore than to savemyn hertes lyfright now,  
I have do so as ye comanded me,  
And, if ye vouchesauf, ye may go see.  
Dooth as yow list, have youre biheste in  
mynde,  
For, quyk or deed, right there ye shal me  
fynde.

In yow lith al to do me lyve or deye,—  
But wel I woot the rokkes been awaye.

He taketh his leve and she astonied  
stood ;

In al hir face nas a drope of blood, 1340  
She wendé never han come in swich a  
trappe !

‘Allas !’ quod she, ‘that ever this sholde  
happe,

For wende I never by possibilitee,  
That swich a monstre or merveille myghté  
be ;

It is agayns the proces of nature.’

And hoom she goth a sorweful créature,—  
For verray feere unnethé may she go.

She wepeth, wailleth al a day or two,  
And swowneth, that it routhe was to see ;

But why it was to no wight toldé shee, 1350  
For out of townne was goon Arveragus.

But to hirself she spak, and seyde thus,  
With face pale and with ful sorweful cheer,

In hire compleynt as ye shal after heere.  
‘Allas !’ quod she, ‘on thee, Fortune,

I pleyne,

That unwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne,  
For which tescapé woot I no socour,

Save oonly deeth or ellés dishonour.  
Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese,

But natheles yet have I levele lese 1360  
My lif, than of my body have a shame,

Or knowe myselfen fals, or lese my name ;

1335. As noted in E, the stories referred to in  
this wearisome complaint are all taken from St.  
Jerome's treatise, *Contra Jovinianum* (ch. 41,  
p. 306 *app.* in Migne).

And with my deth I may be quyt, y-wis ;  
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this,  
And many a mayde, y-slayn hir self, alas !  
Rather than with hir body doon trespas ?

‘Yis, certés, lo, thise stories beren  
witness

Whan Thretty Tirauntz ful of cursednesse  
Haddeslayn Phidoun, in Atthenés, at feste,  
They comanded his doghtres for taresté,  
And bryngen hem biforn hem in despit,  
Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delit ;  
And in hir fadrés blood they made hem  
daunce

Upon the pavement,—God yeve hem mys-  
chaunce !

For which thise woful maydens, ful of drede,  
Rather than they wolde lese hir mayden-  
hede

They prively ben stirt into a welle,  
And dreynthe hemselven, as the bookés telle.

‘They of Mecené leete enquire and seke,  
Of Lacedomye, fifty maydens eke, 1380

On whiché they wolden doon hir lecherye,  
But was ther noon of al that compaignye

That shenasslayn, and with a good entente  
Chees rather for, to dyé, than assente

To ben oppressed of hir maydenhede.  
Why sholde I thanne to dyé been in drede ?

‘Lo, eek the tiraunt Aristoclides,  
That loved a mayden heet Stympthalides,

Whan that hir fader slayn was on a nyght,  
Unto Dianés temple goth she right, 1390

And hente the ymage in hir handes two,  
Fro which ymagé wolde she never go :

No wight ne myghte hir handes of it arace  
Til she was slayn, right in the selvé place.

‘Now sith that maydens hadden swich  
despit

To ben defouled with mannés foul delit,  
Wel oghte a wyf rather hirselven slec

Than ben defouled, as it thynketh me.  
‘What shal I seyn of Hasdrubalés wyf

That at Cartage birafte hirself hir lyf? 1400  
For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the

toun,  
She took hir children alle, and skipte adoun  
Into the fyr, and chees rather to dye

Than any Romayn dide hire vileyneye.

1379. *Mecene*, *Mecenias*.

1387. *Aristoclides*, tyrant of Orchomenus.

'Hath nat Lucrese y-slayn herself, alas!  
At Romé, whan [that] she oppressed was  
Of Tarquyn? for hire thoughte it was a  
shame

To lyven whan she haddé loste hir name.

'The sevene maydens of Melesie, also,  
Hanslayn hemself for verray drede and wo,  
Rather than folk of Gawle hem sholde  
oppresse,—

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,  
Koude I now telle as touchynge this  
mateere.

'Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf  
so deere

Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde  
In Habradates woundés depe and wyde,  
And seyde, "My body, at the leesté way,  
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may."

'What sholde I mo ensamples heer-of  
sayn?

Sith that so manye han hemselven slayn 1420  
Wel rather than they wolde defouléd be,  
I wol conclude that it is bet for me  
To sleen myself than been defouléd thus.

I wol be trewe unto Arveragus,  
Or rather sleen myself in some manere,  
As dide Democionés doghter deere  
By-cause that she wolde nat defouléd be.  
O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee  
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, alas!  
That slowe hemself for swich a manere  
cas. 1430

As greet a pitee was it, or wel moore,  
The Theban mayden that for Nichanore  
Hirselven slow, right for swich manere wo.  
Another Theban mayden dide right so.  
Foroon of Macidonyehadde hire oppressed  
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede re-  
dressed.

What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,  
That for swich cas birafté himself hir lyf?  
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades

1409. *Melesie*, *Milesia*.

1414. *Habradate*. See Xenophon, *Cyropedia*, lib. vii., for the story of Abradates and Panthea.

1426. *Democionés doghter*. On the death of her betrothed, Leosthenes, she killed herself rather than take another as husband.

1430. *Nichanore*, refused by the Theban maiden because he was her conqueror.

1437. *Nicerates wyf*, at the time of the Thirty Tyrants.

His love, that rather for to dyen chees 1440  
Than for to suffre his body unburyed be?  
Lo, which a wyf was Alceaté,' quod she.  
'What seith Omer of goode Penalopee?

Al Grecé knoweth of hire chastitee.

*Pardee*, of Landomya is writen thus,

That whan at Troie was slayn Protheselaus,  
No lenger wolde she lyve after his day.

The same of noble Porcia telle I maye;

Withouté Brutus koudé she nat lyve,

To whom she hadde al hool hir herté yive.

The parfit wyfhood of Arthemessie 1451

Honuréd is thurgh al the Barbarie.

O Teuta, queene, thy wyfchy chastitee

To allé wyvès may a mirour bee.

The samé thyng I seye of Bilyea,

Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria.'

Thus pleynéd Dorigene a day or tweye,  
Purposynge ever that she woldé dey;   
But nathelees upon the thriddé nyght 1459  
Hoom cam Arveragus, this worthy knyght,  
And asked hire why that she weepes so sore,  
And she gan wepen ever lenger the moore.

'Allas!' quod she, 'that ever I was  
born!

Thus have I seyde,' quod she, 'thus have  
I sworn,—

And toold hym al, as ye han herd bifore,  
It nedeth nat reherce it yow namoore.

This housbonde, with glad chiere, in  
freendly wyse,

Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse,  
'Is ther oght ellés, Dorigen, but this?'

'Nay, nay,' quod she, 'God helpe me  
so as wys! 1470

This is to mucche, and it were Goddés wille.'

'Ye, wyf,' quod he, 'lat sleepen that  
is stille,

It may be wel, paráventure, yet to day;  
Ye shul youre trouthe holden, by my fay!

For God so wisly have mercy upon me,  
I hadde wel levere y-stikéd for to be,

For verray love which that I to yow have,  
But if ye sholde youre trouthe kepe and  
save!

1451. *Arthemessie*, of Caria, wife of Mausolus, whose tomb she built.

1453. *Teuta*, Queen of Illyria.

1454, 1455. Bilia was the wife of Duilius, consul 460 B.C.; Rhodogone, daughter of Darius, killed her nurse for suggesting a second marriage.

Trouthe is the hyeste thyng that man may  
kepe, — 1479

But with that word he brast anon to wepe,  
And seyde, 'I yow forbode, up peyne of  
deeth,

That never whil thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,  
To no wight telle thou of this aventure,—  
As I may best I wol my wo endure,—  
Ne make no contenance of hevynesse  
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse.'

And forth he cleped a squier and a mayde;  
'Gooth forth, anon, with Dorigen,' he  
sayde,

'And bryngeth hire to swich a place, anon.'  
They take hir leve and on hir wey they gon,  
But they ne wiste why she thider wente:  
He noldé no wight tellen his entente.

Paraventure an heepe of yow, y-wis,  
Wol holden hym a lewéd man in this,  
That he wol putte his wyf in jupartie.  
Herkeneth the tale, er ye upon hire crie;  
She may have bettré fortune than yow  
semeth;

And, when that ye han herd the talé,  
demeth.

This squier, which that highte Aurelius,  
On Dorigen that was so amorus, 1500  
Of aventure happéd hire to meete  
Amydde the toun, right in the quykest  
strete,

Asshe was bown to goon the wey forth right  
Toward the gardyn, ther as she had hight;  
And he was to the gardynward also;  
For wel he spyéd when she woldé go  
Out of hir hous to any maner place;  
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace,  
And he saleweth hire with glad entente,  
And asked of hire whiderward she wente;  
And she answerde, half as she were mad,  
'Unto the gardyn, as myn housbonde bad,  
My trouthe for to holde, allas! allas!'

Aurelius gan wonden on this cas,  
And in his herte hadde greet compassioun  
Of hire and of hire lamentacioun,  
And of Arveragus, the worthy knyght,  
That bad hire holden al that she had hight,  
So looth hym was his wyf sholde breke hir  
trouthe;

1481. of, om. E.  
1503. bown, ready.

And in his herte he caughte of this greet  
routhe, 1520

Considerynge the beste on every syde,  
That fro his lust yet were hym levere abyde,  
Than doon so heigh a cherlysshe wrecched.  
nesse

Agayns franchise and allé gentillesse;  
For which in fewé wordés seyde he thus:  
'Madame, seyeth to youre lord, Arver-  
agus,

That sith I se his greté gentillesse;  
To yow, and eek I se wel youre distresse,  
That him were levere han shame,—and  
that were routhe,—

Than ye to me sholde breké thus youre  
trouthe, 1530

I have wel levere ever to suffre wo,  
Than I departe the love bitwix yow twa.  
I yow relese, madame, into youre hond,  
Quyrt every surément and every bond  
That ye han maad to me as heer bifore,  
Sith thilké tymé which that ye were born.  
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never  
repreve

Of no biheste, and heere I take my leve,  
As of the treweste and the besté wyf,  
That ever yet I knew in al my lyf. 1540  
But every wyf be war of hire biheste;  
On Dorigene remembreth, atté leeste.  
Thus kan a squier doon a gentil dede  
As wel as kan a knyght, withouten drede.'

She thonketh hym upon hir knees al  
bare,

And hoom unto hir housbonde is she fare,  
And tolde hym al, as ye han herd me sayd;  
And be ye siker he was so weel apayd  
That it were impossible me to wryte.  
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?

Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf 1551  
In sovereyn blissé leden forth hir lyf;  
Never eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene.  
He cherisseth hire, as though she were a  
queene,

And she was to hym trewe for evermoore.  
Of thisé folk ye gete of me namoore.

Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorn,  
Curseth the tyme that ever he was born.  
'Allas!' quod he, 'allas, that I bihighte  
Of puréd gold a thousand pound of wighte  
Unto this philosophre! How shal I do?

I se namoore but that I am fordo ;  
 Myn heritagé moot I nedés selle,  
 And been a beggere ; heere may I nat dwelle  
 And shamen al my kynrede in this place,  
 But I of hym may geté better grace ;  
 But natheles I wole of hym assaye  
 At certeyn dayés, yeer by yeer, to paye,  
 And thanke hym of his grété curteisye.  
 Mytrouthé wol I kepe, I wol nat lye.' 1570

With herté soor he gooth unto his cofre,  
 And broughté gold unto this philosopre,  
 The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,  
 And hym bisecheth, of his gentillesse,  
 To graunte hym dayés of the remenaunt,  
 And seyde, 'Maister, I dar wel make avaunt  
 I failléd never of my trouthe as yit,  
 For sikerly my detté shal be quyt  
 Towardés yow, however that I fare  
 To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare ; 1580  
 But wolde ye vouchésauf, upon seuretee,  
 Two yeer, or thre, for to respiten me,  
 Thanne were I wel, for ellés moot I selle  
 Myn heritage ; ther is namoore to telle.'

This philosopre sobrelly answerde,  
 And seyde thus, whan he thise wordés  
 herde :

'Have I nat holdé covenant unto thee ?'  
 'Yes, certés, wel and trewely,' quod he.  
 'Hastow nat had thy lady as thee liketh ?'  
 'No, no,' quod he, and sorwefully he siketh.  
 'What was the causé ; tel me if thou kan.'  
 Aurelius his tale anon bigan,  
 And tolde hym al, as ye han herd bifoore ;  
 It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore.

He seide, 'Arveragus, of gentillesse,  
 Hadde levere dye in sorwe and in distresse,

Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals ;  
 The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde hym als,—  
 How looth hire was to been a wikked wyf,  
 And that she levere had lost that day hir lyf,  
 And that hir trouthe she swoor thurgh  
 innocence, 1601

She never erst herd speke of apparence ;  
 'That made me han of hire so greet piteé,  
 And right as frely as he sente hire me,  
 As frely sente I hire to hym ageyn ;  
 This is al and som, ther is namoore to seyn.'

This philosopre answerde, 'Leeve  
 brother,

Everich of yow dide gentilly til other ;  
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knyght,  
 But God forbedé, for his blisful myght, 1610  
 But if a clerk koude doon a gentil dede,  
 As wel as any of yow, it is no drede.

'Sire, I releessé thee thy thousand pound  
 As thou right now were copen out of the  
 ground,

Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me ;  
 For, sire, I wol nat taken a peny of thee  
 For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.  
 Thou hast y-payéd wel for my vitaille ;  
 It is ynogh, and farewel, have good day !'  
 And took his hors, and forth he goth his way.

Lordynges, this questioun wolde I aské  
 now, 1621

Which was the moosté fre, as thynketh  
 yow ?

Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.  
 I kan namoore, my tale is at an ende.

1621. E<sup>4</sup> this questioun thanne. Possibly the  
 word to be omitted is 'questionn.'

## GROUP G

## SECOND NUN'S TALE

*The Prologue of the Seconde Nonnes Tale*

THE ministre and the norice unto vice  
 Which that men clepe in English ydel-  
 nesse,

*Seconde Nonnes Tale*, a translation, at first  
 close, afterwards free, of the life of St. Cecilia in  
 the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine.  
 The stanzas on idleness were probably suggested  
 by the Prologue of the French translator, Jehan

That porter at the gate is of delices,  
 To eschue, and by hire contrarie hire  
 oppresse,—

That is to seyn, by leveful bisynesse,—  
 Wel oghten we to don al oure entente,  
 Lest that the feend thurgh ydelnesse us  
 hente,

de Vignay, but in the Tale Chaucer follows the  
 Latin.

3. *porter*, as in the *Roman de la Rose*.



For he that with his thousand cordés alye  
Continuëly us waiteth to biclappe, 9  
Whan he may man in ydelnesse espye,  
He kan so lightly cacche hym in his trappe,  
Till that a man be hent right by the lappe,  
He nys nat war the feend hath hym in  
honde :

Wel oghte us werche, and ydelnesse  
withstonde.

And though men dradden never for to dye,  
Yet seen men wel by resoun, doutélees,  
That ydelnesse is roten slogardy, e  
Of which ther never comth no good  
encres ;

And seen that slouthe hir holdeth in a lees  
Only to slepe and for to ete and drynke,  
And to devouren al that othere swynk. 21

And for to putte us fro swich ydelnesse,  
That cause is of so greet confusioun,  
I have heer doon my faithful bisynesse,  
After the Legende, in translacioun,  
Right of thy glorious lif and passioun,  
Thou with thy gerland wrought with rose  
and lilie,—

Thee, meene I, mayde and martir, seint  
Cecilie.

#### *Invocacio ad Mariam*

And thou that flour of virginés art alle,  
Of whom that Bernard list so wel to write ;  
To thee, at my bigynnyng, first I call, 31  
Thou confort of us wrecches, do me endite  
Thy maydens deeth, that wan thurgh  
hire merite,  
The eternal lyf, and of the feend victorie  
As man may after reden in hire storie.

Thow mayde and mooder, doghter of  
thy sone,  
Thow welle of mercy, synful soulés cure,  
In whom that God, for bountee, chees to  
wone,  
Thow humble, and heigh over every  
creature, 39

36-38. These three stanzas are partly a translation of some of the first twenty-one lines of Dante's *Paradise*, Cant. 33, or perhaps of some Latin prayer or hymn which Dante may have imitated.

Thow nobledest so ferforth omre nature,  
That no desceyn the Makere hadde of kynde  
His sone in blood and flessch to clothe  
and wynde.

Withinne the cloistre blisful of thy sydis  
Took mannés shape the eterneel Love  
and Pees, 4

That of the tryné compas lord and gyde is,  
Whom erthe, and see, and hevene, out  
of reles,  
Ay heryen ; and thou virgine wemméles  
Baar of thy body, and dweltest mayden  
pure,  
The creatour of every creature.

Assembled is in thee magnificence, 50  
With mercy, goodnesse, and with swich  
pitee,

That thou, that art the sonne of excellence,  
Nat oonly helpest hem that preyen thee,  
But often tyme, of thy benygnytee,  
Ful frely, er that men thyn help biseche,  
Thou goost biforn and art hir lyvés leche.

Now help, thow meeke and blisful fair  
mayde,

Me fleméd wrecche in this desert of galle ;  
Thynk on the womman Cananee, that sayde  
That whelpes eten somme of the crommes  
alle 60

That from hir lordés table been y-falle,  
And though that I, unworthy sone of Eve,  
Be synful, yet accepté my bileve.

And for that feith is deed withouten werkis,  
So, for to werken, yif me wit and space,  
That I be quit fro thennés that moost  
derk is.

O thou that art so fair and ful of grace,  
Be myn advocat in that heighé place,  
Theras withouten ende is songe Osanne,  
Thow Cristés mooder, doghter deere of  
Anne ! 70

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte,  
That troubled is by the contagioun

62. *sone of Eve*. The phrase (cp. l. 70, *reden that I write*) shows that this legend was not written as one of the Canterbury Tales.

Of my body, and also by the wighte  
Of erthely lust and fals affection !  
O havene of refut, O salvacioun  
Of hem that been in sorweand in distresse,  
Now helpe for to my werk I wol me dresse !

Yet preye I yow that reden that I write,  
Foryeve me that I do no diligence  
This ilk storie subtilly to endite, 80  
For bothe have I the wordés and sentence  
Of hym that at the seintés reverence  
The storie wroot, and folwen hire legende ;  
I pray yow that ye wole my werk amende.

*Interpretacio nominis Cecilie*

First wolde I yow the name of Seinte  
Cecile

Expowne, as men may in hir storie see.  
It is to seye in English 'hevene lillie,'  
For puré chaastnesse of virginitee,  
Or for she whittnesse hadde of honestee,  
And grene of conscience, and of good fame  
The sooté savour, lillie was hir name ; 91

Or Cecile is to seye 'the way to blynde,'  
For she ensample was by good techynge ;  
Or ellés Cecile, as I writen fynde,  
Is joynéd by a manere conjoynynge  
Of 'hevene' and 'lia,' and heere, in  
figurynge,  
The 'hevene' is set for thoght of hoolynesse  
And 'lia' for hire lastynge bisynesse.

Cecile may eek be seyde in this manere  
'Wantynge of blyndnesse,' for hir greté  
light 100

Of sapience, and for hire thewés cleere ;  
Or ellés, loo, this maydens namé bright  
Of 'hevene' and 'leos' comth, for which  
by right

Men myghte hire wel the hevene of peple  
calle,

Ensampler of goode and wisé werkés alle.

For 'leos' 'peple' in English is to seye ;  
And right as men may in the hevene see

*By. hevene lillie, 'calli lilla.'  
90. the way to blynde, 'cncis via.'  
100. leos, Gk. lilla.*

The sonne, and moone, and sterrés,  
every weye,

Right so men goostly in this mayden free  
Syen of feith the magnanymyte, 110  
And eek the cleernesse hool of sapience,  
And sondry werkés brighte of excellence.

And right so as thise philosophres write  
That hevene is swift, and round, and eek  
brennynge,

Right so was fairé Cecilie the white,  
Ful swift and bisyever, in good werkynge ;  
And round and hool in good perséverynge,  
And brennynge ever in charite ful brighte ;  
Now have I yow declaréd what she highte.

*Here bigynneth The Seconde Nommes Tale  
of the lyf of Seinte Cecile*

This mayden bright, Cecile, as hir lif  
seith, 120  
Was comen of Romayns and of noble  
kynde,

And from hir cradel up fostred in the feith  
Of Crist, and bar his gospel in hir mynde.  
She never cesséd, as I writen fynde,  
Of hir preyere, and God to love and drede,  
Bisekyng hym to kepe hir maydenhede.

And whan this mayden sholde unto a man  
Y-wedded be, that was ful yong of age,  
Which that y-clepéd was Valerian,  
And day was comen of hir marriage, 130  
She ful devout and humble in hire corage,  
Under hir robe of gold that sat ful faire,  
Hadde next hire flessch y-clad hire in an  
haire ;

And whil the organs maden melodie,  
To God alone in herté thus sang she ;  
'O Lord, my soule and eek my body  
gye

Unwemméd, lest that I confounded be ;  
And for his love that dyde upon a tree,  
Every secónde or thriddé day she faste  
Ay biddynge in hire orisons ful faste. 140

The nyght cam, and to beddéd moste  
she gon

With hire housbonde, as ofte is the manere,  
 And prively to hym she seyde anon,  
 'O sweete and wel-bilovéd spouse deere,  
 Ther is a conseil, and ye wolde it heere,  
 Which that right fayn I wolde unto yow  
 seye,  
 So that ye swere ye shul it nat biwreye.'

Valerian gan faste unto hire swere  
 That for no cas, ne thyng that myghte be,  
 He sholdé never mo biwreien here; <sup>150</sup>  
 And thanne at erst to hym thus seyde she:  
 'I have an aungel which that loveth me,  
 That with greet love, wher so I wake or  
 sleepe,  
 Is redy ay my body for to kepe;

And if that he may feelen, out of drede,  
 That ye me touche or love in vileynye,  
 He right anon wol sle yow with the dede,  
 And in youre yowthé thus ye sholden dye;  
 And if that ye in clené love me gye,  
 Hewolyowlovenas me for youre clenness,  
 And shewen yow his joye and his  
 brightnesse.' <sup>161</sup>

Valerian, corrected as God wolde,  
 Answerde agayn, 'If I shal trusten thee  
 Lat me that aungel se, and hym biholde,  
 And if that it a verray angel bee,  
 Thanne wol I doonasthou hast prayéd me;  
 And if thou love another man, for sothe,  
 Right with this sward thanne wol I sle  
 yow bothe!'

Cecile answerde anon right in this wise:  
 'If that yow list, the angel shul ye sec,  
 So that ye trowe in Crist, and yow baptize.  
 Gooth forth to *Via Apia*,<sup>172</sup> quod shee,  
 'That fro this toun nestant but milés three,  
 And to the pouré folkés that ther dwelle  
 Seyhem right thus as that I shal yow telle.

'Tell hem that I, Cecile, yow to hem  
 sente

<sup>172.</sup> *as ofte is the manere*, Chancer's tag. Cp. *and ye wolde it heere*, l. 145; *wher so I wake or sleepe*, l. 153, and many more.

<sup>173.</sup> *Via Apia*. Chancer seems to take this as the name of a place. The Latin says 'the third milestone on the Applan road.'

To shewen yow the goode Urban the olde,  
 For secree needés, and for good entente;  
 And whan that ye Seint Urban han biholde,  
 Telle hym the wordés whiche that I yow  
 tolde,  
 And whan that he hath purgéd yow fro  
 synne,  
 Thanne shul ye see that angel, er ye  
 twynne.'

Valerian is to the place y-gon,  
 And right as hym was taught by his  
 lernynge,  
 He foond this hooly olde Urban anon,  
 Among the seintés buryeles lotynge;  
 And he anon, withouten tariynge,  
 Dide his messáge; and whan that he it  
 tolde,  
 Urban for joye his handés gan up holde;

The teeris from his eyen leet he falle. <sup>174</sup>  
 'Almyghty Lord! O Jhesu Crist,  
 quod he,  
 'Sower of chast conseil, hierde of us alle,  
 The fruyt of thilké seed of chastitee  
 That thou hast sowe in Cecile, taak to theel  
 Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile,  
 Thee serveth ay thyñ owene thral Cecile;

For thilké spouse that she took right now,  
 Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere  
 As meke as ever was any lamb, to yow':  
 And with that word anon ther gan appere  
 An oold man, clad in whité clothes cleere,  
 That hadde a book with lettre of gold,  
 in honde,  
 And gan bifore Valerian to stonde.

Valerian, as deed, fil doun for drede  
 Whan he hym saugh, and he up hente  
 hym tho,  
 And on his book right thus he gan to rede:  
 'O Lord, o feith, o God, withouten mo;  
 O Cristendom, and Fader of alle also,  
 Aboven alle, and over alle, everywhere';  
 Thise wordés al with gold y-written were.

<sup>175.</sup> *bisy bee*, Latin: '*apis argumentosa*,' a delightful phrase for Cecilia.

<sup>176.</sup> *O Cristendom*, Latin: '*unum baptisma*.'

Whan this was rad, thanne seyde this  
oldé man, <sup>217</sup>

'Leevestow this thyng; or no? Sey ye  
or nay.'

'I levee af this thyng,' quod Valerian,  
'For oother thyng than this, I dar wel say,  
Under the hevene no wight thynké may.'  
Tho vanysshed this olde man, he nyste  
where,

And Pope Urban hym cristned right there.

Valerian gooth hoom and fynt Cecile  
Withinne his chambre with an angel  
stonde.

This angel hadde of roses and of lillie <sup>220</sup>  
Córones two, the which he bar in honde;  
And first to Cecile, as I understonde,  
He yaf that oon, and after gan he take  
That oother to Valerian, hir make.

'With body clene, and with unwemméd  
thoght,

Kepeth ay wel thise córones,' quod he;  
'Fro paradys to yow have I hem brought,  
Ne never mo ne shal they roten bee,  
Ne lese hir sooté savour, trusteth me;  
Ne never wight shal seen hem with hiseye,  
But he be chaast and haté vileynye; <sup>231</sup>

And thow, Valerian, for thow so soone  
Assentedest to good conseil also,  
Sey what thee list, and thou shalt han  
thy boone.'

'I have a brother,' quod Valerian tho,  
'That in this world I lové no man so;  
I pray yow that my brother may han grace  
Toknowethe trouthe, as I do in this place.'

The angel seyde, 'God liketh thy requeste,  
And bothé with the palm of martirdom  
Ye shullen come unto his blissful feste';  
And with that word Tiburce his brother  
com,

And whan that he the savour undernom  
Which that the roses and the lilies caste,  
Withinne his herte he gan to wondre faste;

And seyde, 'I wondre, this tyme of theyeer,  
Whennés that sooté savour cometh so

<sup>241.</sup> unto his blissful feste, 'ad Dominum.'

Of rose and lilies that I smellé heer;  
For though I hadde hem in myne handés  
two <sup>249</sup>

The savour myghte in me no depper go;  
The sweeté smel that in myn herte I fynde  
Hath chaungéd me al in another kynde.'

Valerian seyde, 'Two córones han we,  
Snow white and rosé reed, that shynen  
cleere,

Whiche that thyne eyen han no myght  
to see;

And as thou smellést hem thurgh my  
preyere,

So shaltow seen hem, leevé brother deere,  
If it so be thou wolt, withouten slouthe,  
Bileve aright and knowen verray trouthe.'

Tiburce answerd, 'Seistow this to me  
In soothnesse, or in drem I herkné this?'  
'In dremés,' quod Valerian, 'han we be  
Unto this tymé, brother myn, y-wis;  
But now at erst in trouthe ourdwellynge is.'  
'How woostow this,' quod Tiburce, 'in  
what wyse?'

Quod Valerian, 'That shal I thee devyse.

The aungel of God hath me the trouthe  
y-taught,

Which thou shalt seen, if that thou wolt  
reneye

The ydoles, and be clene, and ellés naught.'  
(And of the myracle of thise córones tweye,  
Seint Ambrose in his preface list to seye,—  
Solempnly this noble doctour deere  
Commendeth it, and seith in this manere:

'The palm of martirdom for to receyve  
Seinté Cecile, fulfid of Goddés yifte,  
The world and eek hire chambre gan she  
weyve;

Witnesse Tyburcés and Valerians shrifte,  
To which God of his bountee woldé shifte  
Córones two of floures wel smellynge,  
And made his angel hem the córones  
brynge; <sup>280</sup>

The mayde hath broght thise men to  
blisse above;

<sup>251.</sup> 'Ita sum refectus.'

The world hath wist what it is worth  
 certeyn,  
 Devocioun of chastitee to love.")  
 Thoshe wéð hym Cecile, al open and pleyn,  
 That alle ydoles nys but a thyng in veyn;  
 For they been dombe and therto they  
 been deve,  
 And chargéd hym his ydoles for to leve.

'Who so that troweth nat this, a beast  
 he is,'

Quod tho Tiburce, 'if that I shal nat lye,  
 And she gan kisse his brest that herdé this,  
 And was ful glad he koudé trouthe espye.  
 'This day I také thee for myn allye,'  
 Seydé this blissful, fairé maydè, deere,  
 And after that she seyde as ye may heere:

'Lo, right soas the love of Crist,' quod she,  
 'Made me thy brotheres wyf, right in  
 that wise

Anon for myn allye heer take I thee,  
 Syn that thou wolt thyne ydolés despise;  
 Go with thy brother now, and thee baptise,  
 And make thee clene so that thou mowe  
 biholde

The angeles face, of which thy brother  
 tolde.'

Tiburce answerde and seyde, 'Brother  
 dere,  
 First tell me whider I shal, and to what  
 man?'

'To whom?' quod he; 'com forth with  
 right good cheere;

I wol thee lede unto the Pope Urban.'  
 'Til Urban, brother myn Valerian?'

Quod tho Tiburce; 'woltow me thider  
 lede?

Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne menestow nat Urban,' quod he tho,  
 'That is so oft dampnéd to be deed, 310  
 And woneth in halkes alwey to and fro,  
 And dar nat onés putté forth his heed?  
 Men sholde hym brennen in a fyr so reed,  
 If he were founde, or that men myghte  
 hym spyce,

And we also to bere hym compaignye;

aga. 'Hodie te fator meum esse cognatum,' I  
 own you are really of my kin.

And whil we seken thilke divinitee,  
 That is y-hid in hevenc pryvély,  
 Algate y-brend in this world shul we be!'

To whom Cecile answerdè boldely,  
 'Men myghten dreden wel and skilfully  
 This lyf to lese, myne owene deeré brother,  
 If this were lyvyng oonly, and noon  
 oother;

But ther is bettre lif in oother place,  
 That never shal be lost, ne drede thee  
 noght,

Which Goddés sone us toldé thurgh his  
 grace;

That Fadrés sone hath allé thyng y-wroght,  
 And al that wroght is with a skilful thoght  
 The Goost, that fro the Fader gan procede,  
 Hath sowled hem, withouten any drede.

By word and by myracle, Goddés sone,  
 Whan he was in this world, declaréd here  
 That ther was oother lyf ther men may  
 wone.'

To whom answerde Tiburce, 'O suster  
 deere,

Ne seydestow right now in this manere,  
 "Ther nys but o God, lord in soothfast-  
 nesse,"—

And now of three how maystow bere  
 witness?

'That shal I tellé,' quod she, 'ere I go.  
 Right as a man hath sapiences three,  
 Memorie, engyn, and intellect also,

So in o beyng of divinitee 320  
 Thré personés may ther right wel bee';

Tho gan she hym ful bisely to preche  
 Of Cristés come, and of his peynés teche;

And many pointés of his passioun,  
 How Goddés sone in this world was  
 withholde

To doon mankyndé playn remissioun,  
 That was y-bounde in synne and carés  
 colde;

Al this thyng she unto Tiburce tolde,

322. 'Si hæc sola esset vita.'

324. Hitherto Chaucer has translated literally,  
 only eking out his stanzas with tags; he now  
 begins to abridge, at the same time adding stanzas  
 of his own.

And after this Tiburce in good entente  
With Valerian to Pope Urban he wente,

That thanked God, and with glade herte  
and light,

He cristned hym, and made hym in that  
place

Parfit in his lernyngé, Goddés knyght ;  
And after this Tiburc gat swich grace  
That every day he saugh in tyme and space  
The angel of God, and every maner boone  
That he God axéd, it was sped ful soone.

It were ful hard by ordre for to seyn  
How manye wondres Jhesus for hem  
wroughte ;

But atté laste, to tellen short and pleyn,  
The sergeantz of the town of Rome hem  
soghte,

And hem biforn Almache, the Prefect,  
broughte,

Which hem apposed, and knew al hire  
entente,

And to the ymage of Juppiter hem sente ;

And seyde, ' Whoso wol nat sacrifice,  
Swape of his heed ; this mysentencé heer ' !  
Anon thise martirs that I yow devyse,  
Oon Maximus, that was an officer  
Of the Prefectes, and his corniculer,  
Hem hente, and whan he forth the  
seintés ladde,

Hymself he weepe for pitee that he hadde.

Whan Maximus had herd the seintés  
loore,

He gat hym of the tormentourés leve,  
And ladde hem to his hous, withoute moore,  
And with hir prechyng, er that it were eve,  
They gonnen fro the tormentours to reve,  
And fro Maxime, and fro his folk echone,  
The falsé feith, to trowe in God allone.

Cecilé cam, whan it was woxen nyght,  
With precatés, that hem cristned ally-feere ;  
And afterward, whan day was woxen light,  
Cecilé hem seyde with a fulstedefast cheere,

<sup>360. atté laste.</sup> The offence alleged in the  
Legend is the burial of the bodies of martyrs.

' Now, Cristés owene knyghtés, leave,  
and deere,

Cast alle away the werkés of derknesse,  
And armeth yow in armure of brightnesse.

Ye han, for sothe, y-doon a greet bataille,  
Youre cours is doon, youre feith han ye  
conserved.

Gooth to the corone of lyf, that may nat  
faillé ;

The rightful Jugé, which that ye han served,  
Shal yeve it yow, as ye han it deserved ' ;  
And whan this thing was seyde as I devyse,  
Men ledde hem forth to doon the sacrifice.

But whan they weren to the place  
y-broght, —

To tellen shortly the conclusioun, —  
They nolde encense ne sacrifice right noght,  
But on hir knees they setten hem adoun  
With humble herte and sad devocioun,  
And losten bothe hir hevedes in the place ;  
Hir soulés wenten to the kyng of grace.

This Maximus, that saugh this thyng  
bityde,

With pitous teeris tolde it anon right,  
That he hir soulés saugh to hevene glyde,  
With aungelsful of cleernesse and of light ;  
And with his word converted many a wight,  
For which Almachius dide hym so to-bete,  
With whippe of feed, til he his lif gan lete.

Cecile hym took, and buryed hym anon  
By Tiburce and Valerian softly  
Withinne hire burying-place under the  
stoon ;

And after this Almachius hastily  
Bad his ministres fecchen openly  
Cecile, so that she myghte in his presence  
Doon sacrifice, and Juppiter encense ;

But they, converted at hir wisé loore,  
Wepten ful soore, and yaven ful credence  
Unto hire word, and cryden moore and  
moore,

' Crist, Goddés sone, withouten difference  
Is verray God, this is al oure sentence,

409. Added.

That hath so good a servant hym to serve ;  
This with o voys we trowen, thogh we  
sterve !' 420

Almachius that herde of this doynge  
Bad fecchen Cecile that hemyghte hire see ;  
And alderfirst, lo this was his axynge,  
'What maner womman artow?' tho  
quod he.

'I am a gentil womman born,' quod she.  
'I axé thee,' quod he, 'though it thee  
greeve,  
Of thy religioun, and of thy bileeve.'

'Ye han bigonne youre question folily,'  
Quod she, 'that wolden two answers  
conclude

In o demande ; ye axéd lewedly.' 430  
Almache answerde unto that similitude,  
'Of whennés comth thyn answering so  
rude ?'

'Of whennés ?' quod she, whan that  
she was freyned ;

'Of conscience, and of good feith  
unfeyned.'

Almachius seyde, 'Ne takestow noon  
heede  
Of my powér ?' And she answerde hym  
this :

'Youré myght,' quod she, 'ful litel is to  
dreede,

For every mortal mannés power nys  
But lyke a bladde, ful of wynd, y-wys ;  
For with a nedles poynt whan it is blowe  
May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe.'

'Ful wrongfully bigonné thou,' quod he,  
'And yet in wrong is thy perséveraunce ;  
Wostow nat how oure myghty princes free  
Hanthus comanded and maad ordinaunce,  
That every Cristen wight shal han  
penaunce,

But if that he his Cristendom withseye ;  
And goon al quit, if he wole it reneye ?'

'Yowre princes ergen, as youre nobleye  
dooth,' 449  
Quod tho Cecile, 'and with a wood sentence  
Ye make us gilty, and it is nat sooth ;

For ye that knowen wel oure innocence,—  
For as muche as we doon a reverence  
To Crist, and for we bere a Cristen name,—  
Ye putte on us a cryme, and eek a blamc ;

But we, that knowen thilké namé so  
For vertuous, we may it not withseye.'  
Almache answerde, 'Chees oon of thisé  
two,—

Do sacrifice, or Cristendom reneye, 459  
That thou mowe nowescapen by that weye.'  
At which the hooly blisful fairé mayde  
Gan for to laughe, and to the jugé sayde,

'O jugé, confus in thy nycétee !  
Woltow that I reneyé innocence,  
To maké me a wikked wight ?' quod she.  
Lo, he dissymuleth heere in audience,  
He stareth, and woodeth in his adver-  
tence.

To whom Almachius, 'Unsely wrecche !  
Ne wostow nat how far my myght may  
strecche ?

Han noght oure myghty princes to me  
yeven,

Ye, bothé power and auctoritee  
To maken folk to dyen or to lyven ?  
Whyspekestow so proudly thanne to me ?'

'I speké noght but stedfastly,' quod she,  
'Nat proudly, for, I speke as for my syde,  
We haten deedly thilké vice of pryde ;

And if thou dredé nat a sooth to heere,  
Thanne wol I shewe al openly by right  
That thou hast maad a fulgret lesyng heere.  
Thou seyst thy princes han thee even  
myght 480

Bothe for to sleen and for to quyken a wight ;  
Thou that ne mayst but oonly lyf bireve,  
Thou hast noon oother power, ne no leve :

But thou mayst seyn thy princes han  
thee maked

Ministre of deeth, for if thou speke of mo,  
Thou lyest, for thy power is ful naked !'  
'Do wey thy booldnesse !' seyde Alma-  
chius tho,

'And sacrifice to oure goddés er thou go !

I recché nat what wrong that thou me  
profre,  
For I can suffice it as a philosophre, 490

But thilk wrong<sup>es</sup> may I nat endure,  
That thou spekest of oure goddés heere,  
quod he.

Cecile answerde, 'O nycé creature!  
Thou seydest no word syn thou spak to me  
That I ne knew therwith thy nycétee,  
And that thou were in every maner wise  
A lewéd officer and a veyn justise!

Ther lakketh no thyng to thyne outter eyen  
That thou nart bynd, for thyng that we  
seen alle

That it is stoon,—that men may wel  
espyen,— 500

That ilk stoon a god thow wolt it calle.  
I rede thee, lat thyn hand upon it falle,  
And taste it wel, and stoon thou shalt it  
fynde,  
Syn that thou seest nat with thyne eyen  
blynde.

It is a shamé that the peple shal  
So scorné thee, and laughe at thy folye;  
For comunly men woot it wel overal  
That myghty God is in his hevenés hye,  
And thise ymáges, wel thou mayst espye,  
To thee, ne to himself, mowen noght  
profite, 510  
For in effect they been nat worth a myte.'

Thise wordés and swiche other seyde she;  
And he weex wrooth, and bad men  
sholde hir lede  
Hom til hir house, and 'In hir hous,'  
quod he,

'Brenne hire right in a bath of flambes  
rede';

And as he bad, right so was doon in dede,  
For in a bath they gonne hire fasté shetten,  
And nyght and day greet fyre they under  
betten.

The longé nyght, and eek a day also,  
For al the fyr, and eek the bathés beete,

489-497. Chaucer's addition.  
505-511. Added.

She sat al coold and felte of it no wo;  
It made hire nat a dropé for to sweete;  
But in that bath hir lyf she mosté lete,  
For he, Almachius, with ful wikke entente  
To sleen hire in the bath his sondé sente.

Thre strokés in the nekke he smoot hire  
tho,  
The tormentour, but for no maner chaunce  
He myghté noght smyt al hir nekke atwo;  
And for ther was that tyme an ordinaunce,  
That no man sholde doon men swich  
penaunce 530  
The ferthe strook to smyten, softe or soore,  
This tormentour ne dorsté do namoore;

But half deed, with hir nekke y-corven  
there,

He lefte hir lye, and on his wey is went.

The Cristen folk which that aboute hire  
were,

With sheetés han the blood ful faire y-hent.  
Thre dayés lyvèd she in this torment,  
And never cessèd hem the feith to teche  
That she hadde fostred; hem she gan to  
preche; 539

And hem she yaf hir moebles, and hir thyng,  
And to the Pope Urban bitook hem tho,  
And seyde, 'I axèd this at hevene kyng,  
To han respit thre dayés and namo,  
To recomende to yow, er that I go,  
Thise soulés, lo, and that I myghte do  
werche

Heere of myn hous perpetuely a cherche.'

Seint Urban, with his deknés, prively  
The body fette, and buryed it by nyghte  
Among his other seintés honestly.

Hir hous the chirche of Seinte Cecilie  
highte; 550

Seint Urban halwèd it, as he wel myghte,  
In which, into this day, in noble wyse,  
Mendoon to Crist and to his seinte servyse.

*The prologe of the Chanons Yemannes  
Tale*

Whan toold was al the lyf of Seinte  
Cecile,

535, 536. Added.



Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile,  
At Boghton-under-Blee, us gan atake  
A man that clothed was in clothes blake,  
And undernethe he had a white surplis;  
His hackeney, which that was al pomely  
grys,

So swatté that it wonder was to see; 560  
It semed as he had prikéd milés three.  
The hors eek that his Yeman rood upon  
So swatté that unnethé myghte it gon;  
Abouté the peytrel stood the foom ful hye,  
He was of foom al flekkéd as a pye.  
A male tweyfoold upon his croper lay,  
It seméd that he caried lite array.  
Al light for somer lord this worthy man,  
And in myn herté wondren I bigan  
What that he was, til that I understood 570  
How that his cloke was sowéd to his hood,  
For which, whan I hadde long avyséd me,  
I deméd hym som Chanoun for to be.  
His hat heng at his bak down by a laas,  
For he hadde riden moore than trot or  
paas;

He hadde ay prikéd lik as he were wood.  
A cloté-leef he hadde under his hood  
For swoot, and for to kepe his heed from  
heete;

But it was joyé for to seen hym swete!  
His forheed dropped as a stillatorie 580  
Were ful of plantayne and of paritorie;  
And whan that he was come he gan to crye,  
'God save,' quod he, 'this joly compaignye!  
Faste have I prikéd,' quod he, 'for youre  
sake,

By-cause that I woldé yow atake  
To riden in this myrie compaignye.'  
His Yeman eek was ful of curteisye,  
And seyde, 'Sires, now in the morwétyde,  
Out of youre hostelrye I saugh you ryde,  
And warnéd heer my lord, and my  
soverayn, 590

Which that to ryden with yow is ful fayn,  
For his desport; he loveth daliaunce.'

'Freend, for thy warnyng God yewe thes  
good chaunce!'

Thanne seyde oure Hoost, 'for certés it  
wolde seme

Thylord were wys, and so I may wel deme;  
He is ful jocunde also, dar I leye!  
Can he oght telle a myrie tale or tweye,  
With which he gladé may this com-  
paignye?'

'Who, sire? mylord? ye, ye, withouten  
lye! 599

He kan of murthe, and eek of jolitee  
Nat but ynough; also, sire, trusteth me,  
And ye hym knewé as wel as do I,  
Ye woldé wondre how wel and craftily  
He koudé werke, and that in sondry wise.  
He hath take on hym many a greet emprise,  
Which were ful hard for any that is heere  
To brynge about, but they of hym it leere.  
As hoomey as he rit amongés yow,  
If ye hym knewe it wolde befor youre prow;  
Ye woldé nat forgoon his áqueyntaunce  
For muchel good, I dar leye in balaunce  
Al that I have in my possessioun.  
He is a man of heigh discrecioun;  
I warne yow wel, he is a passyng man.'

'Wel,' quod oure Hoost, 'I pray the  
tel me than

Is he a clerk or noon? Telle what he is.'

'Nay, he is gretter than a clerk, y-wis,  
Seyde this Yeman, 'and in wordés fewe,  
Hoost, of his craft somewhat I wol yow  
shewe. 619

'I seye, mylord kan swich subtilitee,—  
But al his craft ye may nat wite at me,  
And somewhat helpe I yet to his wirkyng,—  
That al this ground on which we been  
ridyng,

Til that we come to Caunterbury toun,  
He koude al clené turne it up-so-down,  
And pave it al of silver and of gold.'

And whan this Yeman hadde this tale  
y-told

Unto oure Hoost, he seyde, '*Benedicite!*  
This thyng is wonder merveillous to me,  
Syn that thy lord is of so heigh prudence,  
By cause of which men sholde hym  
reverence, 631

That of his worshiþe rekketh he so lite.  
His overslopé nys nat worth a myte,  
As in effect, to hym, so moot I go!  
It is al bauty and to-tore also.

Why is thy lord so sluttish, I the preye,

603. *craftily, H<sup>o</sup> the sluffly.*

555. *fyve mile, i.e. from Ospringe.*  
573. *som Chanoun.* The description accords  
with that of a 'black Augustinian.'

And is of power bettre clooth to beye,—  
If that his dede accordé with thy speche?  
Tellé me that, and that I thee biseche.

'Why?' quod this Yeman, 'wherto axe  
ye me?' 640

God help me so, for he shal never thee!—  
But I wol nat avowé that I seye,  
And therefore keepe it secree, I yow  
preye,—

'He is to wys, in feith, as I bileeve;  
[That that is overdoon it wol nat preeve  
Aright; as clerkés seyn, it is a vice.  
Wherefore in that I holde hym lewed and  
nyce;

For whan a man hath over-greet a wit,  
Ful oft hym happeth to mysusen it.  
So dooth my lord, and that me greveth  
soore. 650

God it amende! I kan sey yow namoorc.'  
'Ther-of no fors, good Yeman,' quod  
oure Hoost,

'Syn of the konnyng of thy lord thow woost,  
Telle how he dooth, I pray thee hertely,  
Syn that he is so crafty and so sly;  
Where dwellé ye, if it to tellé be?'

'In the suburbs of a town,' quod he,  
'Lurkyng in hernés, and in lanés blynde,  
Where as thise robbours and thise thieves  
by kynde,

Holden hir pryvee fereful residence, 660  
As they that dar nat shewen hir presence;  
So faren we, if I shal seye the sothe.'

'Now,' quod oure Hoost, 'yet lat me  
talke to the;

Why artow so discoloured of thy face?'

'Peter!' quod he, 'God yeve it hardé  
grace,

I am so uséd in the fyr to blowe,  
That it hath chaungéd my colour, I trowe.  
I am nat wont in no mirour to prie,  
But swynké soore, and lerné multiplie;  
We blondren ever, and pouren in the fir,  
And for al that we faille of our desir, 671  
For ever we lakken oure conclusioun.

To muchel folk we doon illusioun,  
And borwé gold, be it a pound or two,  
Or ten, or twelve, or manye sommés mo,  
And make hem wenen, at the leesté weye,  
That of a pound we koudé maké tweye;  
Yet is it fals; but ay we han good hope

It for to doon and after it we grope;  
But that sciéce is so fer us biforn 680  
We mowen nat, al though we hadde it  
sworn,

It over-take, it slit away so faste.  
It wole us maken beggers atté laste.'

Whil this Yeman was thus in his talking  
This Chanoun drough hym neer, and herde  
al thyng

Which this Yeman spak, for suspicioun  
Of mennés speche ever haddé this  
Chanoun;

For Catoun seith that he that gilty is  
Demeth alle thyng bespoken of hym, y-wis.  
That was the cause he gan so ny hym drawe  
To his Yeman, to herkennen al his sawe,  
And thus he seyde unto his Yeman tho:  
'Hoold thou thy pees, and speke no  
wordés mo!

For if thou do, thou shalt it deere abyé!  
Thou sclaudrest me, heere in this  
compaignye,  
And eek discoverest that thou sholdest  
hyde.'

'Ye?' quod our Hoost, 'telle on what  
so bityde;

Of al his thretyng rekké nat a myte!'  
'In feith,' quod he, 'namoore I do  
but lyte.'

And whan this Chanoun saugh it wolde  
nat be, 700

But his Yeman wolde telle his pryveteé,  
He fledde away for verray sorwe and  
shame.

'A!' quod the Yeman, 'heere shal  
arise a game;

Al that I kan anon now wol I telle,  
Syn he is goon,—the foulé feend hym  
quelle!

For never heer-after wol I with hym meete,  
For peny ne for pound, I yow biheete!  
He that me broghté first unto that game,  
Er that he dye, sorwe have he and shame;  
For it is ernest to me, by my feith! 710  
That feele I wel, what so any man seith.  
And yet for al my smert, and al my grief,

688. Catoun: *De Morib.* l. 17: 'Conscius ipse  
sibi de se putat omnia dici.'

690. *That was the cause, H<sup>1</sup> By cause of  
that.*

They wolde hem selle, and spenden on  
this craft ;

They kan nat styntē til no thyng be left ;  
And evermoore, where that ever they goon,  
Men may hem knowē by smel of brymston.  
For al the world they styngen as a goot ;  
Hir savour is so rammyssh and so hoot  
That though a man a milē from hem be  
The savour wole infecte hym, trustē me.  
Lo thus by smellyng, and threedbare  
array, 890

If that men liste, this folk they knowē may ;  
And if a man wole aske hem pryvely,  
Why they been clothed so unthriftyly,  
They right anon wol rownen in his ere  
And seyn, that if that they espiēd were,  
Men wolde hem slee by-cause of hirsience.  
Lo, thus this folk bitrayen innocence !

Passē over this, I go my tale unto.  
Er that the pot be on the fire y-do,  
Of metals with a certeyn quantitee 900  
My lord hem tempreth, and no man but  
he,—

Now he is goon I dare seyn boldely,—  
For as men seyn he kan doon craftily,  
Algate I woot wel he hath swich a name,  
And yet ful oft he renneth in a blame ;  
And wite ye how? Ful ofte it happeth so  
The pot to-breketh, and farewell, al is go.  
Thise metals been of so greet violence  
Oure wallēs mowe nat make hem  
resistance, 909

But if they weren wrought of lym and stoon,  
They percen so, and thurgh the wal they  
goon,

And. somme of hem synken into the  
ground,—

Thushan we lost by tymē many a pound,—  
And somme are scatered al the floor aboute,  
Somme lepe into the roof, withouten doute.  
Though that the feend noght in oure  
sightē hym shewe,

I trowe he with us be, that ilkē shrewe !  
In hellē, where that he is lord and sire,  
Nis ther moore wo, ne moore rancour,  
ne ire. 919

Whan that oure pot is broke, as I have  
said,

Every man chit and halt hym yvele apayd.

919. H<sup>o</sup> Nis ther no more wo, no anger, no ire.

Somme seyde it was along<sup>e</sup> on the h  
makyng,

Somme seydenay, it was on the blowyng,—  
Thanne was I ferd, for that was myn office.  
'Straw !' quod the thriddē, 'ye been  
lewed and nyce,

It was nat temprēd as it oghtē be.'

'Nay,' quod the fourthē, 'stynt and  
herknē me ;

By-cause our fir ne was nat maad of beech,  
That is the cause, and oother noon, so  
theech.'

I kan nat telle wheron it was along, 920  
But wel I woot greet strif us is among.

'What !' quod my lord, 'ther is  
namoore to doone ;

Of thise perils I wol be war eft-soone.  
I am right siker that the pot was crased ;  
Be as be may, be ye no thyng amased ;  
As usage is, lat swepe the floor as swithe,  
Plukke up your herēs and beeth glad  
and blithe !'

The mullok on an heepe i-swepēd was,  
And on the floor y-cast a canēvas, 929  
And al this mullok in a syve y-throwe,  
And sifted and y-pikēd many a throwe.

'Pardee !' quod oon, 'somwhat of  
oure metal

Yet is ther heere, though that we han  
nat al.

Al though this thyng myshappēd have as  
now,

Another tyme it may be wel ynow.  
Us mostē putte oure good in aventure ;  
A marchant, *pardee !* may nat ay endure,  
Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee.  
Somtyme his good is drenchēd in the see,  
And somtyme comth it sauf unto the londe.

'Pees !' quod my lord, 'the nexte  
tyme I shal fonde 931

To bryngen oure craft al in another plite ;  
And but I do, sires, lat me han the wite ;  
Ther was defaute in somewhat, wel I woot.'

Another seyde the fir was over hoot ;  
But, be it hoot or coold, I dar seye this,  
That we concluden evermoore amys.

We faille of that which that we wolden  
have,

And in oure madnesse evermoore we rave ;

941. y-pikēd, picked over ; H<sup>o</sup> y-plukked.

And whan we been togidres everichoon  
 Every man semeth a Salomon ; 961  
 But althyng which that shyneth as the gold,  
 Nis nat gold, as that I have herd it told ;  
 Ne every appul that is fair at eye  
 Ne is nat good, what somen clappeor crye.  
 Right so, lo, fareth it amonges us :  
 He that semeth the wiseste, by Jhesus,  
 Is moost fool, whan it cometh to the preef ;  
 And he that semeth trewest is a theef.  
 That shul ye knowe, er that I fro yow  
 wende, 970  
 By that I of my tale have maad an ende.

## [PART II]

Ther is a Chanoun of Religioun  
 Amonges us wolde infecte al a toun.  
 Thogh it as greet were as was Nynyvee,  
 Rome, Alisaundre, Troye, and othere  
 three.

His sleightes and his infinit falsnesse  
 Ther koudé no man writen, as I gesse,  
 Though that he lyvé myghte a thousand  
 yeer.

In al this world of falshede nis his peer,  
 For in his termés so he wolde hym  
 wynde, 980

And speke his wordés in so sly a kynde,  
 Whanne he comuné shal with any wight,  
 That he wol make hym doten anon right,  
 But it a feend be, as hymselfen is.  
 Ful many a man hath he bigiled er this,  
 And wole, if that he lyvé may a while ;  
 And yet men ride and goon ful many a mile  
 Hym for to seke and have his aqueyntaunce,  
 Noght knowyng of his falsé governaunce ;  
 And if yow list to yeve me audience, 990  
 I wol it tellé heere in youre presence.

But, worshipful chanouns religious,  
 Ne demeth nat that I desclaundre youre  
 hous,

Although my talé of a chanoun bee ;  
 Of every ordre som shrewe is, *pardes*,  
 And God forbede that al a compaignye  
 Sholde rewe o singuleer mannés folye.  
 To sclaunder yow is nothyng myn entente,  
 But to correcten that is mys, I mente.  
 This talé was nat oonly toold for yow, 1000

978. *lyve myghte*, H<sup>o</sup> *mighte lyven*.

But teek for othere mo ; ye woot wel how  
 That among Cristés apostellés twelve  
 Ther nas no traytour but Judas hymselfe.  
 Thanne why sholde al the remenant have  
 a blame,

That giltyes were ? By yow I seye the  
 same,

Save oonly this, if ye wol herken me,—  
 If any Judas in youre covent be,  
 Remoeveth hym bitymés, I yow rede,  
 If shame, or los, may causen any drede,  
 And beeth no thyng displeséd, I yow  
 preye, 1010  
 But in this cas herketh what I shal seye.

In Londoun was a preest, an annuéeleer,  
 That ther-innedwelléd haddé many a yeer,  
 Which was so plesaunt and so servysable  
 Unto the wyf, where as he was at table,  
 That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for  
 to paye

For bord ne clothyng, wente he never so  
 gaye ;

And spendyng silver hadde he right ynow.  
 Ther-of no fors, I wol procede as now,  
 And tellé forth my tale of the chanoun  
 That broghté this preest to confusioun.

This falsé chanoun cam upon a day  
 Unto this preestés chambre, wher he lay,  
 Bisechyng hym to lene hym a certeyn  
 Of gold, and he wolde quite it hym ageyn.  
 'Leene me a marc,' quod he, 'but dayés  
 three,

And at my day I wol it quiten thee ;  
 And if so be that thow me fyndé fals  
 Another day, do hange me by the hals.'

This preest hym took a marc, and that  
 as swithe, 1020

And this chanoun hym thanked ofté sithe,  
 And took his leve, and wenté forthe his  
 weye,

And at the thridde day broghte his moneye,  
 And to the preest he took his gold agayn,  
 Wher-of this preest was wonder glad and  
 sayn.

'Certés,' quod he, 'nothyng anoyeth me  
 To lene a man a noble, or two, or thre,

1012. *an*, om. E.

1012. *annuéeleer*, a priest employed to sing  
 anniversary masses for the dead.

Or what thyng were in my possessioun,  
Whan he so trewe is of condicioun 1039  
That in no wise he breké wole his day;  
To swich a man I kan never seye nay.

'What I' quod this chanoun, 'sholde  
I be untrewé?

Nay, that were thyng y-fallen al of newe.  
Trouthe is a thyng that I wol ever kepe,  
Unto that day in which that I shal crepe  
Into my grave, or ellis, God forbede!  
Bileveth this, as siker as the Crede.  
God thanke I, and in good tymé be it sayd,  
That ther was never man yet yvele apayd  
For gold ne silver that he to me lente;  
Ne never falshe in myn herte I mente;  
And, sire,' quod he, 'now of my  
pryvétee,—

Syn ye so goodlich han been unto me,  
And kithéd to me so greet gentillesse,—  
Somwhat to quyte with youre kyndénesse  
I wol yow shewe, and if yow list to leere.  
I wol yow teché pleynly the manere  
How I kan werken in philosophie;  
Taketh good heede ye shul wel seen at eye  
That I wol doon a maistrie er I go.' 1060

'Ye,' quod, the preest, 'ye, sire, and  
wol ye so?

Marie! ther-of I pray yow hertely.'

'At youre comandement, sire, trewely,'  
Quod the chanoun, 'and ellis God  
forbeede.'

Loo, how this thief koude his servise  
beede!

Ful sooth it is that swiche profréd servyse  
Stynketh, as witnessen thise oldé wyse;  
And that ful soone I wol it verifie  
In this chanoun, roote of alle trecherie,  
That ever moore delit hath and glad-  
nesse,— 1070

Swiche feendly thoughtés in his herte  
imprese,—

How Cristés peple he may to meschief  
brynge.

God kepe us from his false dissymulyngé!  
Noght wisté this preest with whom  
that he delt,

Ne of his harm comynge he no thyng felte.  
O sely preest, O sely innocent!  
With covetise anon thou shalt be plent.  
O gracéless, ful bynd is thy conceite,

No thyng ne artow war of the deceite  
Which that this fox y-shapen hath for the;  
His wily wrenchés thou ne mayst nat flee;  
Wherefore, to go to the conclusioun  
That refereth to thy confusioun,  
Unhappy man, anon I wol me hye  
To tellen thyn unwit and thy folye,  
And eek the falsnesse of that oother  
wrecche,

As ferforth as my konnyngé may stretche.  
This chanoun was my lord, ye wolden  
weene—

Sire Hoost, in feith, and by the hevenes  
queene,

It was another chanoun and nat hec, 1090  
That kanan hundred fould moore subtiltee;  
He hath bitrayed folkés many tyme;  
Of his falshe it dulleth me to ryme.  
Ever whan I speke of his falshe,  
For shame of hym my chekés wexen rede;  
Algate they bigynnen for to glowe,  
For reednesse have I noon, right wel I  
knowe,

In my visagé; for fumés diverse  
Of metals, whiche ye han herd mereherce,  
Consumed and wasted han my reednesse.  
Now taak heede of this chanouns cursed-  
nesse. 1101

'Sire,' quod he to the preest, 'lat youre  
man gon

For quyk-silver, that we hadde it anon,  
And lat hym bryngen ounces two or three,  
And whan he comth, as fasté shal ye see  
A wonder thyng which ye saugh never  
er this.'

'Sire,' quod the preest, 'it shal be  
doon y-wis.'

He bad hisservant fecchen hym this thyng,  
And he al redy was at his biddynge, 1109  
And wente hym forth, and cam anon agayn  
With this quyk-silver, soothly for to  
sayn;

And toke thise ounces thre to the chanoun,  
And he hem leyde faire and wel adoun,  
And bad the servant colés for to brynge.  
That he anon myghte go to his werkynge

The colés right anon weren y-fet,  
And this chanoun took out a crossélet  
Of his bosom, and shewed it to the preest

1111. *soothly, H<sup>5</sup> shortly.*

'This instrument,' quod he, 'which that thou seest,

Take in thy hand and put thyself therein  
Of this quyk-silver an ounce, and heer bigynne,

In the name of Crist, to wexe a filosofre.  
Ther been ful fewe to whiche I wold profre  
To shewen hem thus muche of mysceience:  
For ye shul seen heer by experience,  
That this quyk-silver wol I mortifye,  
Right in youre sighte anon, I wol nat lye,  
And make it as good silver and as fyn,  
As ther is any in youre purse or myn, 1130  
Or elleswhere, and make it malliable;  
And elles holdeth me fals and unable  
Amonges folk for ever to appeere.

Have a poudre heer, that coste me deere,  
Shal make al good, for it is cause of al  
My konnyng, which that I yow shewen shal.

Voydith youre man and lat hym be ther-oute,

And shette the doré, whils we been aboute  
Oure pryveteé, that no man us espie,  
Whiles we werke in this filosofie.'

Al as he had fulfilled was in dede; 1140  
This ilké servant anonright out yede,  
And his maister shetté the dore anon,  
And to hire labour spedily they gon.

This preest at this curséd chanouns biddýng

Upon the fis anon setté this thyng,  
And blew the fir and bisyed hym ful faste;  
And this chanoun into the crosselet cast  
A poudre,—noot I wher-of that it was  
Y-maad, outhér of chalk, outhér of glas,  
Or somewhat ellés, was nat worth a flye,—  
Toblyndewith the preest, and bad hym hye  
The colés for to couchen al above  
The crosselet; 'For in tokenyng I thee love,'

Quod this chanoun, 'thyne owene handés two

Shul werche al thyng which shal heer be do.'

'Graunt mercy!' quod the preest,  
and was ful glad,  
And couchéd colés as that chanoun bad;  
And while he bisy was, this feendly wrecche,

This false chanoun,—the foulé feend hym fecche!— 1159

Out of his bosom took a bechen cole,  
In which ful subtilly was maad an hole,  
And therein put was of silver lemaille  
An ounce, and stoppéd was withouten faille  
The hole with wax, to kepe the lemaille in;  
And understondeth, that this falsé gyn  
Was nat maad ther, but it was maad bifore;  
And othere thyngés I shal tellen moore  
Herafterward, whiche that he with hym broghte;

Er hecam there, hym to bigile he thoghte;  
And so he dide, er that they wente atwyne; 1170

Til he had tervéd hym, he koude nat blyne.

It dulleth me, whan that I of hym speke;  
On his falschedé fayn wolde I me wreke,  
If I wiste how, but he is heere and there,  
He is so variaunt, he abit nowhere.

But taketh heede now, sires, for Goddés love!

He took this cole of which I spak above,  
And in his hand he baar it pryvely,  
And whyles the preest couchédé bisily  
The colés, as I toldé yow er this, 1180  
This chanoun seyde, 'Freend, ye doon amys,

This is nat couchéd as it oghté be;  
But soone I shal amenden it,' quod he.  
'Now lat me medle ther-with but a while,  
For of yow have I pitee, by Seint Gile!  
Ye been right hoot, I se wel how ye swete;  
Have heer a clooth, and wipe away the wete.'

And whylés that the preest wipéd his face,  
This chanoun took his cole with hardé grace, 1189

And leyde it above, upon the myddeward  
Of the crosselet, and blew wel afterward,  
Til that the colés gonné fasté brenne.

'Now yeve us drynké,' quod the chanoun thenne,

'As swithe al shal be wel, I undertake.  
Sitté we down, and lat us myrie make';

1171. *terved*, stripped. Dr. Skeat's restoration for the common reading *termed*.

1189. *with hardé* (Camb. *very*) *grace*, H<sup>1</sup> *achieves his face*.

And whan that this chanonés bechen cole  
Was brent, al the lemaille out of the hole  
Into the crosselet fil anon adoun,  
And so it mosté nedés, by resoun, 1199  
Syn it so evene aboven couchéd was ;  
But ther-of wiste the preest no thyng, alas !  
He deméd alle the coles yliché good,  
For of that sleighte he no thyng under-  
stood ;

And whan this alkamystre saugh his  
tyme,—

‘Ris up,’ quod he, ‘sire preest, and  
stonde by me,

And for I woot wel ingot have ye noon,  
Gooth walketh forth, and brynge us a  
chalk stoon,

For I wol make it of the samé shape  
That is an ingot, if I may han hape ;  
And bryngeth eek with yow a bolle or a  
panne 1210

Ful of water, and ye shul se wel thanne  
How that oure bisynesse shal thryve and  
preeve ;

And yet, for ye shul han no mysbileeve,  
Ne wrong conceite of me in youre absence,  
I ne wol nat been out of youre presence,  
But go with yow, and come with yow  
ageyn.

The chambré doré, shortly for to seyn,  
They openéd and shette, and went hir weye,  
And forth with hem they carieden the keye,  
And coome agayn withouten any delay.  
What sholde I tarien al the longé day ?  
He took the chalk and shoope it in the  
wise

Of an ingot, as I shal yow devyse.

‘I seye, he took out of his owene sleeve  
A tyme of silver—yvele moot he cheeve !—  
Which that ne was nat but an ounce of  
weighte ;

And taketh heede now of his curséd  
sleighte.

He shoope his ingot in lengthe and  
eek in breede

Of this tyme, withouten any drede,  
So slyly that the preest it nat espide, 1230  
And in his sleeve agayn he gan it hide,  
And fro the fir he took up his mateere  
And in thyngot putte it with myrie cheere,  
And in the water-vessel he it caste,

Whan that hym luste, and bað the preest  
as faste,

‘Look what ther is, put in thin hand  
and grope,

Thow fyndé shalt ther silver, as I hope.’  
What, devel of hellé ! sholde it ellis be ?

Shavyng of silver silver is, *parde !* 1239  
He putte his hand in, and took up a tyme  
Of silver fyn, and glad in every veyne

Was this preest, when he saugh that it  
was so.

‘Goddés blessing, and his moodres also,  
And allé halwés, have ye, sire chanoun !’

Seydé this preest, ‘and I hir malisoun !  
But, and ye vouchésauf to techen me

This noble craft and this subtilitee,  
I wol be youre in al that ever I may.’

Quod the chanoun, ‘Yet wol I make  
assay 1249

Theseconde tyme, that ye may taken heede  
And been expert of this, and in youre neede

Another daye assaye in myn absence  
This disciplyne, and this crafty science.

Lat take another ouncé,’ quod he tho,  
‘Of quyk-silver, withouten wordés mo,

And do therwith as ye han doon er this  
With that oother, which that now silver is.’

This preest hym bisiethe in al that he kan  
To doon as this chanoun, this curséd man,  
Comanded hym, and faste he blew the fir,  
For to come to the effect of his desir ; 1261  
And this chanoun, right in the meene  
while,

Al redy was the preest eft to bigile,  
And for a contenance in his hand he bar  
An holwé stikké,—taak kepe and be  
war,—

In the ende of which an ouncé and namoure  
Of silver lemaille put was (as bifore

Was in his cole) and stoppéd with wex weel,  
For to kepe in his lemaille every deel. 1269

And whil this preest was in his bisynesse,  
This chanoun with his stikké gan hym  
dresse

To hym anon, and his poudré caste in  
As he did er,—the devel out of his skyn

Hym terve, I pray to God, for his falshe dede !  
For he was ever fals in thought and dede,—

And with this stikke, above the crosselet,  
1274. *terve, H<sup>o</sup> terve, terve ; see l. 1171.*

That was ordeyned with that falsé get,  
He stired the colés, til relenté gan  
He wex agayn the fir, as every man,  
But it a fool be, woot wel it mootnede; 1280  
And al that in the stikké was out yede,  
And in the crosselet hastily it fel.

Nów, good sires, what wol ye bet  
than wel?

Whan that this preest thus was bigiled  
ageyn,

Supposynge noght but treuthé, sooth to  
seyn,

He was so glad that I kan nat expresse  
Inomanere his myrthe and his gladnesse;  
And to the chanoun he proffred eftsoone  
Body and good. 'Ye,' quod the chanoun  
soone,

'Though poure I be, crafty thou shalt  
me fynde; 1290

I warné thee yet is ther moore bihynde.  
Is ther any copér her-inne?' seyde he.

'Ye,' quod the preest, 'sire, I trowe  
wel ther be.'

'Ellés go bye us som, and that as swithe.  
Now, goodé sire, go forth thy wey and  
hy the.'

Hewente his wey, and with the copér cam,  
And this chanoun it in his handés nam,  
And of that copér weyed out but an ounce.

Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce,  
As ministre of my wit, the doublenesse 1300  
Of this chanoun, roote of alle cursednesse.  
He semed frendly to hem that knewe  
hym noght,

But he was feendly bothe in werk and  
thoght.

It weerieth me to telle of his falsnesse,  
And nathélees yet wol I it expresse  
To that entent men may be war therby,  
And for noon oother causé, trewely.

He putté the ounce of copér in the  
crosselet,

And on the fir as swithe he hath it set,  
And caste in poudre, and made the preest  
to blowe, 1310

And in his werkyng for to stoupé lowe,  
As he dide er, and al nas but a jape.

Right as hym liste the preest he made  
his ape;

And afterward in the ingot he it caste,

And in the panné putte it at the laste,  
Of water. In he putte his owene hand;  
And in his sleeve, as ye biforen-hand  
Herdé me telle, he hadde a silver teyne;  
Heslyly took it out,—this curséd heyne,—  
Unwityng this preest of his falsé craft, 1320  
And in the pannés botmé he hath it laft,  
And in the water rombleth to and fro,  
And wonder prývely took up also

The copér teyne, noght knowyngé this  
preest,

And hidde it, and hym henté by the brest,  
And to hym spak and thus seyde in his game,  
'Stoupeth adoun, by God, ye be to blame,  
Helpeth me now, as I dide yow whill-er,  
Putte in youre hand, and looketh what  
is theer.'

This preest took up this silver teyne  
anon, 1330

And thanné seyde the chanoun, 'Lat us gon  
With thise thre teynés whiche that we han  
wroght

To som goldsmyth, and wite if they been  
ought;

For, by my feith, I noldé for myn hood,  
But if they weré silver fyn and good,  
And that as swithé preevéd it shal bee.'

Unto the goldsmyth with thise teynés  
thre

They wente, and putte thise teynés in  
assay

To fir and hamer; myghtenomanseye nay,  
But that they weren as hem oghté be. 1340

This sottéd preest, who was gladder  
than he?

Was never brid gladder agayn the day,  
Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May.

Nas never man that lusté bet to syngé,  
Ne ladye lustier in carolyngé,

Or, for to speke of love and wommanhede,  
Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede

To stonden in gracé of his lady deere,  
Than hadde this preest this soory craft

to leere; 1340

And to the chanoun thus hespak and seyde:  
'For love of God, that for us allé deyde,

And as I may deserve it unto yow,  
What shal this receite costé, telleth now?'

'By oure lady,' quod this chanoun,  
'it is deere,



I warne yow wel, for save I and a frere  
In Engeland ther kan no man it make.'

'No fors,' quod he, 'now, sire, for  
Goddés sake,

What shal I paye? Telleth me, I preye.'

'Y-wis,' quod he, 'it is ful deere, I seye.  
Sire, at o word, if that thee list it have,  
Ye shul paye fourty pound, so God me  
save ; 1361

And nerethe freendshipethat ye deideerthis  
To me ye sholdé paye moore, y-wis.'

This preest the somme of fourty pound  
anon

Of noblés fette, and took hem everichon  
To this chanoun, for this ilké receipt.

Al his werkynge nas but fraude and deceit.

'Sire preest,' he seyde, 'I kepé han  
no loos

Of my craft, for I wolde it kept were cloos,  
And, as ye love me, kepeth it secree ; 1370  
For, and men knewen al my soutiltee,  
By God, they wolden han so greet envye  
To me, by cause of my philosophye,  
I sholde be deed ; ther were noon oother  
weye.'

'God it forbedé,' quod the preest ;  
'what say ye ?

Yet hadde I levere spenden al the good  
Which that I have,—and ellés wexe I  
wood !—

Than that ye sholden falle in swiche  
mescheef.'

'For youre good wyl, sire, have ye  
right good preef,'

Quod the chanoun, 'and farewel, *grant*  
*mercy* !' 1380

He wente his wey and never the preest  
hym sy

After that day ; and whan that this preest  
sholde

Maken assay at swich tyme as he wolde  
Of this receit, farwel, it wolde nat be !  
Lo, thus byjapéd and bigiled was he.  
Thus maketh he his introduccioun,  
To bryngé folk to hir destruccioun.

Considereth sires, how that in ech estaat,  
Bitwixé men and gold ther is debaat  
So ferforth, that unnethé is ther noon. 1390  
This multiplying blent so many oon,

That, in good feith, I trowé that it bea  
The causé grettest of swich scarsetee.  
Philosophres speken so mystily  
In this craft, that men kan nat cometherby  
For any wit that men han now-a-daye.  
They mowe wel chiteren as doon thes  
jays,

And in hir termés sette hir lust and peyne,  
But to hir purpos shul they never atteyne.  
A man may lightly lerne, if he have aught,  
To multiplie, and brynge his good to  
naught. 1401

Lo, swich a lucre is in this lusty game  
A mannés myrthe it wol turne unto grame,  
And empten also grete and hevyé purses,  
And maken folk for to purchacen curses  
Of hem that han hir good therto y-lent.  
O fy, for shamé ! they that han been brent,  
Allas ! kan they nat flece the firés heete ?  
Ye that it use I redé ye it leete,  
Lest ye lese al, for 'bet than never is late' ;  
Never to thryvé were to long a date. 1411  
Though ye prolle ay, ye shul it never fynde.  
Ye been as boold as is Bayard the bynde,  
That blondreth forth and peril casteth  
noon.

He is as boold to renne agayn a stoon,  
As for to goon bisidés in the weye.  
So faren ye that multiplie, I seye ;  
If that youre eyen kan nat seen aright,  
Looke that youre myndé lakké noght his  
sight,

For though ye looken never so brode, and  
stare, 1421

Ye shul nat wyne a myte on that chaffare,  
But wasten al that ye may rape and renne.  
Withdraweth the fir, lest it to fasti  
brenne,—

Medleth namouré with that art, I mene  
For, if ye doon, youre thrift is goon fulcne  
And rightas swithe, I wol yow tellen heere  
What philosophres seyn in this matere

Lo, thusseith Arnold of the Newé-Toun.  
As his *Rosaris* maketh mencion ;  
He seith right thus, withouten any lye, 1431  
Ther may no man mercurie mortifie,  
But it be with his brother knowlechyng

1413. *Bayard*, a typical name for a horse.

1428. *Arnold of the Newe-Toun*, Arnoldus de Villanova, a philosophical physician of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Now that he which that first seyde this  
thyng  
philosophes fader was, Hermes;  
he seith how that the dragon doutelees  
he dyeth flat, but if that he be slayn  
with his 'brother'; and that is for to sayn  
By the dragon Mercurie, and noon oother,  
He understood, and brymstoon by his  
brother,

That out of Sol and Luna were y-drawe;  
'And therefore,' seyde he, 'taak heede  
to my sawe;' 1441

Lat noman bisye hym this arte fortoseche,  
But if that he thentencioun and speche  
Of philosophes understande kan;  
And, if he do, he is a lewed man,  
For this science and this konnyng,' quod he,  
'Is of the secree of secrees, *pardee*.'

Also ther was a disciple of Plato  
That on a tymé seyde his maister to,  
As his book *Senior* wol bere witnesse, 1450  
And this was his demande, in soothfast-  
nesse,

'Telle me the namé of the privee stoon.'  
And Plato answerde unto hym anon,  
'Také the stoon that *Titanos* men name'—

1434. *Hermes*, i.e. Hermes Trismegistus.

1435. *the dragon*, Mercury.

1440. *Sol and Luna*, i.e. gold and silver.

1447. The allusion is to the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secreta Secretorum*.

1450. *his book Senior*. 'The book alluded to is printed in the *Theatrum Chemicum* under this title: "Senioris Zadith fil. Hamuella tabula chemica." The story which follows of Plato and his disciples is there told, with some variations, of Solomon' (Tyrwhitt). Dr. Skeat notes that the name Plato occurs three times only a few lines below, which explains Chaucer's mistake.

'Which is that?' quod he. '*Magnasia*  
is the same,'

Seyde Plato. 'Ye, sire, and is it thus?  
This is *ignotum per ignocius*.

What is *Magnasia*, goodsire, I yow preyde?' 1460

'It is a water that is maad, I seye,  
Of elementés fouré,' quod Plato.

'Telle me the rooté, good sire,' quod  
he tho,

'Of that water, if it be youré wille.'

'Nay, nay,' quod Plato, 'certein that  
I nylle;

The philosophes sworn were everychoon  
That they sholden discovere it unto noon,  
Ne in no book it write in no manere,  
For unto Crist it is so lief and deere,  
That he wol nat that it discovered bee,  
But where it liketh to his deitee  
Man for tenspire, and eek for to deffende  
Whom that hym liketh; lo, this is the  
ende.' 1471

Thanne conclude I thus, sith that God  
of hevене

Ne wil nat that the philosophes nevене  
How that a man shal come unto this  
stoon,

I rede as for the besté lete it goon;  
For who so maketh God his adversarie,  
As for to werken anythyn in contrarie  
Of his wil, certés never shal he thryve;  
Thogh that he multipliet terme of his lyve;  
And there a poynt; for ended is my tale.  
God sende every trewe man boote of his  
bale. Amen. 1481

1461. *rooté*, H<sup>o</sup> *roche*.

## GROUP H

*Words of Divers of the Pilgrims*

Wooryenat where ther stant a litel toun,  
Which that y-clepéd is Bobbe-up-and-  
down,

Under the Blee in Caunterbury weye?

2. *Bobbe-up-and-down*, usually identified with Harbledown, but in the parish of Thanington there is a field of 'Up-and-Down' which, if, as is probable, the old Canterbury road took a somewhat different direction from the modern one, may be the site intended.

3. *the Blee*, Elean forest.

Therganoure Hoosté for to jape and pleye,  
And seyde, 'Sires, what! Dun is in the  
Myre!

Is ther no man for preyere ne for hyre,  
That wole awake oure felawe al bihynde?  
A theef myght hym ful lightly robbe and  
bynde.

5. *Dun is in the Myre* (the horse is stuck), the name of an old game in which the company had to extricate a wooden 'Dun' from an imaginary slough.

See how he nappeth ! see how, for cokkés  
bones !

As he wol fallé fro his hors atones. 10

Is that a Cook of Londoun ? with  
meschaunce !

Do hym come forth, he knoweth his  
penaunce,

For he shal telle a talé, by my fey !

Although it be nat worth a botel hey.

Awake, thou Cook,' quod he, 'God yeve  
thee sorwe !

What eyleth thee to slepé by the morwe ?  
Hastow had fleen al nyght, or artow  
dronke ?

Or hastow with som quene al nyght  
y-swonke,

So that thou mayst nat holden up thy  
heed ?'

This Cook, that was ful pale and no  
thyng reed, 20

Seyde to oure Hoost, 'So God my soulé  
blesse,

As ther is falle on me swich hevynesse,  
Noot I nat why, that me were levere slepe  
Than the besté galon wyn in Chepe.'

'Wel,' quod the Maunciple, 'if it may  
doon ese

To thee, sire Cook, and to nowight displese  
Which that heere rideth in this com-  
paignye,

And that oure Hoost wole of his curteisye,  
I wol as now excuse thee of thy tale,

For, in good feith, thy visage is ful pale,  
Thyne eyen daswen eek, as that me  
thynketh, 32

And wel I woot thy breeth ful souré  
stynketh,

That sheweth wel thou art nat wel disposed ;  
Of me certeyn thou shalt nat been y-glosed.

See how he ganeth, lo, this drunken wight !  
As though he woldé swolwe us anonright.

Hoold cloos thy mouth, man, by thy fader  
kyn !

The devel of hellé sette his foot ther-in !  
Thy curséd breeth infecté wole us alle.

Fy, stynkyng swyn ! fy, foulé moote thou  
falle ! 40

A ! taketh heede, sires, of this lusty man !  
Now, sweete sire, wol ye justen atté fan ?

9. *how, for cokkés, H<sup>4</sup> for Goddes.*

Therto me thynketh ye been wel y-shape !  
I trowé that ye dronken han wyn ape,

And thatis whanmen pleyen with a straw,  
And with this speche the Cook was  
wrooth and wraw, 5

And on the Manciple he gan noddé faste  
For lakke of speche, and doun the hon  
hym caste,

Where as he laytill that men up hym took.  
This was a fair chyvachee of a Cook. 30

Allas ! he naddé holde hym by his ladel !

And er that he agayn were in his sadel  
Ther was greetshowvyng, bothé to and fro,

To lifte hym up, and muchel care and wo,  
So unweeldy was this sory, palléd goost.

And to the Manciplé thanne spak oure  
Hoost :

'By-causé drynke hath dominacioun

Upon this man, by my savacioun,  
I trowe, he lewedly wolde telle his tale,

For were it wyn, or oold or moysty ale,  
That he hath dronke, he speketh in his  
nose, 61

And fneseth faste, and eek he hath the pose.  
He hath also to do moore than ynough

To kepe hym and his capul out of slough ;  
And if he fallé from his capul eftsoone,

Thanne shal we allé have ynough to doone,  
In liftyng up his hevvy, dronken cors ;

Telle on thy tale, of hym make I no for.

'But yet, Manciple, in feith thou art  
to nyce,

Thus openly reprove hym of his vice ; 70  
Another day he wole, peraventure,

Reclaymé thee and bryngé thee to lure,—  
I meene, he speké wole of smalé thynges

As for to pynchen at thy rekenynges :  
That were nat honeste, if it cam to preel.'

'No,' quod the Manciple, 'that were  
a greet mescheef !

Somyghte he lightly bryngé me in the snare,  
Yet hadde I levere payen for the mare

Which he rit on, than he sholde with me  
stryve. 75

I wol nat wratthe hym, al somoot I thryve !  
That that I spake I seyde it in my bourde ;

And wite ye what ? I have heer in a gourde  
44. *wyn ape.* The lion, ape, sheep, and pig  
represented degrees of drunkenness ; the pig  
answering to the 'joyous' stage, an unkind jest  
at the cook's sullenness.

A draughte of wyn, ye, of a ripe grape,  
And right anon ye shul seen a good jape.  
This Cook shal drynke ther-of, if that I may.  
Uppeyne of death, he wol nat seye me nay.'

And certeynly, to tellen as it was,  
Of this vessel the Cook dranke faste, allas!  
What neded hym? he drank ynough  
biforn; 89

And whan he haddé pouped in this horn,  
To the Manciple he took the gourde agayn;  
And of that drynke the Cook was wonder  
fayn,

And thanked hym in swich wise as he  
koude.

Thanne gan oure Hoost to laughen  
wonder loude,

And seyde, 'I se wel it is necessarie,  
Where that we goon, good drynke we  
with us carie,

For that wol turné rancour and disese  
Toward love, and many a wrong apese.

'O thou Bacus! y-blessed be thy name!  
That so kanst turnen earnest into game,  
Worshippe and thank be to thy deitee!  
Of that mateere ye gete namore of me;  
Telle on thy tale, Manciple, I thee preye.'

'Wel, sire,' quod he, 'now herkneith  
what I seye.'

## MANCIPLE'S TALE

*Heere bigynneth The Manciples Tale of  
the Crowe*

Whan Phebus dwelled heere in this  
erthe adoun,

As oldé bookés maken mencion,  
He was the moosté lusty bachiler  
In al this world, and eek the best archer.  
He lay Phitoun; the serpent, as he lay  
Slepyng agayn the sonne upon a day,  
And many another poble worthy dede  
He with his bowé wroghte, as men may  
rede.

*Manciple's Tale.* 'The fable of the Crow,  
which is the subject of the Manciple's Tale, has  
been related by so many authors from Ovid down  
to Gower that it is impossible to say whom  
Chaucer principally followed' (Tyrwhitt).

105. *erthe, the world.*

109. *Phitoun, Python.*

Pleyen he koude on every mynatralcie,  
And syngen, that it was a melodie  
To heeren of his cleere voys the soun.  
Certes the kyng of Thebes, Amphion,  
That with his syngyng walléd that citee,  
Koude never syngen half so wel as hee.  
Therto he was the semeliest man 119  
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.  
What nedeth it his fetures to discryve,  
For in this world was noon so fair on lyve.  
He was ther-with fulfild of gentillesse,  
Of honour, and of parfit worthynesse.

This Phebus that was flour of bachilrie,  
As wel in fredom as in chivalrie,  
For his desport, in signe eek of victorie  
Of Phitoun, so as telleth us the storie,  
Was wont to beren in his hand a bowe.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a  
crowe 120

Which in a cage he fostred many a day,  
And taughte it spoken, as men teche a jay.  
Whit was this crowe as is a snow-whit  
swan,

And countrefete the speche of every man  
He koudé, whan he sholdé telle a talé;  
Ther-with in al this world no nyghtyngale  
Ne koudé, by an hondred thousand deel,  
Syngen so wonder myrily and weel.

Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf,  
Which that he lovede mooré than his lyf,  
And nyght and day dide ever his diligence  
Hir for to plesse, and doon hire reverence;  
Save oonly, if the sothe that I shal sayn,  
Jalous he was and wolde have kept hire fayn,  
For hym were looth byjaped for to be;  
And so is every wight in swich degree;  
But all in ydel, for it availleth noght.  
A good wyf that is clene of werk and thought  
Sholde nat been kept in noon awayt,  
certayn;

And trewely the labour is in vayn 129  
To kepe a shrewé, for it wol nat bee.  
This holde I for a verray nyctee,  
To spillé labour for to kepe wyves;  
Thus writen oldé clerkés in hir lyves.

But now to purpos, as I first bigan;  
This worthy Phebus dooth all that he kan  
To plesen hire, wenyng by swich  
pleasaunce,

127. *in ydel, He for naught.*

And for his manhede and his governaunce,  
That no man sholde han put hym from  
hire grace ; 159

But God it woot, ther may no man embrace  
As to destreyne a thyng which that nature  
Hath naturelly set in a creature.

Tak any bryd, and put it in a cage,  
And do al thyn entente, and thy corage,  
To fostre it tendrely with mete and drynke  
Of all deyntees that thou kanst bithynke,  
And keepe it al so clenly as thou may,  
Al though his cage of gold be never so gay,  
Yet hath this brid by twenty thousand foold  
Levere in a forest, that is rude and coold,  
Goon eté wormés and swich wretched-  
nesse ;

For ever this brid wol doon his bisynesse  
To escape out of his cage, if he may ;  
His libertee this brid desirith ay.

Lat take a cat, and fostre hym wel  
with milk  
And tendre flesch, and make his couche  
of silk,

And lat hym seen a mous go by the wal,  
Anon he weyvethe milk, and flesch, and al,  
And every deyntee that is in that hous,  
Swich appetit he hath to ete a mous. 180  
Lo, heere hath lust his dominacioun,  
And appetit fleemeth discrecioun.

A she-wolf hath also a vileyns kynde ;  
The lewdesté wolf that she may fynde,  
Or leest of reputacioun, that wol she take  
In tymé whan hir lust to han a make.

Alle thise ensamples speke I by thise  
men

That ben untrewé, and no thyng by  
wommen ;

For men han ever a likerous appetit,  
On lower thyng to parfournen hir delit 190  
Than on hire wyvés, be they never so faire,  
Ne never so trewé, ne so debonaire ;  
Flesch is so newefangel, with meschaunce !  
That we ne konne in no thyng han  
plesaunce,

That sowneth into vertu, any while.

\* This Phebus, which that thoughte upon  
no gile,

Deceyved was for al his jolitee,  
For under hym another haddé shee,  
A map of lital reputacioun,

Nat worth to Phebus in compassoun ; 20  
The móore harm is, it happeth ofté so,  
Of which ther cometh muchel harm and wo

And so bifel, whan Phebus was absent  
His wyf anon hath for hir lefman sent  
'Hir lemman ?' certés this is a 'knavysal'  
speche !

Foryeveth it me, and that I yow biseche  
The wisé Plato seith, as ye may rede  
'The word moot nede accordé with the  
dede' ;

If men shal tellé properly a thyng 205  
The word moot cosyn be to the werkynge,  
I am a boystous man ; right thus seye I,  
Ther nys no differencé trewely

Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,  
If of hire body dishoneste she bee,  
And a pouré wenche, oother than this,—  
If it so be they werké both amys,—

But that the gentile in hire estaat above,  
She shal be cleped his 'lady,' as in love ;  
And for that oother is a poure womman,  
She shal be cleped his 'wenche,' or his  
'lemman,' 210

And God it woot, myn owene deeré brother,  
Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that  
oother.

Right so bitwixe a titleless tiraunt  
And an outlawe, or a thief erraunt,  
The same I seye, ther is no difference,—  
To Alisaundré was toold this sentence,—  
That for the tiraunt is of gretter myght  
By force of meynce, for to sleen down right,  
And brennen hous and hoom, and make  
al playn,

Lo, therefore is he cleped a 'capitayn' ; 230  
And for the outlawe hath but smal meynce,  
And may nat doon so greet an harm as he,  
Ne brynge a contree to so greet mescheef,  
Men clepen hyman 'outlawe,' or a 'thief' ;  
But for I am a man noght textuel,  
I wol noght telle of textés never a deel ;  
I wol go to my tale as I bigan.

Whan Phebus wyf had sent for hir lemman,  
Anon they wroughten al hire lust volage.

The whité crowe that heeng ay in the  
cage 24

207. *The wise Plato*, quoted from Boethius  
Blk. III. prose 12. Cp. General Prologue, ll. 741  
742.

Biheeld hiȝe werk and seydē never a word;  
And whan that hoom was come Phebus,  
the lord,

This crowē sang 'Cokkow! Cokkow!  
Cokkow!'

'What! bryd,' quod Phebus, 'what  
song syngestow?

Ne were thou wont so myrily to synge  
That to myn herte it was a rejoysynge  
To heere thy voys? Allas! what song  
is this?'

'By God!' quod he, 'I syngē nat amys.  
Phebus,' quod he, 'for al thy worthynesse,  
For al thy beautee and thy gentilesse, 250  
For al thy song and al thy mynstralcy,  
For al thy waityng, blerēd is thyn eye  
With oon of lital reputacioun,  
Noght worth to thee as in comparisoun  
Thementance of a gnat, so moote I thryve!  
For on thy bed thy wyf I saugh hym swyve.'

What wol ye moore? The crowe anon  
hym tolde

By saddē tokenes, and by wordēs bolde,  
How that his wyf had doon hire lecherye,  
Hym to greet shame and to greet vileynye,  
And tolde hym ofte he saugh it with his  
eyen. 261

This Phebus gan awayward for to wryen,  
And thoughte his sorweful hertē brast  
atwo;

His bowe he bente, and sette ther-inne  
a flo,

And in his ire his wyf thanne hath he  
slayn,—

This is theeffect, ther is namoore to sayn;  
For sorwe of which he brak his mynstralcie,  
Bothe harpe, and lute, and gyterne, and  
sautrie,

And eek he brak his arwes and his bowe,  
And after that thus spak he to the crowe:

'Traitor,' quod he, 'with tonge of  
scorpioun 271

Thou hast me brought to my confusioun.  
Allas! that I was wrought! why nere I  
deed?

O deere wyf! O gemme of lustiheed!  
That were to me so sad, and eek so trewe,  
Now listow deed, with facē pale of hewe,  
Ful gyltēles,—that dorste I swere, y-wys!  
O rakel hand! to doon so foule amys.

O trouble wit! O irē, recchēles!  
That unavyseē smyteth giltēles! 280

O wantrust! ful of fals suspecioun,  
Where was thy wit and thy discrecioun?  
O every man, be war of rakelnesse,  
Ne trewe no thyng withouten strong  
witnessē.

Smyt nat to soone, er that ye witen why;  
And beeth avyseē wel and sobrely,  
Er ye doon any execucioun  
Upon youre irē for suspecioun!  
Allas! a thousand folk hath rakel ire  
Fully fordoon, and broght hem in the  
mire! 290

Allas! for sorwe I wol myselfen aleē.  
And to the crowe, 'O falsē thief!'  
seyde he,

'I wol thee quite anon thy falsē tale.  
Thou songē whilom lyk a nyghtyngale;  
Now shaltow, falsē thief, thy song forgon,  
And eek thy whitē fetherēs everichon;  
Ne never in al thy lif ne shaltow speke.  
Thus shal men on a traytour been awreke.  
Thou, and thyn of-spryng, ever shul be  
blake,

Ne never sweetē noysē shul ye make, 300  
But ever crie agayn tempest and rayn.  
In tokenyng that thurgh thee my wyf is  
slayn.'

And to the crowe he sturte, and that anon,  
And pulled his whitē fetherēs everychon,  
And made hym blak, and refte hym all  
his song,  
And eek his speche, and out at dore hym  
slong,

Unto the devel, which I hym bitake!  
And for this caas been allē crowēs blake.

Lordynges, by this ensample I yow  
preye, 309

Beth war, and taketh kepē what I seye;  
Ne telleth never no man in yourē lyf  
How that another man hath dight his wyf;  
He wol yow haten mortally, certeyn.  
Daun Salomon, as wisē clerkēs seyn,  
Techeth a man to kepen his tonge weel;  
But as I seyde, I am noght textuel, 317  
But nathelees, thus taughtē me my dame:

300. *noysē, E. roys.*

310. *I seye, H<sup>4</sup> se seye.*

326. *textuel, H<sup>4</sup> texted (text) wyl.*

'My sone, thank on the crowe, on  
Goddès name;

My sone, keepe wel thy tonge and keepe  
thy freend; <sup>319</sup>

A wikked tonge is worsé than a feend;  
Mysone, from a feend men may hem blesse;  
My sone, God of his endelees goodnesse  
Walléd a tonge with teeth and lippés eke,  
Formansholde hym avysé what he speke;  
My sone, ful ofté for to muché speche  
Hath many a man been spilt, as clerks  
teche,

Bút for litel speche avysély  
Is no man shent, to speké generally.

My sone, thy tongé sholdestow restreyne  
At allé tymes, but whan thou doost thy  
peyne <sup>330</sup>

To speke of God, in honour and preyere.  
The firsté vertu, sone, if thou wolt leere,  
Is to restreyne and kepé wel thy tonge;  
Thus lerné children whan that they been  
yonge.

My sone, of muchel spekyng yvele avysed,  
Ther lassé spekyng hadde ynough suffised,  
Comth muchel harm, thus was me toold  
and taught;

In muchel speché synné wanteth naught.  
Woostow wher-of a rakel tongé serveth?  
Right as a swerd for-kutteth and forkerveth

An arm atwo, my deese sone, bright so  
A tongé kutteth freendshipe al atwo.  
A jangler is to God abhomynable.

Reed Salomon, so wys and honourable,  
Reed David in his Psalmés, reed Senekke  
My sone, spek nat, but with thyh hee  
thou bekke;

Dissimule as thou were deaf, if that tho  
heere

A jangler speke of perilous mateere.  
The Flemyngseith, and lerne it if thee leste  
That "litel janglyng" causeth muche  
rest." <sup>339</sup>

Mysone, if thou no wikked word hast seyd,  
Thee thar nat dredé for to be biwreyd;  
But he that hath mysseyd, I dar wel sayn,  
He may by no wey clepe his word agayn.  
Thyng that is seyd is seyd, and forth it  
gooth,

Though hym repente, or be hym leef a  
looth.

He is his thral to whom that he hath sayd  
A tale of which he is now yvele apayd.  
Mysone, bewar, and be noon auctour new  
Of tidynges, wheither they been false or  
trewe; <sup>340</sup>

Wher so thou come, amongés hye or lowe,  
Kepe wel thy tonge, and think upon the  
crowe.'

## GROUP I.

*Heere foloweth the Prologe of the Persons  
Tale*

By that the Maunciple hadde his tale  
al ended

Thesonnéfro thesouth lynewas descended  
So lowé that he ne nas nat to my sighte  
Degreés nyne-and-twenty as in bighte;  
[Foure] of the klokke it was tho, as I gesse,  
For ellevene foot, or jitel moore or lesse,  
My shadwe was at thilké tyme, as there,  
Of swiche feet as my lengthé parted were  
In sixe feet equal of-proporcioun.

2. *the Maunciple.* According to the notes of  
time some other tales must have intervened, and  
*Maunciple* is only the guess of the copyists.

3. *Four.* The MSS. read *Ten*, which accords  
with neither line 4 nor line 7a.

4. *anywhere, i.e. in that latitude; H of the year.*

Ther-with the moonés exaltacioun, <sup>10</sup>  
I meene *Libra*, alwey gan ascende,  
As we were entryng at a thropés ende;  
For which our Hoost, as he was wont togye,  
As in this caas, oure joly compaignye,  
Seyde in this wisé, 'Lordynges everichoon,  
Now lakketh us no talés mo than oon;  
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;  
I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.  
Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce;  
I pray to God so yeve hym right good  
chaunce <sup>20</sup>  
That tellet this tale to us lustily.

10, 11. *the moonés exaltacioun, I meene Libra.*  
It seems best to suppose with Tyrwhitt that *the*  
*moonés* is a blunder for *Saturnes*, Taurus being  
the exaltation of the moon, and *Libra* of Saturn.  
H reads *In mensis* for *I mensis*. *In mensis* (in the  
middle of) has been suggested as a possible reading.

'Sire Preest,' quod he, 'artow a vicary,  
Or arte a Person? sey sooth, by thy fey!  
Be what thou be, ne breke thou nat oure  
pley,

Foreveryman save thou hath toold his tale.  
Unbokele, and shewe us what is in thy  
male;

For trewely, me thynketh by thy cheere,  
Thou sholdest knytte up wel a greet  
mateere.

Telle us a fable anon, for cokkés bones!

This Persoune answered al atones, 30  
'Thou getest fable noon y-toold for me,  
For Paul, that writeth unto Thymothee,  
Repneveth hem that weyveth soothfast-  
nesse,

And tellen fables and swich wrecched-  
nesse.

Why sholde I sowen draf out of my fest,  
Whan I may sowen whete, if that me lest?  
For which I seye, if that yow list to heere  
Moralitee and vertuous mateere,

And thanne that ye wol yeve me audience,  
I wol ful fayn, at Cristés reverence, 40  
Do yow plesauñc leefful, as I kan;

But, trusteth wel, I am a southren man,  
Ikannatgeesté"; *um, ram, ruf*" by lettre;  
Ne, God woot, rym holde I but litel bettre;  
And therefore, if yow list,—I wol nat  
glose,—

I wol yow telle a myrie tale in prose,  
To knytte up al this feeste, and make an  
ende;

And Jhesu, for his gracé, wit me sende  
To shewé yow the wey, in this viage, 50  
Of thilké parfit, glorious pilgrymage;  
That highte Jerusalem celestial;  
And if ye vouchésauf, anon I shal  
Bigynne upon my tale, for whiche I preye  
Telle youre avys. I kan no bettre seye.

'But nathéless this meditacioun  
I patte it ay under correccioun  
Of clerkés, for I am nat textueel.  
I také but the sentencé, trusteth weel;  
Therefore I make a protestacioun  
That I wol stondé to correccioun.' 60

Upon this word we han assented soone,  
43. *grosse*, etc., tell tales in alliterative metres  
like the northern poets.

58. *the* (om. E) *sentence*, the meaning as op-  
posed to the letter.

For as us seméd, it was for to doone,  
To enden in som vertuous sentence,  
And for to yeve hym space and audience;  
And bedeoure Hoost hesholdé to hymseye  
That allé we to telle his tale hym preye.

Oure Hoosté hadde the wordés for us  
alle:

'Sire Preest,' quod he, 'now fairé yow  
bifalle!

Sey what yow list, and we wol gladly heere';  
And with that word, he seyde in this  
manere: 70

'Telleth,' quod he, 'yours meditacioun;  
But hasteth yow, the sonnè wole adoun.  
Beth fructuous, and that in litel space,  
And to do wel, God sendé yow his grace.'

## PARSON'S TALE

### *Heere bigynneth the Persoun's Tale*

JER. VI. *Stans super vias, et videtes, et interro-  
gate de semitis antiquis, quid sit via bona, et  
ambulate in ea; et inornietis refrigerium ani-  
mabus vestris.*

[75] Oure sweete Lord God of hevене,  
that no man wole perisse, but wole that  
we comen alle to the knoweleche of hym  
and the blissful lif that is perdurable,  
amongesteth us by the prophete Jæremie,  
and seith in this wyse: 'Stondeth upon  
the weyes, and seeth, and axeth of olde  
pathes, that is to seyn of olde sentences,  
which is the goode wey, and walketh in that  
wey, and ye shal fynde refresshyng for  
yoursoules.'

Manye been the weyes espirituels that  
leden folk to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and  
to the regne of glorie; [80] of whiche weyes  
ther is a ful noble wey, and a covenable,  
which may nat fayle to man, ne to womman,  
that thurgh synne bath mysگون fro the  
righte wey of Jerusalem celestial, and this

*Parson's Tale.* The treatise on the Deadly  
Sins and their cure which is wedged into this  
account of Penitence is taken from the *Somma-  
re de Vices et de Virtus* of Frère Lorens, a thirteenth-  
century writer. Chaucer's authorship of these  
sections has been doubted, perhaps needlessly;  
but the sermon is unmercifully long.

Jer. vi., v. 16.

75. *that no man wole perisse*, who desires to  
destroy no man.



wey is cleped penitence; of which man sholde gladly herknen and enquire with al his herte to wyten what is penitence, and whennes it is cleped penitence, and in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynge of penitence, and how manye spesces ther been of penitence, and whiche thynges apertenen and bihoven to penitence, and whiche thynges destourben penitence.

Seint Ambrose seith that penitence is the pleynynge of man for gilt that he hath doon and namoore to do any thyng for which hym oghte to pleyne; [85] and som doctour seith, 'Penitence is the waymentynge of man that sorweth for his synne, and pyneth hymself for he hath mysdoon.' Penitence with certeyne circumstances is verray repentance of a man that halt hym self in sorwe and oother payne for his giltes; and for he shall be verray penitent, he shal first biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon and stidefastly purposen in his herte to have shrift of mouthe and to doon satisfaccioun, and never to doon thyng for which hym oghte moore biwayle or to compleyne, and continue in goodewerkes, or elles his repentance may nat availle; for, as seith Seint Ysidre, 'He is a japer and a gabber and no verray repentant that eftsoone dooth thyng for which hym oghte repente.' [90] Wepynge, and nat for to stynt to do synne, may nat avaylle; but nathelesmen shal hope that at every tyme that man falleth, be it never so ofte, that he may arise thurgh penitence, if he have grace; but certainly it is greet doute, for, as seith Seint Gregorie, unneth ariseth he out of his synne that is charged with the charge of yvel usage; and therefore repentant folk that stynte for to synne, and forlete synne er that synne forlete hem, hooly chirche holdeth hem siker of hire savacioun. And he that synneth and verrailly repenteth hym in his laste ende, hooly chirche yet hopeth his savacioun, by the grete mercy of oure Lord Jhesu Crist for his repentaunce; but taak the siker wey.

85. *shrif of mouthe*, verbal confession.

85. *Seint Ysidre*, St. Isidore.

[95] And now sith I have deplared you what thyng is penitence, now shul y understonde that ther been thre accioun of penitence. The firste accioun of penitence is that a man be baptized after that he hath synned. Seint Augusty seith, 'But he be penytent for his old synful lyf, he may nat bigynne the new clene lif'; for certes, if he be baptize withouten penitence of his olde gilt, he receyveth the mark of baptesme, be nat the grace, ne the remission of his synnes, til he have repentance verray. Another defeaute is this, that men doo deedly synne after that they han receyve baptesme. [100] The thridde defeaute is that men fallen in venial synnes after his baptesme fro day to day. Ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that penitence of goode and humble folk is the penitence of every day.

The spesces of penitence been thre. That oon of hem is solempne, another is commune, and the thridde is prive. Thilke penance that is solempne is in two maneres; as to be put out of hool chirche in Lente for slaughtre of childer and swich maner thyng. Another thyng is whan a man hath synned openly, of which synne the fame is openly spoke in the contree, and thanne hooly chirch by juggement destreyneth hym for to do open penitence. [105] Commune penance is that preestes enjoinen men in certeyn caas, as for to goon peraventure naked in pilgrimages, or bare-foot. Pryve penance is thilke that men doon alda for privee synnes, of whiche they shryve hem prively, and receyve privee penance.

Now shaltow understande what bihovely and necessarie to verray perf penitence. And this stant on thre thynges. Contricioun of herte, Confessioun of mouth, and Satisfaccioun; for whiche seith Seint John Crisostom, 'Penitence destreyneth a man to accepte benygne every payne that hym is enjoyed with contricioun of herte, and shrift of mouthe with satisfaccioun, and in werkynge alle manere humylytee'; [110] and this

105. *naked*, i.e. without upper garments.

fruytful penitence agayn thre thynges in whiche we wratthe oure Lord Jhesu Crist. This is to seyn, by delit in thynkyng, by recchelesnesse in spekyng, and by wikked synful werkyng; and agayns thisse wikkede gyltes is penitence, that may be likned unto a tree.

The roote of this tree is contricioun, that hideth hym in the herte of hym that is verray repentaunt, right as the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe. Of the roote of contricioun spryngeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leues of confessioun, and fruyt of satisfaccioun. [125] For which Crist seith in his gospel, 'Dooth digne fruyt of penitence'; for by this fruyt may men knowe this tree, and nat by the roote that is hyd in the herte of man, ne by the braunches, ne by the leues of confessioun; and therefore oure Lord Jhesu Crist seith thus, 'By the fruyt of hem ye shul knowen hem.' Of this roote eek spryngeth a seed of grace, the which seed is mooder of alkeness, and this seed is egre and hoot. The grace of this seed spryngeth of God thurgh remembrance of the day of doome and on the peynes of helle. Of this matere seith Salomon, that in the drede of God man forleteth his synne. [120] The heete of this seed is the love of God, and the desiryng of the joye perdurable. This heete draweth the herte of a man to God, and dooth hym haten his synne; for soothly ther is no thyng that savoureth so wel to a child as the milk of his norice, ne no thyng moore abhomynable than thilke milk whan it is medled with oother mete. Right so the synful man that loveth his synne, hym semeth that it is to him moost sweete of any thyng; but fro that tyme that he loveth sadly oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and desireth the lif perdurable, ther nys to him no thyng moore abhomynable; [125] for soothly the lawe of God is the love of God. For which David the prophete seith, 'I have loved thy lawe, and hated wikkednesse and hate; he that loveth God kepeth his lawe and his word.' This tree saugh

the prophete Daniel in spirit upon the avysoun of Nabugodonosor, whan he counselled hym to do penitence. Penance is the tree of lyf to hem that it receyven, and he that holdeth hym in verray penitence is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon.

In this penitence or contricioun man shal understonde foure thynges; that is to seyn, what is contricioun, and whiche been the causes that moeven a man to contricioun, and how he sholde be contrit, and what contricioun availleth to the soule. Thanne is it thus that contricioun is the verray sorwe that a man receyvethe in his herte for his synnes, with sad purpos to shryve hym and to do penance, and nevermoore to do synne; [130] and this sorwe shal been in this manere, ay seith Seint Bernard; it shal been hevvy and grevous, and ful sharpe and poynant in herte. First, for man hath agilt his Lord and his Creatour, and moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath agilt hys Fader celestial, and yet moore sharpe and poynaunt for he hath wrathed and agilt hym that boghte hym, which with his precious blood hath delivered us fro the bondes of synne, and fro the crueltee of the devel, and fro the peynes of helle.

The causes that oghte moeve a man to contricioun been sexe. First, a man shal remembre hym of his synnes; but looke he that thilke remembraunce ne be to hym no delit by no wey, but greet shame and sorwe for his gilt; for Job seith, synful men doon werkes worthy of confessioun. [135] And therefore seith Ezechie, 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lyf in bitternesse of myn herte.' And God seith in the Apocalipse, 'Remembreth yow fro whennes that ye been falle'; for biforn that tyme that ye synned ye were the children of God, and lymes of the regne of God; but for youre synne ye been woxen thral and foul, and membres of the feend, hate of. aungels,

125. in spirit upon the avysoun of, E. in the avysoun of the kyng.

125. Nabugodonosor, Nebuchadnezzar.

sclande of hooly chirche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetueel matere of the fir of helle; and yet moore foul and abhomyable, for ye trespassen so ofte tyme as dooth the hound that retourneth to eten his spewyng; and yet be ye fouler for youre longe continuyng in synne and youre synful usage, for which ye be roten in youre synne as a beest in his dong. [140] Swiche manere of thoughtes maken a man to have shame of his synne and no delit, as God seith by the prophete Ezechiel, 'Ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes and they shuln displese yow.' Soothly synnes been the weyes that leden folk to helle.

The seconde cause that oghte make a man to have desdayn of synne is this, that, as seith Seint Peter, 'Who-so that dooth synne is thral of synne'; and synne put a man in greet thraldom, and therefore seith the prophete Ezechiel, 'I wente sorweful in desdayn of my self'; and certes, wel oghte a man have desdayn of synne and withdrawe hym from that thraldom and vileyny. And lo, what seith Seneca in this matere? He seith thus: 'Though I wiste that God—neither God ne man—ne sholde never knowe it, yet wolde I have desdayn for to do synne.' [145] And the same Seneca also seith, 'I am born to gretter thynges than to be thral to my body, or than for to maken of my body a thral'; ne a fouler thral may no man ne womman maken of his body than for to yeven his body to synne. Al were it the fouleste cherl, or the fouleste womman that lyveth, and leest of value, yet is he thanne moore foule and moore in servitude. Ever from the hyer degree that man falleth, the moore is he thral, and moore to God and to the world vile and abhomyable. O goode God! wel oghte man have desdayn of synne, sith that thurgh synne ther he was free now is he maked bonde; [150] and therefore seyth Seint Augustyn, 'If thou hast desdayn of thy servant, if he agilte, or synne, have thou thanne desdayn that thou thyself sholdest do

synne; take reward of thy value, that thou ne be to foul to thyself.' Allas wel oghten they thanne have desdayn to been servauntz and thralles, to synne and soore been ashamed of hemself, that God of his endeles goodnesse hath set hem in heigh estaat, or yeven hem wil strengthe of body, heele, beautee, prosperitee, and boghte hem fro the deet with his herte blood, that they so unkyndely agayns his gentillesse quiten hyr so vileynsly, to slaughtre of hir owen soules. [155] O goode God! ye womme that been of so greet beautee, remembret yow of the proverbe of Salomon, he seith, 'Likneth a fair womman that is fool of hire body lyk to a ryng of gol that were in the groyn of a sowe, for right as a sowe wrotheth in everic ordure, so wrotheth hire beautee in the stynkyng ordure of synne.'

The thridde cause that oghte moeve man to contricioun is drede of the day of doome and of the horrible peynes of helle; for as Seint Jerome seith, 'At every tyme that me remembreth of the day of doome, I quake, [160] for whan ete, or drynke, or what so that I do ever semeth me that the trompe sownet in myn ere, "Riseth up, ye that be dede, and cometh to the juggement." O goode God! muchel oghte a man to drede swich a juggement, ther as we shullen been alle, as Seint Poul seith biforn the seete of oure Lord Jhesu Cris wher as he shal make a general congregacioun, wher as no man may be absent, for certes there availleth no excusoyne, ne excusacioun. [165] And moonly that oure defautes shullen be jugged but eek that alle oure werkes shulle openly be knowe. And as seith Seint Bernard, 'Ther ne shal no pledyng availle, ne sleighte; we shullen yeven rekenyng of everich ydel word; that shul we han a juge that may nat be deceyved ne corrupt.' And why? for certes alle oure thoughtes been discoverte as to hym; ne for preyere, ne for meed he shal nat been corrupt. And therfore

seith Salomon, 'The wratthe of God ne wol nat spare no wight for preyere ne for yfte'; and therefore, at the day of doom ther nys noon hope to escape.

Wherefore, as seith Seint Anselm, 'Ful greet angwyssh shul the synful folk have at that tyme. [170] Ther shal the stierne and wrothe juge sitte above, and under hym the horrible put of helle open to destroyen hym that moot biknownen his synnes, whiche synnes openly been shewed biforn God and biforn every creature; and in the left syde mo develes than herte may bithynke, for to harye and drawe the synful soules to the peyne of helle; and withinne the, hertes of folk shal be the bitynge conscience, and withoute forth shal be the world al brennyng.' Whider shal thanne the wrecched synful man flee to hiden hym? Certes, he may nat hyden hym,—he mooste come forth and shewen hym; for certes, as seith Seint Jerome, 'The erthe shal casten hym out of hym, and the see also, and the eyr also, that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightnynges.'

[175] Now soothly, who so wel remembreth hym of these thynges, I gesse that his synne shal nat turne hym to delit, but to greet sorwe, for drede of the peyne of helle. And therefore seith Job to God, 'Suffre, Lord, that I may awhile biwaille, and wepe, er I go withoute, returning to the derke lond, covered with the derknesse of deeth, to the lond of mysease and of derknesse, where as is the shadwe of deeth, where as ther is noon ordre or ordinaunce, but grisly drede that ever shal laste.' Loo, heere may ye seen that Job preye respit a while to biwepe and waille his trespas, for soothly oon day of respit is bettre than al the tresor of this world; and forasmuche as a man may acquiten hymself biforn God by penitence in this world, and nat by tresor, therefore sholde he preye to God to yeve hym respit a while to biwepe and biwailen his trespas; [180] for certes, al the sorwe that a man myghte make fro the bigynnyng of the

world nys but a litel thyng at regard of the sorwe of helle.

The cause why that Job clepeth helle 'the lond of derknesse': understondeth that he clepeth it londe or erthe, for it is stable and never shal faille; dirk, for he that is in helle hath defaute of light material, for certes, the derke light that shal come out of the fyr that ever shal brenne shal turne hym al to peyne that is in helle, for it sheweth hym to the horrible develes that hym tormenten; 'covered with the derknesse of deeth'; that is to seyn, that he that is in helle shall have defaute of the sighte of God; for certes, the sighte of God is the lyf perdurable. [185] The 'derknesse of deeth' been the synnes that the wrecched man bath doon, whiche that destourben hym to see the face of God, right as dooth a derk clowde bitwixe us and the sonne. 'Lond of misease,' by-cause that ther been three maneres of defautes agayn thre thynges that folk of this world han in this present lyf; that is to seyn, honours, delices, and richesses. Agayn honoure have they in helle shame and confusioun; for wel ye woot that men clepen honoure the reverence that man doth to man; but in helle is noon honour ne reverence, for certes, namoore reverence shal be doon there to a kyng than to a knave. For which God seith by the prophete Jeremye, 'Thilke folk that me despisen shul been in despit.' [190] Honour is eek cleped greet lordshipe. Ther, shal no wight serven oother but of harm and torment. Honour is eek cleped greet dignyte and heighnesse, but in helle shul they been al fortroden of develes. And God seith, 'The horrible develes shulle goon and comen upon the bevedes of the dampned folk'; and this is forasmuche as the hyer that they were in this present lyf, the moore shulle they been abated and defouled in helle.

Agayns the richesses of this world shul they han mysease of poverté; and this

185. *displeen*, H *displeen*.

povertye shal been in foure thynges. In defaute of tresor, of which that David seith, 'The riche folk that embraceden and oneden al hire herte to tresor of this world, shul slepe in the slepyng of deeth, and no thyng ne shal they fynden in hir handes of al hir tresor.' And mooreover the myse of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke, [195] for God seith thus by Moyses, 'They shul been wasted with hunger, and the briddes of helle shal devouren hem with the bitter deeth, and the galle of the dragon shal been hire drynke, and the venym of the dragon hire morsels.' And forther-over hire myse shal been in defaute of clothyng, for they shulle be naked in body, as of clothyng, save the fyr in which they brenne, and othere filthes; and naked shul they been of soule, as of alle manere vertues which that is the clothyng of the soule. Where been thanne the gaye robes, and the softe shetes, and the smale shertes? Loo, what seith God of hem by the prophete Ysaye? 'That under hem shul been strawed motthes, and hire covertures shulle been of wormes of helle. And forther-over hir myse shal been in defaute of freendes, for he nys nat poure that hath goode freendes; but there is no frend; [200] for neither God, ne no creature, shal been frend to hem; and everich of hem shal haten oother with deedly hate. Thesones and the doghtren shullen rebellen agayns fader and mooder, and kynrede agayns kynrede, and chiden and despisen everich of hem oother bothe day and nyght, as God seith by the prophete Michias. And the lovyng children, that whilom loveden so fleschly everich oother, wolden everich of hem eten oother, if they myghte; for how sholden they love togidre in the peyne of helle, whan they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf? For truste wel, hir fleschly love was deedly hate, as seith the prophete David, 'Whoso that loveth wikkednesse he hateth his soule'; [205] and whoso hateth his owene

195. *the bitter death, H bitter death.*

soule, certes, he may love upon oother wight in no manere; and therfore helle is no solas, ne no freendshipe, ever the moore fleschly kynredes thil been in helle, the moore cursynges, the more chidynges, and the moore deeth hate ther is among hem.

And forther-over they shul have a faute of alle manere delices; for cerdelices been after the appetites of the five wittes, as sighte, herynge, smellyng, savorynge, and touchyng: [210] but helle hir sighte shal be ful of derkenes and of smoke, and therfore ful of teer and hir herynge ful of waymentyng and of gryntyng of teeth, as seith Jhesu Crist. Hir nose-thirles shullen be ful stynkyng stynk; and, as seith Ysaie the prophete, hir savoryng shal be ful bitter galle; and touchyng of al the body y-covered with fir that never shal quenche, and with wormes that never shal dyen, as God seith by the mouth of Ysaye. And forasmuch as they shul nat wene that they may dyen for peyne, as by hir deeth flee fro peyne, that nat they understonden by the word of Jhesu that seith, 'Ther as is the shadwe of deeth.' Certes a shadwe hath the likeness of the thyng of which it is shadwe but shadwe is nat the same thyng of which it is shadwe. Right so fareth the peyne of helle; it is lyk deeth for the horrible angwisch; and why? For it peyneth hem ever as though they sholde dye anon, but certes, they shal nat dye, for as seith Seint Gregorie 'To wrecche caitives shal be deeth withoute deeth, and endewithouten ende and defaute withoute faillyng, [215] for hir deeth shal alwey lyven and hir ende shal evermo bigynne, and hir defaute shal nat faille'; and therfore seith Seint John the Evaungelist, 'They shullen folwe deeth and they shul nat fynde hym, and they shul desiren to dye and deeth shal flee fro hem.'

And eek Job seith that in helle is no order of rule, and al be it so that God hath creat alle thynges in right ordre and

no thyng withouten ordre, but alle thynges been ordeyned and nombred; yet natheles, they that been dampned been no thyng in the ordre, ne holden noon ordre, for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt, [220] for, as the prophete David seith, 'God shal destroie the fruyt of the erthe as fro hem, ne water ne shal yeve hem no moisture, ne the eyr no refreshyng, ne fyr no light.' For as seith Seint Basilie, 'The brennyng of the fyr of this world shal God yeven in helle to hem that been dampned, but the light and the cleernesse shal be yeven in hevене to his children, right as the goode man yeveth flesh to his children and bones to his houndes.' And for they shullen have noon hope to escape, seith Seint Job atte laste, that ther shal horroure and grisly drede dwellen withouten ende.

Horroure is alwey drede of harm that is to come, and this drede shal ever dwelle in the hertes of hem that been dampned; and therefore han they lorn al hire hope for sevene causes. [225] First, for God that is hir juge shal be withouten mercy to hem, and they may nat plesse hym ne noon of his halwes; ne they ne may yeve no thyng for hir raunsoun; ne they have no voys to speke to hym; ne they may nat fle fro peyne; ne they have no goodnesse in hem that they mowe shewe to delivere hem fro peyne. And therefore seith Salomon, 'The wikked man dyeth, and whan he is deed he shal have noon hope to escape fro peyne.' Whoso thanne wolde wel understande these peynes and bithynke hym weel that he hath deserved thilke peynes for his synnes, certes, he sholde have moore talent to siken and to wepe, than for to synge and to pleye, for as that seith Salomon, 'Whoso that hadde the science to know the peynes that been establised and ordeyned for synne, he wolde make sorwe.' [230] Thilke science, as seith Seint Augustyn, maketh a man to waymenten in his herte.

The fourthe point that oghte maken a

man to have contricioun is the sorweful remembrance of the good that he hath left to doon here in erthe, and eek the good that he hath lorn. Soothly, the goode werkes that he hath [left], outhe they been the goode werkes that he hath wrought er he fel into deedly synne, o elles the goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in synne. Soothly, the goode werkes that he dide biforn that he fil in synne been al mortefied and astoned, and dilled, by the ofte synnyng. The othere goode werkes that he wrought while he lay in deedly synne, thei bee outrely dede as to the lyf perdurable in hevене.

[235] Thanne thilke goode werkes the been mortefied by ofte synnyng, which goode werkes he dide whil he was in charitee, no mowe never quyken agay withouten verray penitence; and ther seith God by the mouth of Ezechie 'That if the rightful man returne agay from his rightwisnesse and werk wikkednesse, shal he lyve? Nay, for alle the goode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul never been in remembrance, for he shal dycen in his synne. And upon thilke chapitre seith Seint Gregorie thus: 'That we shulle understonde this principally, that whan we doon deedly synne it is for nought than to rehercen or drawen into memorie the goode werkes that we han wrog biforn'; [240] for certes, in the werkyn of the deedly synne ther is no trust to a good werk that we han doon biforn, this is for to seyn, as for to have therby the lyf perdurable in hevене; but natheles the goode werkes quyken agayn as comen agayn and helpen and availen have the lyf perdurable in hevене whan we han contricioun. But soothly, the goode werkes that men doon whil they been in deedly synne, forasmuch as they were doon in deedly synne, they never quyke agayn; for certes, they that never hadde lyf may never quyken and natheles, al be it that they availle nought to han the lyf perdurable

yet availen they to abregge of the peyne of helle, or elles to geten temporal richesse, or elles that God wole the rather enlumyne and lightne the herte of the synful man to have repentance. [245] And eek they availen for to usen a man to doon goode werkes that the feend have the lasse power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lord Jhesu Crist wole that no good werk be lost, for in somewhat it shal availle. But, forasmuche as the goode werkes that men doon while they been in good lyf been al mortefied by synne folwyng, and eek sith that alle the goode werkes that men doon while they been in deedly synne been outrelly dede, for to have the lyf perdurable, wel may that man that no good werk ne dooth synge thilke newe Frenshe song, '*Jay tout perdu—mon temps et mon labour.*'

For certes synne bireveth a man bothe goodnesse of nature and eek the goodnesse of grace; [250] for soothly, the grace of the Hooly Goost fareth lyk fyr that may nat been ydel, for fyr fayleth anon as it forleteth his werkynge; and right so grace fayleth anon as it forleteth his werkynge. Then leseth the synful man the goodnesse of glorie that onoly is bihight to goode men that labouren and werken. Wel may he be sory thanne that oweth al his lif to God, as longe as he hath lyved and eek as longe as he shal lyve, that no goodnesse ne hath to paye with his dette to God, to whom he oweth al his lyf; for, trust wel, he shal yeven accountes, as seith Seint Bernard, of alle the goodes that han be yeven hym in this present lyf, and how he hath hem despended; noht so muche that ther shal nat perisse an heer of his heed, ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat perisse of his tyme, that he ne shal yeve of it a rekenyng.

[255] The fifthe thyng that oghte moeve a man to contricioun is remembrance of the passioun that oure Lord Jhesu Crist suffred for oure synnes, for, as seith

Seint Bernard, 'Whil that I lyve I shal have remembrance of the travailes that oure Lord Crist suffred in prechyng, his werynesse in travaillynge, his temptaciouns whan he fasted, his longe wakynges whan he preyde, his teeres whan that he weepe for pitee of good peple, the wo and the shame and the filthe that men seyden to hym, of the foule spitting that men spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaven hym, of the foule mowes and of the repreves that men to hym seyden, of the nayles with whiche he was nayled to the croys, and of al the remenant of his passioun that he suffred for my synnes and no thyng for his gilt.'

[260] And ye shul understonde that in mannes synne is every manere of ordre or ordinance turned up-so-down. For it is sooth that God and resoun and sensualitee and the body of man been ordeyned that everich of thise foure thynges sholde have lordshipe over that oother; as thus: God sholde have lordshipe over resoun, and resoun over sensualitee, and sensualitee over the body of man; but soothly, whan man synneth al this ordre or ordinance is turned up-so-down. And therefore thanne, forasmuche as the resoun of man ne wol nat be subget ne obeisant to God, that is his lord by right, therefore leseth it the lordshipe that it sholde have over sensualitee, and eek over the body of man. [265] And why? For sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoun, and by that way leseth resoun the lordshipe over sensualitee and over the body, for, right as resoun is rebel to God, right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to resoun and the body also.

And certes, this disordinaunce and this rebelloun oure Lord Jhesu Crist aboghte upon his precious body ful deere; and herketh in which wise. For as muche thanne as resoun is rebel to God, therefore is man worthy to have sorwe and to be deed. This suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man, after that he hadde be bitrayed of his disciple, and distreyned

245. *thilke newe Frenshe song.* Quoted again in the *Parson*, l. 7.

and bounde, so that his blood prast out at every nayl of his handes, as seith Seint Augustyn. [270] And forther-over for as muchel as resoun of man ne wol nat daunte sensualitee when it may, therfore is man worthy to have shame, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man when they spetten in his visage. And forther-over for as muchel thanne as the caytyf body of man is rebel bothe to resoun and to sensualitee, therfore is it worthy the deeth, and this suffred oure Lord Jhesu Crist for man upon the croys, where as ther was no part of his body free withouten greet payne and bitter passioun.

And al this suffred Jhesu Crist that never forfeted, and therefore resonably may be said of Jhesu in this manere: 'To muchel am I peyned for the thynges that I never deserved, and to muche defouled for shendshipe that man is worthy to have.' And therefore may the synful man wel seye, as seith Seint Bernard, 'Acursed be the bitterness of my synne, for which ther moste he suffred so muchel bitterness'; [275] for certes, after the diverse discordaunces of oure wikkednesses was the passioun of Jhesu Crist ordeyned in diverse thynges, as thus; certes, synful mannes soule is bitraysed of the devel by coveitise of temporeel prosperitee, and scorned by deceite when he cheseth fleshly delices, and yet is it tormented by impacience of adversitee, and by-spit by servage and subjeccioun of synne, and atte laste it is slayn fynally. For this disordinaunce of synful man was Jhesu Crist first bitraysed, and after that he was bounde that cam for to unbynden us of synne and of payne. Thanne was he by-scorned that only sholde han been honoured in alle thynges and of alle thynges. Thanne was his visage, that oghte be desired to be seyn of al mankynde, in which visage angels desiren to looke, vileynsly bispet; [280] thanne was he scourged that no thyng hadde agilt; and finally thanne

275. *by-spit, & dispet.*

was he crucified and slayn. Thanne was accomplished the word of Ysay 'He was wounded for oure mysdedes and defouled by oure felonies.' Now, sit that Jhesu Crist took upon hymself the payne of alle oure wikkednesses, muche oghte synful man wepen and biway that for his synnes Goddes sone hevene sholde al this payne endure.

The sixte thyng that oghte moeve man to contricioun is the hope of thr thynges; that is to seyn, foryiffnesse of synne, and the yifte of grace wel for to do, and the glorie of hevene, with which God shal gerdone a man for his good dedes.

And, for as muche as Jhesu Crist yeveth us thise yiftes of his largesse, and of his sovereyn bountee, therfore is he cleped *Jhesus Nasarennus, rex Judeorum*. [285] *Jhesus* is to seyn saveour, or salvacioun, on whom men shul hope to have foryiffnesse of synnes, which that is proprely salvacioun of synnes; and therefore seyde the aungel to Joseph, 'Thou shalt clepen his name Jhesus that shal saven his peple of hir synnes.' And heer-of seith Seint Peter, 'Ther is noon oother name under hevene that is yeve to any man by which a man may be saved,' but oonly Jhesus. *Nasarennus* is as muche for to seye as florisshynge, in which a man shal hope that he that yeveth hym remissioun of synnes shal yeve hym eek grace wel for to do, for in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme comynge, and in foryiffnesse of synnes, hope of grace wel for to do. 'I was atte dore of thyn herte,' seith Jhesus, 'and cleped for to entre; he that openeth to me shal have foryiffnesse of synne; [290] I wol entre into hym by my grace and soupe with hym (by the goode werkes that he shal doon, whiche werkes been the foode of God), and he shal soupe with me' (by the grete joye that I shal yeven hym).

Thus shal man hope for his werkes of penaunce that God shal yeven hym his regne, as he bihooteth hym in the gospel.

Now shal a man understonde in which



manere shal been his contricioun. I seye that it shal been universal and total. This is to seyn, a man shal be verray repentaunt for alle his synnes that he hath doon in delit of his thought, for delit is ful perilous. For ther been two manere of consentynges; that oon of hem is cleped consentynge of affeccoun, whan a man is moeved to do synne, and deliteth hym longe for to thynke on that synne, and his resoun aperceyvet hit wel that it is synne agayns the lawe of God, and yet his resoun refreyneth nat his foul delit or talent, though he se wel apertly that it is agayns the reverence of God; although his resoun ne consente noght to doon that synne in dede, [295] yet seyn somme doctours that swich delit that dwelleth longe it is ful perilous, al be it never so lite. And also a man sholde sorwe namely, for al that ever he hath desired agayn the lawe of God with perfit consentynge of his resoun, for ther-of is no doute that it is deedly synne in consentynge; for certes, ther is no deedly synne that it nas first in mannes thought, and after that in his delit and so forth into consentynge, and into dede. Wherefore, I seye that many men ne repenten hem never of swiche thoghtes and delites, ne never shryven hem of it, but oonly of the dede of grete synnes outward; wherefore, I seye that swiche wikked delites and wikked thoghtes been subtille bigileres of hem that shullen be dampned.

[300] Moore-over, man oghte to sorwe for his wikkede wordes, as wel as for his wikkede dedes; for, certes, the repentaunce of a synguler synne, and nat repente of alle his othere synnes, or elles repenten hym of alle his othere synnes and nat of a synguler synne, may nat availle. For certes, God Almyghty is al good, and therefore he foryeveth al, or elles right noght. And heer-of seith Seint Augustyn, I wot certeynly that God is enemy to everich synnere, and how thanne he that observeth o synne, shal he have foryifnesse of the remenaunt of his othere synnes? Nay.

[305] And forther-over contricioun sholde be wondresowful and angwissous, and therefore yeveth hym God pleylnly his mercy, and therefore 'whan my soule was angwissous with-inne me, I hadde remembrance of God, that my preyere myghte come to hym.' Forther-over contricioun moste be continueel, and that man havestede fast purpos to shryven hym, and for to amenden hym of his lyf; for, soothly, whil contricioun lasteth man may ever have hope of foryifnesse, and of this comth hate of synne, that destroyeth synne bothe in him-self and eek in oother folk, at his power; for which seith David, 'Ye that loven God, hateth wikkednesse,' for, trusteth wel, to love God is for to love that he loveth and hate that he hateth.

The laste thyng that man shal understonde in contricioun is this, 'Wher-of awayleth contricioun?' I seye that som tyme contricioun delivereth a man fro synne; of which that David seith, 'I seye,' quod David, that is to seyn, 'I purposed fermely to shryve me, and thow, Lord, reledest my synne.' [310] And right so as contricioun availleth noght withouten sad purpos of shrifte, if man have oportunitie, right so litel worth is shrifte or satisfaccioun withouten contricioun. And moore-over contricioun destroyeth the prisoun of helle, and maketh wayk and fieble alle the strengthes of the develes, and restoreth the yiftes of the Hooly Goost and of alle goode vertues; and it clenseth the soule of synne and delivereth the soule fro the peyne of helle, and fro the compaignye of the devel, and fro the servage of synne, and restoreth it to alle goodes espiituels, and to the compaignye and communynoun of hooly chirche.

And forther-over it maketh hym that whilom was some of ire to be some of grace, and alle thise thynges been preved by hooly writ, and therefore he that wolde sette his entente to thise thynges, he were ful wys, for, soothly, he ne sholde na-

320. *entente*, H *herite*.

thanne in al his lyf have corage to synne, but yeven his body and al his herte to the service of Jhesu Crist, and ther-of doon hym hommage; [315] for soothly oure sweete Lord Jhesu Crist hath spared us so debonairly in our folies, that if he ne hadde pitee of mannes soule a sory song we myghten alle synge.

*Explicit prima pars penitentie. Et sequitur secunda pars eiusdem*

The seconde partie of penitence is confessioun that is signe of contricioun. Now shul ye understonde what is confessioun, and wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon, and whiche thynges been povenable to verray confessioun.

First shaltow understonde that confessioun is verray shewyng of synnes to the preest; this is to seyn 'verray,' for he moste confessen hym of alle the condiciouns that bilongen to his synne, as ferforth as he kan; [320] al moot be seyed and no thyng excused, ne hyd, ne for-wrapped, and noght avaunte thee of thy goode werkes. And forther-over it is necessarie to understonde whennes that synnes spryngen, and how they encreessen, and whiche they been.

Of the spryngynge of synnes seith Seint Paul in this wise, that 'Right as by a man synne entred first into this world, and thurgh that synne deeth; right so thilke deeth entred into alle men that synneden'; and this man was Adam, by whom synne entred into this world whan he brak the comaundementz of God. And therefore, he that first was so myghty that he sholde nat have dyed, bcam swich oon that he moste nedes dye, wheither he wolde or noon, and al his progenye in this world that in thilke man synneden.

[325] Looke, that in thestaat of innocence, whan Adam and Eve naked weren in Paradys and no thyng ne hadden shame of hir nakednesse, how that the serpent, that was moost wily of alle

othere beestes that God hadde maked seyde to the womman, 'Why comaunde God to yow ye sholde nat eten of ever tree in Paradys?' The womman answered: 'Of the fruyt,' quod she, 'of the trees in Paradys we feden us, but soothly, of the fruyt of the tree that is in the myddel of Paradys God forbad us for to ete, an nat touchen it, lest peraventure we shold dyen.' The serpent seyde to the womman 'Nay, nay, ye shul nat dyen of deeth for sothe, God woot that what day tha ye eten ther-of youre eyen shul opene and ye shul been as goddes, knowyng good and harm.'

The womman thanne saugh that th tree was good to feedyng, and fair to th eyen, and delitable to the sighte. She took of the fruyt of the tree, and eet it and yaf to hire housbonde, and he eet and anon the eyen of hem bothe openeden [330] and whan that they knewe that they were naked they sowed of fige leves in maner of breches, to hiden hire members.

There may ye seen that deedly synne hath first suggestioun of the feend, a sheweth heere by the naddre, and after ward the delit of the flesh, as sheweth heere by Eve, and after that the consentyng of resoun, as sheweth heere by Adam. For trust wel, though so wer that the feend tempted Eve, that is to seyn the flesh, and the flesh hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt defended, ye certes til that resoun, that is to seyn Adam consented to the etyng of the fruyt, ye stood he in the staat of innocence. Of thilke Adam tooke we thilke synne original, fo of hym fleshly descended be we alle and engendred of vile and corrup mateere; and whan the soule is put in oure body, right anon is contract origina synne, and that that was erst but oonly payne of concupiscence is afterward boti payne and synne; [335] and therefore be we alle born sones of wratthe and of dampnacioun perdurable, if it nere baptesm that we receyven, which bynymeth us th culpe. But for sothe the payne dwellet with us as to temptacioun, which payn

highte concupiscence. And this concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordeyned in man it maketh hym coveite by coveitise of flesh, fleshly synne by sighte of his eyen as to erthely thynges, and eek coveitise of hynesse by pride of herte.

Now, as for to speken of the firste coveitise, that is concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres that weren lawefulliche y-maked and by rightful jugement of God. I seye, forasmuche as man is nat obeisaunt to God, that is his Lord, therefore is the flesh to hym disobeisaunt thurgh concupiscence, which yet is cleped norrissynge of synne, and occasion of synne. Therefore al the while that a man hath in hym the peyne of concupiscence it is impossible but he be tempted somtime and moeved in his flesh to synne, [340] and this thyng may nat faille as longe as he lyveth. It may wel wexefieble and faille by vertu of baptesme, and by the grace of God thurgh penitence, but fully ne shal it never quenche, that he ne shal som tyme be moeved in hymself, but if he were al refreyded by siknesse, or by malefice of sorcerie, or colde drynkes. For lo, what seith Seint Paul, 'The flesh coveiteth agayn the spirit, and the spirit agayn the flesh; they been so contrarie and so stryven that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde.' The same Seint Paul after his grete penaunce in water and in lond;—in water by nyght and by day, in greet peril and in greet peyne; in lond, in fameyne, in thurst, in coold, and cloothles, and ones stoned almoost to the deeth,—yet seyde he, 'Allas ! I caytyf man, who shal delivere me fro the prisson of my caytyf body?' [345] And Seint Jerome, whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert, where as he hadde no compaignye but of wilde beestes, where as he ne hadde no mete but herbes, and water to his drynke, ne no bed but the naked erthe, for which his flesh was blak as an Ethiopeen for hete, and ny destroyed for coold, yet seyde he that the brennyng of lecherie

bboyled in al his body; wherfore, I woot wel sykerly, that they been deceyved that seyn that they ne be nat tempted in hir body. Witnesse on Seint Jame the Apostel, that seith that every wight is tempted in his owene concupiscence, that is to seyn, that everich of us hath matere and occasioun to be tempted of the norrissynge of synne that is in his body. And therefore seith Seint John the evaungelist, 'If that we seyn that we beth withoute synne, we deceyve us selve, and trouthe is nat in us.'

[350] Now shal ye understonde in what manere that synne wexeth and encreeseth in man. The firste thyng is thilke norrissynge of synne of which I spak biforn, thilke fleshly concupiscence; and after that comth the subjeccioun of the devel, this is to seyn the develes bely, with which he bloweth in man the fir of fleshly concupiscence; and after that a man biithynketh hym whether he wol doon, or no, thilke thing to which he is tempted. And thanne, if that a man withstonde and weyve the firste entisyng of his flesh, and of the feend, thanne is it no synne; and if it so be that he do nat so, thanne feelet he anon a flambe of delit, and thanne is it good to be war and kepen hym wel, or elles he wol falle anon into consentynge of synne; and thanne wol he do it, if he may have tyme and place. [355] And of this matere seith Moyses, by the devel, in this manere: The feend seith, 'I wole chace and pursue the man by wikked suggestioun, and I wole hente hym by moevynge and stirynge of synne; I wol departe my prise, or my praye, by deliberacioun, and my lust shal been accompliced in delit; I wol drawe my sward in consentynge,'—for certes, right as a sward departeth a thyng in two peces, right so consentynge departeth God fro man,—'and thanne wol I sleen hym with myn hand in dede of synne'; thus seith the feend; for certes, thanne is a man al deed in soule. And thus is synne accompliced

by temptacioun, by delit, and by consentynge, and thanne is the synne cleped actueel.

Forsothe synne is in two maneres, outhir it is venial, or deedly synne. Soothly, whan man loveth any creature moore than Jhesu Crist oure Creatour, thanne is it deedly synne. And venial synne is it, if man love Jhesu Crist lasse than hym oughte. Forsothe the dede of this venial synne is ful perilous, for it manneth the love that men sholde han to God moore and moore. [360] And therefore if a man charge hymself with many swiche venial synnes, certes, but if so be that he som tyme discharge hym of hem by shrifte, they mowe ful lightly amenuse in hym al the love that he hath to Jhesu Crist; and in this wise skippeth venial into deedly synne, for certes, the moore that a man chargeth his soule with venial synne, the moore is he enclenyd to fallen into deedly synne. And therefore lat us nat be negligent to deschargen us of venial synnes, for the proverbe seith that 'manye smale maken a greet.' And herke this ensample; a greet wawe of the see comth somtyme with so greet a violence that it drencheth the shipe; and the same harm dooth som tyme the smale dropes of water that entren thurgh a litel crevace into the thurrok, and in the botme of the shipe, if men be so negligent that they ne discharge hem nat by tyme. And therefore, although ther be a difference bitwixe these two causes of drenchynge, algates the shipe is dreynt. [365] Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly synne, and of anyouse veniale synnes, whan they multiple in a man so greetly that thilke worldly thynges that he loveth, thurgh whiche he synneth venially, is as greet in his herte as the love of God, or moore. And therefore the love of every thyng that is nat biset in God, ne doon principally for Goddes sake, al though that a man love it lasse than God, yet is it venial synne, and deedly synne whan

the love of any thyng weyeth in the herte of man as muchel as the love of God, or moore. Deedly synne, as seith Seint Augustyn, is 'whan a man turneth his herte fro God, which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge and flitte'; and certes, that is every thyng, save God of hevene. For sooth is that if a man yeve his love, the which that he oweth al to God with al his herte, unto a creature, certes as muche as he yeveth of his love to thilke creature, so muche he bireveth fro God, [370] and therefore dooth he synne, for he that is dettoure to God ne yeldeth nat to God al his dette, that is to seyn, al the love of his herte.

Now, sith man understondeth generally which is venial synne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially of synnes whiche that many a man peraventure ne demeth hem nat synnes, and ne shryveth hem nat of the same thynges, and yet nathelees they been synnes. Soothly, as thise clerkes writen, this is to seyn, that at every tyme that a man eteth or drynketh moore than suffieth to the sustenance of his body, in certain he dooth synne; and eek whan he spekeþ moore than nedeth it is synne; eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the poure; eke whan he is in heele of body and wol nat faste whan hym oghte faste, withouten cause resonable; eke whan he slepeth moore than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite; [375] eke whan he useth his wyf withouten sovereyn desir of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entente to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body; eke whan he wol nat visite the sike and the prisoner, if he may; eke if he love wyf or child, or oother worldly thyng, moore than rescoun requireth; eke if he flattere or blandise moore than hym oghte, for any necessitee; eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the

370. *hym oghte, He other folk (other men).*

almesse of the poure; eke if he apparailleth his mete moore deliciously than nede is, or ete to hastily, by likerousnesse; eke if he tale vanytees at chirche, or at Goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes, of folye, or of vileynye,—for he shal yelden acountes of it at the day of doome; eke whan he biheteth or assureth to do thynges that he may nat perfourne; eke whan that he by lightnesse or folie mysseyeth or scorneth his neighebores; [380] eke whan he hath any wikked suspicioun of thyng ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse; thise thynges and mo withoute nombre been synnes, as seith Seint Augustyn.

Now shal men understonde that al be it so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial synnes, yet may he refreyne hym by the brennyng love that he hath to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and by preyes and confessioun and othere goode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve; for, as seith Saint Augustyn, 'If a man love God in swich manere that al that ever he dooth is in the love of God, and for the love of God verraily, for he brenneth in the love of God, looke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anyeth or greveth, so muche anyeth a venial synne unto a man that is perfit in the love of Jhesu Crist.' [385] Men may also refreyne venial synne by receyvyng worthily of the precious body of Jhesu Crist; by receyvyng eek of hooly water, by almesdede, by general confessioun of *Confiteor* at masse, and at complyn, and by blessyng of bisshopes and of preestes and othere goode werkes.

*Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus et eorum dependenciis et speciebus*

Now is it bihovely thyng to telle

*Sequitur de septem peccatis.* At this point Chaucer begins to follow the *Somme des Vices et des Vertus* of Frère Lorens, altering, however, his arrangement, and with less close logical coherence.

whiche been the deedly synnes, this is to seyn chieftaynes of synnes. Alle they renne in o leas, but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chieftaynes, for as-muche as they been chief, and spryngen of alle othere synnes. Of the roote of thise sevene synnes thanne is pride, the general roote of alle harmes, for of this roote spryngen certain braunches, as ire; envye; accidie, or slewthe; avarice, or coveitise, to commune understondyng; glotony, and lecherye. And everich of thise chief synnes hath his braunches and his twigges as shal be declared in hire chapitres folwyng.

### *De Superbia*

[390] And thogh so be that no man kan outrely telle the nombre of twigges and of the harmes that cometh of pride, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. Ther is inobedience, avauntynge, ypocrisie, despit, arrogance, inpudence, swellynge of herte, insolence, clacioun, impacience, strif, contumacie, presumpcioun, irreverence, pertinacie, veyne glorie and many another twig that I kan nat declare. Inobedient is he that disobeyeth for despit to the comandementz of God and to his sovereyns and to his goostly fader. Avauntour is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. Ypocrite is he that hideth to shewe hym swich as he is, and sheweth hym swich as he nochtis. [395] Despitous is he that hath desdeyn of his neighebores, that is to seyn of his evene Cristene, or hath despit to doon that hym oghte to do. Arrogant is he that thynketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath noght, or weneth that he sholde have hem by his desertes, or elles he demeth that he be that he nys nat. Inpudent is he that for his pride hath no shame of his synnes. Swellynge of herte is whan a man rejoyseth hym of

[395. as ire, etc. These are really treated separately, and not as branches of Pride.

harm that he hath doon. Insolent is he that despiseleth in his juggement alle othere folk, as to regard of his value, and of his konnyng, and of his spekyng, and of his beryng. [400] Elacioun is whan he ne may neither suffice to have maister ne felawe. Inpacient is he that wol nat been y-taught ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werreieith trouthe wityngly, and deffendeth his folye. Contumax is he that thurgh his indignacioun is agayns everich auctoritee or power of hem that been his sovereyns. Presumpcioun is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that hym oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do, and this is called surquidie. Irreverence is whan men do nat honour there as hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be revered. Pertinacie is whan man deffendeth his folies, and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. [405] Veyneglorie is for to have pompe and delit in his temporeel hynesse, and glorifie hym in this worldly estaat. Janglynge is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, and clappen as a mille, and taken no kepe what they seye.

And yet is ther a privee spece of pride that waiteth first to be salewed er he wole salewe, al be he lasse worth than that oother is, peraventure; and eek he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the wey, or kisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offryng biforn his neighebores, and swiche semblable thynges, agayns his ductee, peraventure, but that he hath his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple.

Now been ther two maneres of pride. That oon of hem is withinne the herte of man and that oother is withoute, [410] of whiche soothly thise forseide thynges, and mo than I have seyde, apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man, and that othere speces of pride been withoute;

405. *Private place*, secret kind. This section is Chaucer's addition.

but natheles that oon of thise speces of pride is signe of that oother, right as the gaye leefsel atte taverne is signe of the wyn that is in the celer. And this is in manye thynges, as in speche and contenance, and in outrageous array of clothyng; for certes, if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyng, Crist wolde nat so soone have noted and spoken of the clothyng of thilke riche man in the gospel. And as seith Seint Gregorie, 'That precious clothyng is cownpable for the derthe of it, and for his softnesse and for his strangenesse and degisynesse, and for the superfluitee, and for the inordinat scantnesse of it.'

[415] Allas! may men nat seen as in oure dayes the synful costlewe array of clothyng, and namely in to muche superfluitee, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse?

As to the firste synne, in superfluitee of clothyng, which that maketh it so deere to harm of the peple, nat oonly the cost of embrowdyng, the degise, endentyng, barryng, owndyng, palyng, wyndyng or bendyng, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee, but ther is also costlewe furringe in hir gownes, so muche pownsonyng of chisel to maken holes, so muche daggyng of sheres; forth-with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gownes, traillyng in the dong, and in the mire, on horse and eek on foote, as wel of men as of wommen, that al thilke traillyng is verrailly as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with donge, rather than it is yeven to the poure, to greet damage of the forseide poure folk. [420] And that in sondry wise; this is to seyn, that the moore that clooth is wasted, the moore it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse. And forther-over if so be that they wolde yeven swich pownsoned and dagged clothyng to the poure folk, it is nat convenient to were for hire estaat, ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee

420. On the subject of clothes, Chaucer greatly expands his original.

to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament.

Upon that oother side to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothyng as been thisse kuttid sloppes, or haynselyns, that thurgh hire shortnesse ne couere nat the shameful membres of man, to wikked entente. Allas ! somme of hem shewen the boce of hir shape, and the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lik the maladie of hirnias, in the wrappynge of hir hoses ; and eek the buttookes of hem faren as it were the hyndre part of a she ape in the fulle of the moone. [435] And moreover the wretched swollen membres that they shewethurgh the degisyng, in departynge of hire hoses in whit and reed, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres weren flayne. And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whit and blak, or whit and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth, thanne semeth it as by variaunce of colour that half the partie of hire privee membres were corrupt by the fir of Seint Antony, or by cancre, or by oother swich meschaunce. Of the hyndre part of hir buttookes it is ful horrible for to see, for certes, in that partie of hir body ther as they purgen hir stynkyng ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the peple prouwdly in despit of honestitee, the which honestitee that Jhesu Crist and his freendes observede to shewen in hir lyve.

[430] Now of the outrageous array of wommen, God woot that though the visages of somme of hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie they in hire array of atyr likerousnesse and pride. I sey nat that honestitee in clothyng of man or woman is uncovenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothyng is reprevable. Also the synne of aornement, or of apparaille, is in thynges that apertenen to ridynge,—as in to manye delicat horses that been hooden for delit, that been so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also to

many a vicious knave that is justened by cause of hem ; in to curious harneys, as in sadeles, in crouperes, peytrels, and bridles covered with precious clothyng, and riche barres, and plates of gold, and of silver ; for which God seith, by Zakarie the prophete, 'I wol confounde the rideres of swiche horses.' [435] This folk taken litel reward of the ridynge of Goddes sone of hevene and of his harneys whan he rood upon the asse, and ne hadde noon oother harneys but the poure clothes of his disciples, ne we ne rede nat that ever he rood on oother beest. I speke this for the synne of superfluitee, and nat for resonable honestitee, whan reson it requireth.

And further, certes, pride is greatly notified in holdynge of greet meynes whan they be of litel profit, or of right no profit ; and namely whan that meynes is felonous and damageous to the peple, by hardynesse of heigh lordshipe, or by wey of offices ; for certes, swiche lordes sellen thanne hir lordshipe to the devel of helle, whanne they sustenen the wikkednesse of hir meynes. [440] Or elles whan this folk of lowe degree, as thilke that holden hostelries, sustenen the thefte of hire hostilers, and that is in many manere of deceites. Thilke manere of folk been the flies that folwen the hony, or elles the houndes that folwen the careyne. Swich forseide folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes, for which thus seith David the prophete, 'Wikked deeth moote come upon thilke lordshipes, and God yeve that they moote descenden into helle al doun, al doun ; for in hire houses been iniquitees and shrewednesses, and nat God of hevene.' And certes, but if they doon amendement, right as God yaf his benysoun to Pharaon by the service of Jacob, and to Laban by the service of Joseph, right so God wol yeve his malisoun to swiche lordshipes as sustenen

440. Pharaon . . . Jacob. All the seven MSS. have the names in this order, so it may be Chaucer's mistake.

ne wikkednesse of hir servauntz, but if  
they come to amendement.

Pride of the table appeereth eek ful  
feste; for certes, riche men been cleped  
festes and poure folk been put away  
and rebuked. [445] Also in excesse of  
iverse metes and drynkes, and namely  
riche manere bake-metes and dissh-  
etes, brennyng of wilde fir, and peynted  
and castelled with papir, and semblable  
ast, so that it is abusioun for to thynke.  
And eek in to greet preciousnesse of  
essel and curiositee of mynstralcie, by  
riche a man is stired the moore to  
elices of luxurie. If so be that he  
ste his herte the lasse upon oure Lord  
esu Crist, certeyn it is a synne; and  
erteinly the delices myghte been so grete  
in this cas that man myghte lightly falle  
y hem into deedly synne.

The especes that sourden of pride,  
sothly, whan they sourden of malice  
magined, avised, and forncast, or elles  
usage, been deedly synnes, it is no  
oute; and whan they sourden by  
elettee unavyssed and sodeynly with-  
rawn ageyn, al been they grevous  
nes, I gesse that they ne been nat  
deedly.

[450] Now myghte men axe wher-of  
that pride sourdeth and spryngeth, and  
I seye, somtyme it spryngeth of the  
goodes of nature, and somtyme of the  
goodes of fortune, and somtyme of the  
goodes of grace. Certes, the goodes of  
nature stonden outhur in goodes of body  
or in goodes of soule. Certes, goodes  
of body been heele of body, as strengthe,  
deliverance, beautee, gentrie, franchise;  
goodes of nature of the soule been good  
wit, sharpe understondyng, subtil engyn,  
vertu naturel, good memorie; goodes  
of fortune been richesse, hygh degrees  
of lordshipe, preisynges of the peple;  
[455] goodes of grace been science, power  
to suffre spirituel travaille, benignitee,  
vertuous contemplacioun, withstondyng  
of temptacioun, and semblable thynges;  
of which the forseyde goodes, certes, it is a  
ful greet folye a man to priden hym in

any of hem alle. Now as for to speken  
of goodes of nature; God woot that  
somtyme we han hem in nature as muche  
to oure damage as to oure profit. As  
for to speken of heele of body, certes, it  
passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte  
enchesoun of the siknesse of oure soule;  
for, God woot, the flessch is a ful greet  
enemy to the soule, and therfore the  
moore that the body is hool the moore  
be we in peril to falle. Eke for to pride  
hym in his strengthe of body, it is an  
heigh folye, for certes, the flessch covейteth  
agayn the spirit, and ay the moore strong  
that the flessch is, the sorer may the  
soule be, [460] and over al this, strengthe  
of body and worldly hardynesse causeth  
ful ofte many a man to peril and  
meschaunce. Eek for to pride hym of  
his gentrie is ful greet folie, for ofte  
tyme the gentrie of the body binymeth  
the gentrie of the soule, and eek we ben  
alle of o fader and of o mooder, and alle  
we been of o nature, roten and corrupt,  
bothe riche and poure. Forsothe o  
manere gentrie is for to preise—that  
apparailleth mannes corage with vertues  
and moralitees and maketh hym Cristes  
child; for truste wel, that over what  
man that synne hath maistrie he is a  
verray cherl to synne.

Now been ther generale signes of  
gentillesse, as eschewyng of vice and  
ribaudye and servage of synne, in word,  
in werk, and contenance, [465] and  
usyng vertu, curteisye, and clenness,  
and to be liberal, that is to seyn, large  
by mesure, for thilke that passeth  
mesure is folie and synne. Another is  
to remembre hym of bountee that he of  
oother folk hath receyved. Another is  
to be benigne to his goode subgetis,  
wherfore seith Senek, 'Ther is no thing  
moore covenable to a man of heigh estaat;  
than debonairetee and pitee'; and ther-  
fore these flyes that men elepeth bees,  
whan they maken hir kyng, they chesen  
oon that hath no prikke wherwith he  
may styng.

Another is, a man to have a noble



herte, and a diligent to attayne to heighe vertuose thynges. Now certes, a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace is eek an outrageous folie, for thilke yifte of grace that sholde have turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine, turneth hym to venym and to confusioun, as seith Seint Gregorie. [470] Certes also, who-so prideth hym in the goodes of fortune, he is a ful greet fool, for somtyme is a man a greet lord by the morwe, that is a caytyf and a wrecche er it be nyght; and somtyme the richesse of a man is cause of his deth; somtyme the delices of a man is cause of the grevous maladye thurgh which he dyeth. Certes, the commendacioun of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotel for to triste,—this day they preyse, tomorwe they blame; God woot, desir to have commendacioun of the peple hath caused deeth to many a bisy man.

*Remedium contra peccatum Superbia*

[475] Now sith that so is that ye han understonde what is pride, and whiche been the spes of it, and whennes pride sourdeth and spryngeth, now shul ye understonde which is the remedie agayns the synne of pride; and that is humylitee or mekenesse, that is a vertu thurgh which a man hath verray knoweleche of hymself, and holdeth of hymself no pris ne deyntee, as in regard of his desertes, considerynge ever his freletee.

Now been ther thre maneres of humylitee; as humylitee in herte, and another humylitee in his mouth, the thridde in his werkes.

The humilitee in herte is in foure maneres. That oon is whan a man holdeth hymself as noght worth bifrom God of hevene. Another is, whan he ne despiseth noon oother man. [480] The thridde is whan he rekketh nat though men holde hym noght worth.

470. *Remedium.* In the *Somma de Viciis*, etc., the remedies and the sins are kept apart. Chaucer brings each remedy after its sin.

The ferthe is whan he nys nat sory of his humiliacioun.

Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thynges; in attempree speche, and in humblesse of speche; and whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth that he is swich, as hym thynketh that he is in his herte; another is whan he preiseth the bountee of another man and no thyng therof amenuseth.

Humilitee eek in werkes is in foure maneres; the firste is whan he putteth othere men bifrom hym; the seconde is to chese the loweste place over al; the thridde is gladly to assente to good conseil; the ferthe is to stonde gladly to the award of his sovereyns, or of hym that is in hyer degree. Certein this is a greet werk of humylitee.

*Sequitur de Invidia*

After pride wol I speken of the foule synne of envye, which is, as by the word of the philosophe, sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee; and after the word of Seint Augustyn, it is sorwe of oother mannes wele and joye of othere mennes harm. [485] This synne is platly agayns the Hooly Goost. Al be it so that every synne is agayns the Hooly Goost, yet nathelecs for-as-muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to the Hooly Goost, and envye comth proprely of malice, therefore it is proprely agayn the bountee of the Hooly Goost.

Now hath malice two spes, that is to seyn, hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse, or elles the flessch of man is so blynd that he considereth nat that he is in synne, or rekketh nat that he is in synne, which is the hardnesse of the devel.

That oother spece of malice is whan a man werreyeth trouthe, whan he woot that it is trouthe, and eek whan he werreyeth the grace that God hath yve to his neigheore; and al this is by envye. Certes thanne is envye the worste synne that is; for soothly alle othere synnes been somtyme only agayns ospacial vertu,

ut certes, envye is agayns alle vertues, and agayns alle goodnesse, for it is sory of alle the bountees of his neighebores; and in this manere it is divers from alle othere synnes; [490] for wel unneth is ther any yane that it ne hath som delit in itself, save onoly envye, that ever hath in itself ngwissh and sorwe.

The spesce of envye been thise; ther; first, sorwe of oother mannes goodnesse and of his prosperitee; and prosperitee is kyndely matere of joye; thanne is envye a synne agayns kynde. The econde spece of envye is joye of oother mannes harm; and that is proprely lyk to the devel, that ever rejoyseth hym of mannes harm.

Of thise two spesce comth bakbiting, and this synne of bakbiting, or detraction, hath certeine spesce, as thus; som man reiseth his neighebores by a wikke entente, for he maketh alwey a wikked motte atte laste ende, alwey he maketh 'but' atte laste ende,—that is digne of moore blame than worth is al the preisyng. [495] The seconde spece is that if a man be good, and dooth or seith a thing to good entente, the bakbiter wol turne all thilke goodnesse up-so-down, to his shrewed entente. The thridde is to amenuse the bountee of his neighebores. The fourthe spece of bakbiting is this, that if men speke goodnesse of a man, thanne wol the bakbiter seyn, 'Pardee I swich a man is yet bet than he,' in dispreisyng of hym that men preise.

The fite spece is this, for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of oother folk; this synne is ful greet and ay encreseth after the wikked entente of the bakbiter.

After bakbiting cometh grucchyng or murmuracioun, and somtyme it spryngeth of inpacience agayns God, and somtyme agayns man.

[500] Agayns God it is whan a man grucbeth agayn the peynes of helle, or agayns poverté, or loss of catel, agayn syn or tempest, or elles grucbeth that hrewes han prosperitee, or elles for that

goode men han adversitee; and alle thise thynges sholde men suffre patiently, for they comen by the rightful juggement and ordinance of God. Somtyme comth grucching of avarice, as Judas grucched agayns the Magdaleyne, whan she enoynte the heved of oure Lord Jhesu Crist with hir precious oynement. This maner murmure is swich as whan man grucbeth of goodnesse that hymself dooth, or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel.

Somtyme comth murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharisee grucched agayn the Magdaleyne, whan she approached to Jhesu Crist and wepe at his feet for hiresynnes. [505] And somtyme grucchyng sourdeth of envye, whan men discovereth a mannes harm that was pryvee, or bereth hym on hond thyng that is fals.

Murmure eek is ofte amonges servantz, that grucchen whan hir sovereyns bidden hem doon leveful thynges; and, for-as-muche as they dar nat openly withseye the comaundementz of hir sovereyns, yet wol they seyn harm, and grucche and murmure prively, for verray despit, whiche wordes men clepen 'the develes *Pater noster*,' though so be that the devel ne hadde never *Pater noster*, but that lewed folk yeven it swich a name. Somtyme grucchyng comth of ire, or prive hate that noriseth rancour in herte, as afterward I shal declare. [510] Thanne cometh eek bitternesse of herte, thurgh which bitternesse every good dede of his neighebor semeth to hym bitter and unsavory. Thanne cometh discord that unbyndeth alle manere of freendshipe. Thanne comth scornynge of his neighebor, al do he never so weel. Thanne comth accusyng, as whan man seketh occasioun to anoyen his neighebor, which that is lyk to the craft of the devel, that waiteth bothe nyght and day to accusen us alle. Thanne comth malignitee, thurgh which a man anoyeth his neighebor prively, if he may; and if he noght may, algate his wikked wil ne shal nat wante, as for to

505. *withseye*, contradict; H *withstende*.

505. *folk . . . name*, H *men calle it so*.

brennen his hous pryvely, or empoysone or sleen his beestes, and semblable thynges.

[515] *Remedium contra peccatum Invidie*

Now wol I speke of the remedie agayns this foule synne of envye. First is the lovyng of God principal, and lovyng of his neighebor as hymself, for soothly that oon ne may nat been withoute that oother. And truste wel, that in the name of thy neighebor thou shalt understonde the name of thy brother; for certes alle we have o fader flesshly, and o mooder, that is to seyn, Adam and Eve; and eek o Fader espiritueel, and that is God of hevene. Thy neighebor artow holden for to love and wilne hym alle goodnesse, and therefore seith God, 'Love thy neighebor as thyselfe'; that is to seyn, to salvacioun of lyf and of soule. And moore-over thou shalt love hym in word, and in benigne amonestyng and chastisyng, and comforten hym in his anoyes, and preye for hym with al thyn herte. And in dede thou shalt love hym in swich wise that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone; [520] and therfore thou ne shalt doon hym no damage in wikked word, ne harm in his body, ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entissyng of wikked ensample; thou shalt nat desiren his wyf, ne none of his thynges. Understood eek, that in the name of neighebor is comprehended his enemy. Certes man shal loven his enemy by the comandement of God, and soothly, thy freend shaltow love in God. I seye, thyn enemy shaltow love for Goddes sake by his comandement; for if it were reson that a man sholde haten his enemy, forsothe God nolde nat receyven us to his love, that been his enemy.

Agayns thre manere of wronges that his enemy dooth to hym he shal doon thre thynges, as thus: [525] agayns hate and rancour of herte, he shal love hym in herte; agayns chidyng and wikkede

wordes, he shal preye for his enemy; and agayn wikked dede of his enemy, he shal doon hym bountee; for Crist seith, 'Loveth youre enemy, and preyeth for hem that speke yow harm, and eek for hem that yow chacen and pursewen, and dooth bountee to hem that yow haten.' Loo, thus comaundeth us oure Lord Jhesu Crist to do to oure enemy, for soothly nature dryveth us to loven oure freendes, and *parfey*, oure enemy han moore nede to love than oure freendes; and they that moore nede have, certes, to hem shal men doon goodnesse; and certes, in thilke dede have we remembrance of the love of Jhesu Crist that deyde for his enemy. And, in as muche as thilke love is 'the moore grevous to perfourne, in so muche is the moore gretter the merite, and therefore the lovyng of oure enemy bath confounded the venym of the devel; [530] for, right as the devel is disconfited by humylitee, right so is he wounded to the deeth by love of oure enemy. Certes thanne is love the medicine that casteth out the venym of envye fro mannes herte. The spes of this paas shullen be moore largely in hir chapitres folwyng declared.

*Sequitur de Ira*

After envye wol I discryven the synne of ire; for soothly whoso hath envye upon his neighebor anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe in word, or in dede, agayns hym to whom he hath envye. And as wel comth ire of pride as of envye, for soothly he that is proude or envyous is lightly wrooth.

[535] This synne of ire, after the discryvyng of Saint Augustyn, is wikked wil to been avenged by word or by dede. Ire, after the philosophre, is the fervent blood of man y-quyked in his herte, thurgh which he wole harm to hym that he hateth. For certes, the herte of man, by eschawfyng and moevyng of his blood, wexeth so trouble that he is out of alle judgement of reson.

But ye shal understonde that ire is in  
two maneres; that oon of hem is good  
and that oother is wikked. The goode  
is by jalousie of goodnesse, thurgh  
which a man is wrooth with wikkednesse,  
and agayns wikkednesse; and therefore  
with a wys man, that ire is bet than  
fey. [540] This ire is with debonairetee,  
and it is wrooth withouten bitternesse,  
and wrooth agayns the man, but wrooth  
with the mysdede of the man, as seith  
the prophete David, *Irascimini, et nolite*  
*scare.*

Now understondeth that wikked ire is  
in two maneres, that is to seyn, sodeyn  
and hastif ire withouten avisement  
and consentynge of resoun. The menyng  
of the sens of this is, that the resoun of  
a man ne consente nat to thilke sodeyn ire;  
and thanne it is venial. Another ire is  
wikked, that comth of felonie of herte,  
myed and cast biforn with wikked wil  
to do vengeance, and therto his resoun  
consenteth; and soothly this is deedly  
synne. This ire is so displeant to God  
that it troubleth his hous and chaceth  
the Hooly Goost out of mannes soule,  
and wasteth and destroyeth the liknesse  
of God, that is to seyn, the vertu that is  
in mannes soule, [545] and put in hym  
the liknesse of the devel, and bynymeth  
the man fro God that is his rightful lord.  
This ire is a ful greet plesaunce to the  
devel, for it is the develes founneys that  
schawfed with the fir of helle. For  
wites, right so as fir is moore mighty to  
destroyen erthly thynges than any  
other element, right so ire is myghty to  
destroyen alle spiritueel thynges.

Looke how that fir of smale gleedes,  
that been almoost dede under asshen,  
ollen quike agayn when they been  
touched with brymston. Right so ire  
of evermo quyken agayn when it is  
touched by the pride that is covered in  
mannes herte; for certes, fir ne may nat  
comen out of no thyng, but if it were  
first in the same thyng natureelly, as fir  
is drawen out of flyntes with steel. [550]  
And, right so as pride is ofte tyme

matere of ire, right so is rancour norice  
and keper of ire. Ther is a maner tree,  
as seith Seint Ysidre, that whan men  
maken fire of thilke tree and covere the  
coles of it with asshen, soothly the fir of  
it wol lasten al a yeer or moore, and  
right so fareth it of rancour; whan it is  
ones conceived in the hertes of som men,  
certein it wol lasten peraventure from  
oon Estre day unto another Estre day  
and moore; but certes, thilke man is  
ful fer fro the mercy of God in thilke  
while.

In this forseyde develes founneys ther  
forgen thre shrewes: Pride, that ay  
bloweth and encreaseth the fir by  
chidyng and wikked wordes; [555]  
thanne stant Envy, and holdeth the  
hoote iren upon the herte of man with a  
peire of longe toonges of long rancour;  
and thanne stant the synne of Contumelie  
or strif and cheeste, and batereth and  
forgeth by vileyns reprevynges. Certes,  
this cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the  
man hymself and eek to his neigheore.  
For soothly, almoost al the harm that any  
man dooth to his neigheore comth of  
wrathe; for certes, outrageous wratthe  
dooth al that ever the devel hym  
comandeth: for he ne spareth neither  
Crist, ne his sweete mooder. And in  
his outrageous anger and ire, alas!  
allas! ful many oon at that tyme feeleth  
in his herte ful wikkedly both of Crist  
and of alle his halwes.

[560] Is nat this a cursed vice? Yis,  
certes. Alas! it bynymeth from man  
his wit and his resoun and al his  
debonaire lif espiritueel, that sholde  
kepen his soule.

Certes it bynymeth eek Goddes due  
lordshipe, and that is mannes soule and  
the love of his neigheores. It stryvet  
eek alday agayn trouthe. It reveth hym  
the quiete of his herte and subverteth  
his soule.

Of ire comen thise stynkyng engendrures; first, hate, that is oold  
wrathe; discord, thurgh which a man  
foraketh his olde freend that he hath

lovede ful longe; and thanne cometh werre, and every manere of wrong that man dooth to his neigheore in body, or in catel. Of this cursed synne of ire cometh eek manslaughter, and understonde wel that homycide, that is manslaughter, is in diverse wise. Som manere of homycide is spiritueel, and som is bodily.

[565] Spiritueel manslaughter is in sixe thynges. First, by hate, as Seint John seith, 'He that hateth his brother is homycide.' Homycide is eek by bak-bitynge; of whiche bakbiters seith Salomon, that they han two swerdes with whiche they sleen hire neigheores; for soothly as wikke is to bynyme his good name, as his lyf. Homycide is eek in yevynge of wikked conseil by fraude, as for to yeven conseil to areysen wrongful custumes and taillages, of whiche seith Salomon: 'Leoun rorynge and bere hongry been like to the crueel lordshipes in witholdynge or abreggyng of the shepe (or the hyre), or of the wages of servantz, or elles in usures or in with-drawynge of the almesse of poure folk.' For which the wise man seith, 'Fedeth hym that almoost dyeth for hongr'; for soothly, but if thou feede hym, thou sleest hym. And alle these been deedly synnes. [570] Bodily manslaughter is whan thou sleest him with thy tonge in oother manere, as whan thou comandest to sleen a man, or elles yevest hym conseil to sleen a man.

Manslaughtre in dede is in foure maneres. That oon is by lawe, right as a justice dampneth hym that is coupable to the deeth; but lat the justice be war that he do it rightfully, and that he do it nat for delit to spille blood, but for kepyng of rightwisenesse. Another homycide is that is doon for necessitee, as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt, and that he ne may noon ootherwise escape from his owene deeth; but certainly, if he may escape withouten manslaughter of his adversarie and sleeth hym, he dooth synne, and he shal bere

penance as for deedly synne. Eek if a man, by caas or aventure, sleete an arwe, or caste a stoon, with which he sleeth a man, he is homycide. [575] Eek if a womman by negligence overlyeth hire child in hir slepyng, it is homycide and deedly synne. Eek whan man deatourbeth concepcioun of a child, and maketh a womman outhur bareyne by drynkynge venemouse herbes thurgh which she may nat conceyve, or sleeth a child by drynkes, or elles putteth certeine material thynges in hire secree places to slee the child, or elles dooth unkyndely synne by which man or womman shedeth hire nature, in manere or in place ther as a child may nat be conceived, or elles if a woman have conceived and hurt hirselfe, and sleeth the child, yet it is homycide. What seye we eek of women that morden hir children for drede of worldly shame? Certes, an horrible homicide! Homycide is eek if a man approcheth to a womman by desir of lecherie, thurgh which the child is perissed, or elles smyteth a womman wityngly, thurgh which she leseth hir child. Alle these been homycides and horrible deedly synnes.

[580] Yet comen ther of ire manye mo synnes, as wel in word, as in thought and in dede, as he that arreteth upon God, or blameth God of thyng of which he is hymself gilty, or despiseth God, and alle his halwes, as doon these cursede hasardours in diverse contrees. This cursed synne doon they whan they feelen in hir hertes ful wikkedly of God and of his halwes; also whan they treten unreverently the sacrament of the auter, thilke synne is so greet that unneth may it been releessed, but that the mercy of God passeth alle his werkis, it is so greet, and he so benigne.

Thanne comth of ire attrayngre, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to forleten his synne, thanne wole he be angry and answeren hokerly and angrily, and defenden or excusen

575. *by drynkes, & addis wilfully.*

is synne by unstedfastnesse of his  
 esch; or elles he dide it for to holde  
 unpayed; with his felawes; or elles  
 seith, the fend enticed hym; [585] or  
 elles he dide it for his youthe; or elles his  
 compleccioun is so courageous that he  
 may nat forbere; or elles it is his destinee,  
 he seith, unto a certain age; or elles,  
 he seith, it cometh hym of gentillesse of  
 his auncestres; and semblable thynges.  
 Of this manere of folk so wrappen hem  
 hir synnes that they ne wol nat  
 alivere hemself; for soothly no wight  
 nat excuseth hym wilfully of his synne  
 may nat been delivered of his synne, til  
 he mekely biknoweth his synne.

After this thanne cometh sweryng, that  
 expres agayn the comandement of God;  
 and this bifalleth ofte of anger and of  
 fe. God seith, 'Thow shalt nat take  
 the name of thy Lord God in vein,' or  
 in ydel. Also oure Lord Jhesu Crist  
 seith, by the word of Seint Mathew,  
 'Ne wol ye nat swere in alle manere;  
 either by hevene, for it is Goddes trone;  
 or by erthe, for it is the bench of his  
 feet; ne by Jerusalem, for it is the citee  
 of a greet kyng; ne by thyn heer, for  
 thou mayst nat make an heer whitt ne  
 black; [590] but seyeth by youre word,  
 "ye, ye," and "nay, nay"; and what  
 that is moore it is of yvel,' seith Crist.  
 For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so  
 synfully, in dismembrynge of Crist by  
 soule, herte, bones, and body; for certes  
 it semeth that ye thynke that the cursede  
 Jewes ne dismembred nat ynough the  
 precious persone of Crist, but ye dis-  
 membre hym moore. And if so be  
 that the lawe compelle yow to swere,  
 thanne rule yow after the lawe of God  
 in youre sweryng, as seith Jeremye, 4° c°,  
 'Thou shalt kepe thre condicions; 'thou  
 shalt swere in trouthe, in doom, and in  
 rightwisnesse'; this is to seyn, thou  
 shalt swere sooth; for every lesyng is  
 agayns Crist, for Crist is verray trouthe.

[590] *dismembrynge*, i.e. the swearing by  
 Crist's different members; cp. *Pardoner's Tale*,  
 B. 474. 703.

And thynk wel this, that every greet  
 swerere, nat compelled lawefully to swere,  
 the wounde shal nat departe from his  
 hous whil he useth swich unleveful  
 sweryng. Thou shalt sweren eek in  
 doom, whan thou art constrained by thy  
 domesman to witnessen the trouthe.  
 [595] Eek thou shalt nat swere for envye,  
 ne for favour, ne for meede, but for  
 rightwisnesse, and for declaracioun of it,  
 to the worshipe of God, and helpyng of  
 thyne evene Cristene. And therefore,  
 every man that taketh Goddes name in  
 ydel, or falsly swereth with his mouth,  
 or elles taketh on hym the name of Crist,  
 to be called a Cristene man, and lyveth  
 agayns Cristes lyvyng and his techyng,  
 alle they taken Goddes name in ydel.

Looke eek, what Seint Peter seith,  
*Actuum 4°, Non est aliud nomen sub celo*,  
 etc.: 'Ther nys noon oother name,'  
 seith Seint Peter, 'under hevene yeven  
 to men, in which they mowe be saved';  
 that is to seyn, but the name of Jhesu  
 Crist. Take kepe eek how that the  
 name of Crist so precious is, as seith Seint  
 Paul *ad Philipenses 2°, In nomine Jhesu*,  
 etc.: that 'in the name of Jhesu every  
 knee of havenely creatures, or erthely,  
 or of helle, sholden bowe'; for it is so  
 heigh and so worshipful that the cursede  
 feend in helle sholde tremblen to heeren  
 it y-nempned. Thanne semeth it that  
 men that sweren so horribly by his  
 blessed name, that they despise hym  
 moore booldely than dide the cursede  
 Jewes, or elles the devel, that trembleth  
 whan he heereth his name.

[600] Now certes, sith that sweryng,  
 but if it be lawefully doon, is so heighly  
 defended, muche worse is forsweryng  
 falsly, and yet nedelees.

What seye we eek of hem that deliten  
 hem in sweryng and holden it a gentile  
 or a manly dede to swere grete othes?  
 And what of hem that of verray usage  
 ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be  
 the cause nat worth a straw? Certes,  
 it is horrible synne. Sweryng sodeynly,  
 withoute aysement, is eek a synne.

But lat us go now to thilke horrible sweryng of adjuracioun and conjuracioun, as doon thise false enchauntours or nigromanciens, in bacyns ful of water, or in a bright sward, in a cercle, or in a fir, or in a shulder-boon of a sheepe ! I kan nat seye but that they doon cursedly and damnablely agayns Crist, and al the feith of hooly Chirche.

[603] What seye we of hem that bileeven in divynails, as by flight or by noyse of briddes, or of beestes, or by sort, by geomancie, by dremes, by chirkyng of dore, or crakyng of houses, by gnawynge of rattes, and swich manere wrecchednesse ? Certes, al this thyng is deffended by God, and by al hooly Chirche ; for which they been -acursed til they come to amendement, that on swich filthe setten hire bileeve. Charmes for woundes or maladie of men, or of beestes, if they taken any effect, it may be peraventure that God suffreth it, for folk sholden yeve the moore feith and reverence to his name.

Now wol I speken of lesynges, which generally is fals signyficacioun of word, in entente to deceyven his evene Cristene. Some lesyng is, of which ther comth noon advantage to no wight ; and som lesyng turneth to the ese and profit of o man, and to disese and damage of another man. [610] Another lesyng is for to saven his lyf or his catel. Another lesyng comth of delit for to lye, in which delit they wol forge a long tale and peynten it with alle circumstaunces, where al the ground of the tale is fals. Som lesyng comth for he wole sustene his word ; and som lesyng comth of recchelesnesse withouten avisement ; and semblable thynges.

Lat us now touche the vice of flaterynge, which ne comth nat gladly, but for drede, or for covetise. Flaterye is generally wrongful preisyng. Flatereres been the develes norices, that norissen his children with milk of losengerie. Forsothe Salomon seith that flaterie is wors than detraccioun, for somtyme detraccioun maketh an hauteyn man be the moore

humble, for he dredeth detraccioun ; but certes, flaterye, that maketh a man to enhauncen his herte and his ~~reynance~~ [615] Flatereres been the develes enchauntours, for they make a man to wene of hymself be lyk that he nys nat lyk ; they been lyk to Judas, that bitraysed [God, and thise flatereres bitraysen] a man to sellen hym to his enemy, that is to the devel. Flatereres been the develes chapel-eyns that syngen ever *Placeto*. I rekene flaterie in the vices of ire, for ofte tyme if o man be wrooth with another, thanne wole he flaterie som wight to sustene hym in his querele.

Speke we now of swich cursynge as comth of irous herte. Malisoun generally may be seyed every maner power or harm. Swich cursynge bireveth man fro the regne of God, as seith Seint Paul. [620] And ofte tyme swich cursynge wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth, as a bryd that retorneth agayn to his owne nest. And over alle thyng men oghten eschewe to cursen hire children, and yeven to the devel hire engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is ; certes it is greet peril and greet synne.

Lat us thanne speken of chidyng and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte, for they unsowen the semes of frendshipe in mannes herte. For certes, unnethes may a man pleyntly been accorded with hym that hath hym openly revyled and reprieved in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly syane, as Crist seith in the gospel. And taak kepe now, that he that repreveþ his neighebor, outhir he repreveþ hym by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as, 'mesel !' 'croked harlot !' or by som synne that he dooth. [625] Now if he repreve hym by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the repreve to Jhesu Crist, for peyne is sent by the rightwys sonde of God, and by his suffraunce, be it meselrie, or mayme, or maladie. And if he repreve hym uncharitably of synne, as 'thou

615. *I rekene flaterie*, etc. Chaucer's unhappy defence of the digression in the *Somme*.

shewe hylot !' and so forth, thanne stenech that to the rejoyssynge of the el. ~~the~~ ever hath joye that men mayne.

And certes chidyng may nat come out of a vileyns herte, for after the vundance of the herte speketh the uth ful ofte. And ye shul undernde that. Looke by any wey whan man shal chastise another, that he war from chidyng and reprevynge; trewely, but he be war, he may ful tily quyen the fir of angre, and of utthe, which that he sholde quenche, I peraventure sleeth hym which that myght chastise with benignitee. For seith Salomon, 'The amyable tonge the tree of lyf'; that is to seyn, of espritueel, and soothly, a deslavee ge sleeth the spirites of hym that reveth and eek of hym that is repaved.

] Loo, what seith Seint Augustyn, 'her is no thyng so lyk the develes id as he that ofte chideth.' Seint al seith eek, 'A servant of God loveth nat to chide.' And how that dyng be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle nere folk, yet is it, certes, moost unrenable bitwixe a man and his wyf; there is never reste; and therfore th Salomon, 'An hous that is untered in reyn and droppynge and a dyng wyf been lyke.' A man that in a droppynge hous in manye places, wgh he eschewe the droppynge in o ce, it droppeth on hym in another ce; so fareth it by a chidyng wyf; t she chide hym in o place, she wol ide hym in another; and therfore, letre is a morsel of breed with joye in an hous ful of delices with chidyng,' th Salomon. Seint Paul seith, 'O

wommen, be ye subgetes to youre usbondes; as bihoveth in God, and ye in loveth youre wyves.' *Ad Colos- sers 3<sup>o</sup>*.

[63] Afterward speke we of scornynge, lich is a wikked synne, and namely an he scorneth a man for his goode rkes; for certes, swiche scorneres faren

lyk the foule tode that may nat endure to smelle the soote savour of the vyme whanne it flourisheth. Thise scorneres been partyng-felawes with the devel, for they han joye whan the devel wynneth, and sorwe whan he leseth; they been adversaries of Jhesu Crist, for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacioun of soule.

Speke we now of wikked conseil, for he that wikked conseil yeveth is a traytour; he deceyveth hym that trusteth in hym, *ut Achitofel ad Absolonem*. But natheles yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hymself. [64] For, as seith the wise man, 'Every fals lyvynge hath his propertee in hymself, that he that wole anoye another man, he anoyeth first hymself.' And men shul understonde that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit; ne to muche worldly folk; namely in conseilynge of soules.

Now comth the synne of hem that soven and maken discord amonges folk; which is a synne that Crist hateth outrelly; and no wonder is; for he deyde for to make concord. And moore shame do they to Crist, than dide they that hym crucifiede; for God loveth bettre that freendshipe be amonges folk than he dide his owene body, the which that he yaf for unitee. Therfore been they likned to the devel, that ever been aboute to maken discord.

Now comth the synne of double tonge swiche as speken faire byforn folk and wikkedly bihynde, or elles they maken semblant as though they speke of good entencioun or elles in game and play, and yet they speke of wikked entente.

[64] Now comth biwreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethe may he restoore the damage.

Now comth manace, that is an open folye, for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth moore than he may perforne ful ofte tyme.

Now cometh ydel wordes, that is with-



often profit of hym that speketh tho wordes, and eek of hym that herkneþ tho wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been tho that been nedefees, or withouten entente of naturel profit. And al be it that ydel wordes been somtyme venial synne, yet sholde men douten hem, for we shul yeve rekenynge of hem bifore God.

Now comth janglynge, that may nat been withoute synne. And as seith Salomon, it is a synne of apert folye, [690] and therefore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed hym how that men sholde plesse the peple, and he answerde, 'Do manye goode werkes and spek fewe jangles.'

After this comth the synne of japeres, that been the develes apes, for they maken folk to laughe at hire japerie as folk doon at the gawdes of an ape. Swich japes deffendeth Seint Paul. Looke, how that vertuouse wordes and hooply woordes conforten hem that travaillen in the service of Crist, right so conforten the vileyns wordes and knakkes of japeris hem that travaillen in the service of the devel. Thisse been the synnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of ire, and of othere synnes mo.

*Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire*

The remedie agayns ire is a vertu that men clepen mansuetude, that is debonairetee; and eek another vertu that men callen pacience, or suffraunce.

[695] Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the styrynges and the moevynge of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by ire.

Suffraunce suffreth swetely alle the annoyances and the wronges that men doon to man outward. Seint Jerome seith thus of debonairetee, that it dooth noon harm to no wight, ne seith, ne forþon harm that men doon or seyn he ne schawfeth nat agayns his resoun. This

*þat is debonairetee, Cam. that Jhon de Bonavia clepith debonairetee.*

vertu som tyme comth of nature, for, as seith the philosophre, 'A man is a quyk thyng, by nature debonaire and treftable to goodnesse'; but whan debonairetee is enformed of grace, thanne is it the moore worth.

Pacience, that is another remedie agayns ire, is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to hym. [660] The philosophre seith that pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee and every wikked word. This vertu maketh a man lyk to God, and maketh hym Goddes owene deere child, as seith Crist; this vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy, and therefore seith the wise man, 'If thou wolt venquysse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre.' And thou shalt understonde that man suffreth four manere of grevances in outward thynges; agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciences.

The firste grevance is of wikkede wordes; thilke suffrede Jhesu Crist withouten grucchyng, ful patiently, whan the Jewes despised and repreved hym ful ofte. Suffre thou therefore patiently; for the wise man seith, 'If thou stryve with a fool, though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste.'

[665] That oother grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther agayns suffred Crist ful patiently, whan he was despoyled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but his clothes.

The thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful patiently in al his passioun.

The fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherefore I seye that folk that maken hir servantz to travaillen to grevously, or out of tyme, as on haly dayes, soothly they do greet synne. Heer-agayns suffred Crist ful patiently and taughte us pacience, whan he bar upon his blissed shulder the croys, upon which he sholde suffren despitous deeth.

Here may men lerne to be pacient; for certes noght oonly Cristen men been pacient for love of Jhesu Crist and for pardoun of the blisful lyf that is perdurable, but certes the olde payens that never were Cristene, commendedden and useden the vertu of pacience.

[670] A philosophre upon a tyme, that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas, for which he was greetly amoeved, and broghte a yerde to scourge the child; and when this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister, 'What thenke ye to do?' 'I wol bete thee,' quod the maister, 'for thy correccioun.' 'Forsothe,' quod the child; 'ye oghten first correcte youreself, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child.' 'Forsothe,' quod the maister, al wepyng, 'thow seyst sooth; have thow the yerde, my deere sone, and correcte me for myn inpacience.' Of pacience comth obedience, thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist and to alle hem to whiche he oghte to be obedient in Crist. [675] And understond wel that obedience is perfyt whan that a man dooth gladly and hastily, with good herte, entirely, al that he sholde do. Obedience generally is to perfourne the doctrine of God and of his sovereyns, to whiche hym oghte to ben obeisant in alle rightwisnesse.

#### *Sequitur de Accidia*

After the synne of envye and of ire, now wol I speken of the synne of accidie; for envye blyndeth the herte of man, and ire troubleth a man, and accidie maketh hym hevvy, thoughtful and wrawful. Envye and ire maken bitternesse in herte, which bitternesse is mooder of accidie and bynymeth hym the love of alle goodnesse. Thanne is accidie the angwisch of troubled herte; and Seint Augustyn seith, it is anoy of goodnesse and joye of harm. Certes this is a dampnable synne, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist, in as muche as it bynymeth the service that men oghte doon to Crist

with alle diligence, as seith Salomon. [680] But accidie dooth nowich diligence. He dooth alle thyng with anoy, and with wrawnesse, slaknesse, and excusacioun, and with ydelnesse, and unlust; for which the book seith, 'Accused be he that dooth the service of God negligently.'

Thanne is accidie enemy to everich estaat of man; for certes the estaat of man is in thre maneres. Outher it is thestaat of innocence, as was thestaat of Adam bifrom that he fil into synne; in which estaat he was holden to wirche, as in heriyng and adowryng of God. Another estaat is estaat of synful men, in which estaat men been holden to labour in preiynge to God for amendement of hire synnes, and that he wole graunte hem to aysen out of hir synnes. Another estaat is thestaat of grace, in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence; and certes to alle these thynges is accidie enemy and contrarie, for he loveth no bisynesce at al. [685] Now certes this foule sinne, accidie, is eek a ful greet enemy to the lifode of the body, for it ne hath no purveaunce agayn temporeel necessitee, for it forsluweth and forsluggeth, and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles by recchelesnesse.

The fourthe thyng is, that accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle, by-cause of hir slouth and of hire hevynesse; for they that been dampned been so bounde that they ne may neither wel do, ne wel thynke. Of accidie comth first, that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhomynacion of swich accidie, as seith Seint John.

Now cometh slouth, that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce; for soothly, slouth is so tendre and so delicat, as seith Salomon, that he wol nat suffre noon hardnesse, ne penaunce, and therefore he shendeth al that he dooth. Agayns this roten-herted synne of accidie and slouth sholde men exercise himself to doon goode werkes, and manly and

685. sinne, & synne.

vertuously cacchen corage wel to doon, thynkyng that oure Lord Jhesu Crist quitheth every good dede, be it never so lite. <sup>[690]</sup> Usage of labour is a greet thyng, for it maketh, as seith Seint Bernard, the laborer to have stronge armes, and harde synwes; and slouth maketh hem feble and tendre. Thanne comth drede to bigynne to werke anye goode werkes; for certes he that is enclnyed to synne, hym thynketh it is so greet an emprise for to undertake to doon werkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his herte that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grevous and so chargeaunt for to suffice, that he dar nat undertake to do werkes of goodnesse, as seith Seint Gregorie.

Now comth wanhope, that is despir of the mercy of God, that comth somtyme of to muche outrageous sorwe, and somtyme of to muche drede, ymaginyng that he hath doon so muche synne that it wol nat availen hym, though he wolde repenten hym and forsake synne; thurgh which despir or drede he abaondoneth al his herte to every maner synne, as seith Seint Augustin. <sup>[695]</sup> Which dampnable synne, if that it continue unto his ende, it is cleped synnyng in the Hooly Goost. This horrible synne is so perilous, that he that is despeired, ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to do, as sheweth wel by Judas.

Certes, aboven alle synnes thanne is this synne moost displeasnt to Crist and moost adversarie.

Soothly, he that despeireth hym is lyke the coward champioun recreant that seith 'creaunt' withoute nede. Alas! alas! nedeles is he recreaunt and nedelees despeired. Certes, the mercy of God is ever redy to the penitent, and is aboven alle his werkes. <sup>[700]</sup> Allas! kan a man nat bithynke hym on the gospel of Seint Luc xv., where as Crist seith that as wel shal ther be joye in hevene upon a synful man that dooth penitence, as upon synnety and nyne rightful men that never ne dede synne, ne neden no penitence.

Looke forther in the same gospel, the joye and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was returned to his fader. Kan they nat remembren hem eek, that, as seith Seint Luc xxiij., how that the theef that was hanged biysde Jhesu Crist seyde, 'Lord, remembre of me, whan thou comest into thy regne.' 'Forsothe,' seyde Crist, 'I seye to thee, to day shaltow been with me in paradys.' Certes, ther is noon so horrible synne of man that it ne may in his lyf be destroyed by penitence, thurgh vertu of the passion and of the deeth of Crist. <sup>[705]</sup> Allas! what nedeth man thanne to been despeired, with that his mercy so redy is and large? Aze and have.

Thanne cometh sompnolence, that is sloppy slombryng, which maketh a man be hevy and dul in body and in soule. And this synne comth of slouth. And certes, the tyme that by wey of resoun men sholde nat slepe, that is by the morwe, but if ther were cause reasonable; for soothly the morwe tyde is moost covenable a man to sey his preyer, and for to thyngen on God, and for to honour God, and to yeven almesse to the poure, that first cometh in the name of Crist. Lo, what seith Salomon? 'Whoso wolde by the morwe awaken and seke me, he shal fynde.' <sup>[710]</sup> Thanne cometh negligenge or recchelesnesse, that rekketh of no thyng; and how that ignorance be mooder of alle harm, certes negligenge is the norice. Negligence ne dooth no for, whan he shal doon a thyng, wheither he do it weel or baddely.

Of the remedie of these two synnes, as seith the wise man, that he that dredeth God he spareth nat to doon that his oghte doon, and he that loveth God he wol doon diligence to please God by his werkes, and abandone hymself, with a his myght, wel for to doon. Thanne comth ydelnesse that is the yate of alle harmes. An ydel man is lyk to a place that hat no walles; the develes may entre o every syde and sheten at hym at discover

by temptacion on every syde. [715] This ydelnesse is the thurrok of alle wikked and vileyns thoghtes and of alle jangles, trufles, and of alle ordure. Certes, the hevene is yeven to hem that wol labouren, and nat to ydel folk. Eek David seith, that they ne been nat in the labour of men, ne they shul nat been whipped with men, that is to seyn in purgatorie; certes thanne semeth it they shul be tormented with the devel in helle, but if they doon penitence.

Thanne comth the synne that men clepen *tarditas*, as whan a man is to laterede or tarynge, er he wole turne to God; and certes that is a greet folie. He is lyk to hym that falleth in the dych, and wol nat arise. And this vice comth of a fals hope, that he thynketh that he shal lyve longe; but that hope failleth ful ofte.

[720] Thanne comth lachesse; that is he that whan he biginneth any good werk, anon he shal foreleten it, and stynten, as doon they that han any wight to governe and ne taken of hym namoore kepe, anon as they fynden any contrarie or any annoy. Thise been the newe shepherdes that leten hir sheepe wityngly go renne to the wolf, that is in the breres, or do no fors of hir owene governaunce. Of this comth poverte and destruccioun, bothe of spiritueel and temporeel thynges.

Thanne comth a manere cooldnesse, that fresseth al the herte of a man. Thanne comth undevoicioun, thurgh which a man is blent, as seith Seint Bernard, and hath swich langour in soule, that he may neither rede ne singe in hooly chirche, ne heere, ne thynke of no devocioun, ne travaille with his handes in no good werk, that it nys hym unsavory and al apalled. Thanne wexeth he slough and slombry, and soone wol be wrooth, and soone is enclyned to hate and to envye.

[725] Thanne comth the synne of worldly sorwe, swich as is cleped *tristitia*, that sleeth man, as Seint Paul seith. For certes, swich sorwe werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also, for

ther-of comth that a man is annoyed of his owene lif; wherfore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lif of man, er that his tyme be come by wey of kynde.

#### *Remedium contra peccatum Accidie*

Agayns this horrible synne of accidie, and the branches of the same, ther is a vertu that is called *fortitudo*, or strengthe; that is, an affeccoun thurgh which a man despiseth anyouse thynges. This vertu is so myghty and so vigorous that it dar withstonde myghtily, and wisely kepen hym self fro perila that been wikked, and wrastle agayn the assautes of the devel; [730] for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule, right as accidie abateth it, and maketh it fieble; for this *fortitudo* may endure by long suffraunce the travailes that been covenable.

This vertu hath manye spesces, and the firste is cleped magnanimitie, that is to seyn greet corage; for certes ther bihoveth greet corage agains accidie lest that it ne swolve the soule by the synne of sorwe, or destroye it by wanhope. This vertu maketh folk to undertake harde thynges and grevouse thynges by hir owene wil, wisely and resonably. And for as muchel as the devel fighteth agayns a man moore by queyntise and by sleighte than by strengthe, therefore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoun and by discrecioun.

Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith and hope in God, and in his seintes, to acheve and accomple the goode werkes, in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. [735] Thanne comth seuretee, or sikernes, and that is whan a man ne douteth no travaille in tyme comyng, of the goode werkes that a man hath bigonne. Thanne comth magnificence, that is to seyn whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse; and that is the ende why that men sholde do goode werkes; for in the accomplisynge of grete goode werkes lith the grete gerdoun. Thanne is ther com-

stance, that is stablesse of corage; and this sholde been in herte by stedefast feith, and in mouth, and in berynge, and in chiere, and in dede. Eke ther been mo speciale remedies agains accidie in diverse werkes, and in consideracioun of the peynes of helle, and of the joyes of hevene, and in trust of the grace of the Holy Goost, that wole yewe hym myght to perfourne his goode entente.

### *Sequitur de Avaricia*

After accidie wol I speke of avarice and of coveitise, of which synne seith Seint Paule that the roote of alle harmes is coveitise. *Ad Thimotheum* vi. [740] For soothly, whan the herte of a man is confounded in itself, and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the confort of God, thanne seketh he an ydel solas of worldly thynges.

Avarice, after the descripcion of Seint Augustyn, is likerounesse in herte to have erthely thynges. Som oother folk seyn that avarice is for to purchacen manye erthely thynges, and no thyng yewe to hem that han nede. And understoond that avarice ne stant nat oonly in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thyng is avarice and coveitise.

And the difference bitwixe avarice and coveitise is this; coveitise is for to coveite swiehe thynges as thou hast nat, and avarice is for to withholde and kepe swiehe thynges as thou hast withoute rightful nede. [745] Soothly this avarice is a synne that is ful dampnable, for al hooly writ curseth it, and speketh agayns that vice, for it dooth wrong to Jhesu Crist; for it bireveth hym the love that men to hym owen, and turneth it bakward agayns alle resoun, and maketh that the avaricious man hath moore hope in his catel than in Jhesu Crist, and dooth moore observance in keypynge of his tresor than he dooth to service of Jhesu Crist. And therefore seith Seint Paul, *ad Ephesios* v., that an avaricious man is the thraldom of ydolatrie.

What difference is betwene an ydolastre and an avaricious man? That that any ydolastre peraventure ne hath but o mawmet or two and the avaricious man hath manye; for certes, every floryn in his cofre is his mawmet. [750] And certes, the synne of mawmettrie is the firste thyng that God defended in the ten comaundmentz, as bereth witnesse *Exodi* capitulo xx. 'Thou shalt have no false goddes bfore me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grave thyng.' Thus is an avaricious man that loveth his tresor biforn God an ydolastre, thurgh this cursed synne of avarice.

Of coveitise comen these harde lordshipes thurgh whiche men been distreynd by taylages, custumes, and cariages, moore than hire duetee or resoun is; and eek they taken of hire bonde-men amercimentz, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extorcions than amercimentz. Of whiche amercimentz and raunsounynge of bondemen somme lordes stywardes seyn that it is rightful, for as muche as a cherl hath no temporeel thyng that it ne is his lordes, as they seyn; but certes these lordshipes doon wrong that bireven hire bonde folk thynges that they never yave hem. *Augustinus de Civitate Dei*, libro ix. [755] Sooth is that the condicioun of thraldom and the firste cause of thraldom is for synne. *Genesis* ix.

Thus may ye seen that the gilt diserveth thraldom, but nat nature; wherfore these lordes ne sholde nat muche glorifien hem in hir lordshipes, sith that by naturel condicioun they been nat lordes of thralles, but that thraldom comth first by the desert of synne. And forther-over ther as the lawe seith that temporeel goodes of boonde folk been the goodes of hir lordshipes, ye, that is for to understonde, the goodes of the emperour, to defenden hem in hir right, but nat for to robben

750. the firste thyng. The 1st and 5th commandments were reckoned by the Roman Church as one, the 10th being divided.

hem ne reven hem. And therfore seith Seneca, 'Thy prudence sholde lyve benignely with thy thralles'; [760] thilke that thou clippest thy thralles been Goddes peple, for humble folk been Cristes frendes, they been contubernyal with the Lord.

Thynk eek that of swich seed as cherles spryngeth, of swich seed spryngen lordes. As wel may the cherl be saved as the lord; the same deeth that take the cherl, swich deeth taketh the lord; wherfore I rede, do right so with thy cherl as thou woldest that thy Lord dide with thee, if thou were in his plit. Every synful man is a cherl to synne. I rede thee, certes, that thou, lord, werke in swiche wise with thy cherles that they rather love thee than drede. I woot wel ther is degree above degree, as reson is, and skile it is that men do hir devoir ther as it is due; but certes, extorcions and despit of youre underlynges is dampnable.

[765] And forther-over understood wel that thise conquerours, or tirauntz, maken ful ofte thralles of hem that been born of as roial blood as been they that hem conqueren. This name of thraldom was never erst kowth, til that Noe seyde that his sone Canaan sholde be thral to his bretheren for his synne. What seye we thanne of hem that pilen and doon extorcions in hooly chirche? Certes, the swerd that men yeven first to a knyght, whan he is newe dubbed, signifieth that he sholde defenden hooly chirche, and nat robben it ne pilen it; and who so dooth is traitour to Crist. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, they been the develes wolves that stranglen the sheepe of Jhesu Crist, and doon worse than wolves; for, soothly, whan the wolf hath ful his wombe he stynteth to strangle sheepe, but soothly, the pilours and destroyours of Goddes hooly chirche ne do nat so, for they ne stynte never to pile.

[770] Now, as I have seyde, sith so is

765. *thraldom, H<sup>2</sup> cheridom.*

that synne was first cause of thraldom, thanne is it thus, that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne, thanne was al this world in thraldom and subjeccioun; but certes, sith the time of grace cam, God ordeyned that som folk sholde be moore heigh in estaat and in degree, and som folk moore lough, and that everich sholde be served in his estaat and his degree; and therfore in somme contrees, ther they byen thralles, whan they han turned hem to the feith, they maken hire thralles free out of thraldom. And therfore certes the lord oweth to his man that the man oweth to his lord. The pope calleth hymself servaunt of the servauntz of God; but for-as-muche as the estaat of hooly chirche ne myghte nat han be, ne the commune profit myghte nat han be kept, ne pees and reste in erthe, but if God hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and som men lower, therfore was sovereyntee ordeyned to kepe and mayntene and defenden hire underlynges or hire subgetz, in resoun, as ferforth as it lith in hire power, and nat to destroyen hem ne confounde.

[775] Wherfore I seye, that thilke lordes that been lyk wolves that devouren the possessiouns or the catel of poure folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to poure folk, the mercy of Jhesu Crist, but if it be amended.

Now comth deceite bitwixe marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou shalt understonde that marchandise is in manye maneres; that oon is bodily, and that oother is goostly, that oon is honeste and lefevel, and that oother is deshoneste and unlefevel. Of thilke bodily marchandise that is lefevel and honeste is this, that there as God hath ordeyned that a regne or a contree is suffisaunt to hym-self, thanne is it honeste and lefevel that men helpe another contree that is moore nedey; and therfore ther moote beten marchants

to bryngen fro that o contree to that oother hire marchandises.

[790] That oother marchandise, that men haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite, with lesynges and false othes, is cursed and dampnable.

Espiritueel marchandise is proprely symonye, that is, ententif desir to byen thyng espiritueel, that is thyng that aperteneth to the seintuarie of God, and to cure of the soule. This desir, if so be that a man do his diligence to parfournen it, al be it that his desir ne take noon effect, yet is it to hym a deedly synne, and if he be ordred he is irreguleer. Certes symonye is cleped of Simon Magus, that wolde han boght for temporel catel the yifte that God hadde yeven by the Hooly Goost to Seint Peter and to the Apostles. And therfore understood that bothe he that sellethe and he that beyeth thynges espirituels been cleped symonyals, be it by catel, be it by procurynge, or by fleshly preyere of his freendes, fleshly freendes, or espiritueel freendes. [785] Fleshly in two maneres; as by kynrede, or othere freendes; soothly, if they praye for hym that is nat worthy and able, it is symonye, if he take the benefice; and if he be worthy and able ther nys noon.

That oother manere is whan a man or womman preyen for folk to avauncen hem oonly for wikked fleshly affeccioun that they have unto the persone, and that is foul symonye. But certes in service for which men yeven thynges espirituels unto hir servantz it moot be understonde that the service moot been honeste, and elles nat; and eek that it be withouten bargaynyng, and that the persone be able; for, as seith Seint Damasc, 'Alle the synnes of the world at regard of this synne arn as thyng of noht, for it is the gretteste synne that may be, after the synne of Lucifer and Antecrist'; for by this synne God forleseth the chirche and the soule that he boghte with his precious blood by hem that yeven chirches to hem that

been nat digne, [790] for they putten in theves that stelen the soules of Jhesu Crist and destroyen his patriþoyne. By swiche undigne preestes and curates han lewed men the lasse reverence of the sacramentz of hooly chirche, and swiche yeveres of chirches putten out the children of Crist, and putten into the chirche the develes owene sone. They sellen the soules that lambes sholde kepen, to the wolf that stranglenth hem; and therfore, shul they never han part of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of hevene.

Now comth hasardrie, with his apurtenaunces, as tables and rafes, of which comth deceite, false othes, chidynges, and alle ravynes, blasphemynge and reneiyng of God, and hate of his neighebores, wast of goodes, mysprendynge of tyme, and somtyme manslaughtre. Certes, hasardours ne mowe nat been withouten greet synne whil thay haunte that crafte. [795] Of avarice comen eek lesynges, thefte, fals witness, and false othes; and ye shul understonde that thise been grete synnes, and expres agayn the commandementz of God, as I have seyde. Fals witness is in word and eek in dede. In word, as for to bireve thy neighebores goode name by thy fals witnessyng, or bireven hym his catel or his heritage by thy fals witnessyng, whan thou for ire, or for meede, or for envye, berest fals witness, or accusest hym, or excusest hym, by thy fals witness, or elles excusest thyself falsly. Ware yow questemongerers and notaries. Certes, for fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful gret sorwe and payne, and many another mo. The synne of thefte is eek expres agayns Goddes heeste, and in two maneres, corporeel and espiritueel. Corporeel, as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl, be it by force or by sleight, be it by met or by mesure, [800] by stelyng eek of false enditementz upon hym, and in borwyng of thy neighebores catel, in entent never to payen it agayn, and semblaible thynges.

Espritueel thefte is sacrilege, that is to sayn, hurtyng of hooly thynges, or of thynges sacred to Crist, in two maneres ; by reson of the hooly place, as chirches or chirche-hawes, for which every vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege, or every violence in the semblable places. Also they that withdrawn falsly the rightes that longen to hooly chirche. And pleyntly and generally, sacrilege is to reven hooly thyng fro hooly place, or unhooly thyng out of hooly place, or hooly thyng out of unhooly place.

*Relevacio contra peccatum Avaricie*

Now shul ye understonde that the relevynge of avarice is misericorde and pitee largely taken. And men myghten ase why that misericorde and pitee is relevynge of avarice. [805] Certes, the avaricious man sheweth no pitee nemisericorde to the nedeful man, for he deliteth hym in the keypyng of his tresor and nat in the rescowyng ne relevynge of his evene Cristene; and therefore speke I first of misericorde.

Thanne is misericorde, as seith the philosopre, a vertu by which the corage of man is stired by the myseuse of hym that is mysed; upon which misericorde folweth pitee in parfournynge of charitable werkis of misericorde. And certes, thise thynges moeven a man to misericorde of Jhesu Crist, that he yaf hymself for oure gilt, and suffred deeth for misericorde, and foryaf us oure originale synnes, and therby released us fro the peynes of helle, and amenused the peynes of purgatorie by penitence, and yeveth grace wel to do, and atte laste the blisse of hevене. [810] The spes of misericorde been, as for to lene and for to yeve, and to foryeven and relese, and for to han pitee in herte, and compassioun of the meschief of his evene Cristene, and eek to chastise there as nede is.

Another manere of remedie agayns avarice is resonable largesse, but soothly

heere bihoveth the consideracioun of the grace of Jhesu Crist and of his temporel goodes, and eek of the goodes perdurables that Crist yaf to us, and to han remembrance of the deeth that he shal receyve, he noot whanne, where, ne how; and eek that he shal forgon al that he hath, save oonly that he hath despended in goode werkis.

But, for as muche as som folk been unmesurable, men oughten eachue foollargesse, that men clepen wast. Certes, he that is fool-large ne yeveth nat his catel, but he leseth his catel. Soothly what thyng that he yeveth for veyneglorie, as to mynstrals and to folk, for to beren his renoun in the world, he hath synne ther-of, and noon almesse. [815] Certes he leseth soule his good that ne seketh with the yiste of his good no thyng but synne. He is lyk to an hors that seketh rather to drynken drovy or trouble water, than for to drynken water of the clere welle. And for as muchel as they yeven ther as they sholde nat yeven, to hem aperteneth thilke malisoun that Crist shal yeven at the day of doome to hem that shullen been dampned.

*Sequitur de Gula*

After avarice conth glotonye, which is expres eek agayn the comandement of God. Glotonye is unmesurable appetit to cte or to drynke, or elles to doon ynogh to the unmesurable appetit and desordeyne coveitise to eten or to drynke. This synne corrupted al this world, as is wel shewed in the synne of Adam and of Eve. Looke, eek, what seith Seint Paul of glotonye. [820] 'Manye,' seith Seint Paul, 'goon, of whiche I have ofte seyde to yow, and now I seye it wepyng, that been the enemyis of the croys of Crist, of whiche the ende is deeth, and of whiche hire wombe is hire God, and hire glorie in confusioun of hem that so devooren erthely thynges.' He that is usant to this synne of glotonye

820. *devocionem, H<sup>3</sup> amorem.*



he ne may no synne withstonde; he moot been in servage of alle vices, for it is the develes hoord ther he hideth hym and resteth.

This synne hath manye spesces. The firste is dronkenesse, that is the horrible sepulture of mannes resoun, and therefore whan a man is dronken he hath lost his resoun, and this is deedly synne. But soothly, whan that a man is nat wont to strong drynke, and peraventure ne knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath travailed, thurgh which he drynketh the moore, al be he sodeynly caught with drynke, it is no deedly synne, but venyal. The seconde spece of glotonye is, that the spirit of a man wexeth al trouble, for dronkenesse hireveth hym the discrecioun of his wit. [825] The thridde spece of glotonye is whan a man devoureth his mete, and hath no rightful manere of etynge. The fourth is, whan thurgh the grete habundaunce of his mete, the humours in his body been destempred. The 'fifthe' is forgetelnesse by to muchel drynkyng, for which somtyme a man forgeteth er the morwe what he dide at even, or on the nyght biforn.

In oother manere been distinct the spesces of glotonye, after Seint Gregorie. The firste is for to ete biforn tyme to ete; the seconde is whan a man get hym to delicaat mete or drynke; the thridde is whan men taken to muche over mesure; the fourthe is curiositee with greet entente to maken and apparailen his mete; the fifthe is for to eten to greedily. [830] Thise been the fyve fynghes of the develes hand, by whiche he draweth folk to synne.

#### *Remedium contra peccatum Gule*

Agayns glotonye is the remedie abstinence, as seith Galien; but that holde I nat meritorie, if he do it oonly for the heele of his body. Seint Augustyn wole that abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience. 'Abstinence,' he seith,

'is litel worth, but if a man have good wil ther-to, and but it be enforced by pacience and by charitee, and that mer doon it for Godes sake, and in hope to have the blisse of hevene.'

The felawes of abstinence been at temperaunce, that holdeth the meene in alle thynges; eek shame, that eschuet alle deshonestee; suffisance, that seket no riche metes ne drynkes, ne dooth no fors of to outrageous apparailynge o mete; mesure also, that restreyneth by resoun the deslavec appetit of etynge sobrenesse also, that restreyneth the out rage of drynke; [835] sparynge also that restreyneth the delicaat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softely, wherfor som folk stonden, of hir owene wyl, to eten at the lasse leyser.

#### *Sequitur de Luxuria*

After glotonye thanne comth lecherie for thise two synnes been so ny cosyng that ofte tyme they wol nat departe. God woot this synne is ful displeasunt thyng to God, for he seyde hymself, 'Do no lecherie'; and therefore he putte grete peynes agayns this synne in the olde lawe. If womman thral were taken in this synne, she sholde be beten with staves to the deeth; and if she were a genti womman, she sholde be slayn with stones; and if she were a bisshoppes doghter she sholde been brent, by Goddes comande ment. Fortherover, by the synne o lecherie God dreynthe al the world a the diluge, and after that he brente five citees with thonder leyt and sank hem into helle.

[840] Now lat us speke thanne of thilke stynkyng synne of lecherie that men clepe avowtrie of wedded folk; that is to seyn, if that oon of hem be wedded or elles both. Seint John seith that avowtters shullen been in helle in a stant brennyng of fyr and of brymston. If fyr for lecherie, in brymston for the styn of hire ordure. Certes, the bekyng o this sacrement is an horrible thyng; i

was maked of God hymself in paradys, and conferrid by Jhesu Crist, as witnesseth Seint Mathew in the gospel: 'A man shal lefe fader and mooder and taken hym to his wif, and they shullen be two in o flesh.' This sacrament bitokneth the knyittinge togidre of Crist and of hooly chirche. And nat oonly that God forbad avowtrie in dede, but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coveite thy neighbores wyf. [845] In this heeste, seith Seint Augustyn, is forboden alle manere coveitise to doon lecherie. Lo, what seith Seint Mathew in the gospel; that who-so seeth a womman to coveitise of his lust, he hath doon lecherie with hire in his herte. Heere may ye seen that nat oonly the dede of this synne is forboden, but eek the desir to doon that synne.

This cursed synne anoyeth grevousliche hem that it haunten. And first to hire soule, for he obligeth it to synne and to payne of deeth that is perdurable. Unto the body anoyeth it grevously also, for it dreyeth hym, and wasteth, and shenteth hym, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the feend of helle; it wasteth his catel and his substaunce. And certes if it be a foul thyng a man to waste his catel on wommen, yet is it a fouler thyng whan that for swich ordure wommen dispenden upon men hir catel and substaunce. [850] This synne, as seith the prophete, bireveth man and womman hir goode fame, and al hire honour, and it is ful plesaunt to the devel; for ther-by wynneth he the mooste partie of this world; and, right as a marchant deliteth hym moost in chaffare that he hath moost advantage of, right so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

This is that oother hand of the devel with five fynghes to cacche the peple to his vileynye. The firste fynger is the fool lookynge of the fool womman, and of the fool man, that sleeth right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venym of his sighte; for the coveitise of eyen folweth the coveitise of the herte. The seconde fynger is the vileyns touchynge in wikked

manere; and therefore, seith Salomon that whoso toucheth and handleth a womman he fareth lyk hym that handleth the scorpion that styngeth and sodeynly sleeth thurgh his envenymynge; as who-so toucheth warm pych, it shent his fynghes. [855] The thridde is foule wordes, that fareth lyk fyr, that right anon brenneth the herte. The fourthe fynger is the kissinge; and trewely he were a greet fool that wolde kisse the mouth of a brennyng ovene, or of a fourneys. And moore foolen been they that kissen in vileynye, for that mouth is the mouth of helle; and namely thise olde dotardesholours, yet wol they kisse, though they may nat do, and smatre hem. Certes, they been lyk to houndes, for an hound whan he comth by the roser, or by othere [bushes], though he may nat pisse, yet wole he heve up his leg and make a contenance to pisse. And for that many man weneth that he may nat synne, for no likerousnesse that he dooth with his wyf, certes, that opinioun is fals; God woot a man may sleen hymself with his owene knyf and make hymselfen dronken of his owene tonne. [860] Certes, be it wyf, be it child, or any worldly thyng that he loveth bifrom God, it is his mawmet, and he is an ydolastre. Man sholde loven his wyf by discrecioun, patiently and atemprely, and thanne is she as though it were his suster.

The fifthe fynger of the develes hand is the stynkyng dede of lecherie. Certes, the five fynghes of glotonie the scend put in the wombe of a man, and with his five fynghes of lecherie he gripeth hym by the reynes for to throwen hym into the fourneys of helle, ther as they shul han the fyr and the wormes that ever shul lasten, and wepyng and wailynge, sharpe hunger and thirst, and grymnese of develes that shullen al to-trede hem, withouten respit and withouten ende.

[865] Of lecherie, as I seyde, sourden

855. *bushes*, Tyrwhitt's emendation for *bequestes* of the MSS.

diverse speses, as fornicacioun that is bitwixe man and womman that been nat maried, and this is deedly synne and agayns nature. Al that is enemy and destruccioun to nature is agayns nature. *Parfay*, the resoun of a man telteth eek hym wel that it is deedly synne, for as muche as God forbad leccherie. And Seint Paul yeveth hem the regne, that nys dewe to no wight but to hem that doon deedly synne. Another synne of leccherie is to bireve a mayden of hir maydenhede, for he that so dooth, certes, he casteth a mayden out of the hyste degree that is in this present lif, and bireveth hire thilke precious fruyt that the book clepeth the 'hundred fruyt.' I ne kan seye it noon oother weyes in Engliish, but in Latyn it highte *Centesimus fructus*. [870] Certes, he that so dooth is cause of manye damages and vileynyes, mo than any man kan rekene, right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that beestes don in the feeld that breketh the hegge or the closure, thurgh which he destroyeth that may nat been restooed. For certes, namoore may maydenhede be restooed than an arm that is smyten from the body may retourne agayn to wexe. She may have mercy, this woot I wel, if she do penitence; but never shal it be that she nas corrupt.

And, al be it so that I have spoken somewhat of avowtrie, it is good to shewen mo perils that longen to avowtrie, for to eschue that foule synne. Avowtrie in Latyn is for to seyn, approchyng of oother mannes bed, thurgh which tho that whilom weren o flesh abawndone hir bodyes to othere persones. [875] Of this synne, as seith the wise man, folwen manye harmes. First, brekyng of feith; and certes, in feith is the keye of Cristendom, and whan that feith is broken and lorn, soothly, Cristendom stant veyn and withouten fruyt. This synne is eek a thefte; for thefte generally is for to reve a wight his thyng agayns his wille. Certes this is the fouleste thefte that may be, whan a womman steleth hir

body from hir housbonde and yeveth i to hire holour to defoulent hire, and steleth hir soule fro Crist, and yeveth i to the devel. This is a foule, thefte that for to breke a chirche and stele the chalice for these avowtiers breken the temple o God spiritually, and stelen the vessel o grace, that is the body and the soule, for which Crist shal destroyen hem, as seith Seint Paul.

[880] Soothly of this thefte douted Joseph, whan that his lordes wyf preyed hym of vileynye, whan he seyde, 'Lo, my lady, how my lord hath take to me under my warde al that he hath in this world, ne no thyng of his thynges is out of my power, but oonly ye, that been his wyf; and how sholde I thanne do this wikkednesse and synne so horrible agayns God, and agayns my lord? God it forbeede!' Allas! al to litel is swich trouthe now y-founde.

The thridde harm is the filthe thurgh which they breken the comandement of God and defoulen the auctour of matrimoyne, that is, Crist. For certes, in so muche as the sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it; for God made mariage in paradys, in the estaat of innocence, to multiplie mankynde to the service of God; and therefore is the brekyng moore grevous; of which brekyng comen false heires ofte tyme, that wrongfully occupien folkes heritages. And therefore wol Crist putte hem out of the regne of hevene, that is heritage to goode folk. [885] Of this brekyng comth eek ofte tyme that folk unwar wedden or synnen with hire owene kynrede, and namely thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of these foul women, that mowe be likned to a commune gonge, where as men purgen hire ordure.

• What seye we eek of putours that lyven by the horrible synne of putrie, and constrayne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hire bodily puterie,—ye, somtyme of his owene wyf, or his child, as doon this bawdes. Certes, this been

cursed synnes. Understood eek, that avowtrie is bet gladly in the ten comandementis bitwixe thefte and manslaughter, for it is the gretteste thefte that may be, for it is thefte of body and of soule; and it is lyk to homycide, for it kerveth atwo and breketh atwo hem that first were makid o flesh, and therefore by the olde lawe of God they sholde be slayn. But natheles, by the lawe of Jhesu Crist, that is lawe of pitee, whan he seyde to the woman that was founden in avowtrie, and sholde han been slayn with stones after the wyl of the Jewes, as was hir lawe, 'Go,' quod Jhesu Crist, 'and have namoore wyl to synne,' or wille namoore to do synne. [890] Soothly, the vengeance of avowtrie is awarded to the peynes of helle, but if so be that it be destourbed by penitence.

Yet been ther mo speses of this cursed synne, as whan that oon of hem is religious, or elles bothe, or of folk that been entred into ordre, as subdekne, or dekne or preest, or hospitaliers, and ever the hyer that he is in ordre the gretter is the synne. The thynges that gretly aggregen hire synne is the brekyng of hire avow of chastitee, whan they receyved the ordre. And farther-over, sooth is, that hooly ordre is chief of al the tresorie of God, and his especial signe and mark of chastitee, to shewe that they been joynd to chastitee, which that is moost precious lyf that is. And thise ordred folk been specially tited to God, and of the special meignee of God, for which, whan they doon deedly synne, they been the special traytours of God and of his peple, for they lyven of the peple to preye for the peple, and while they been suche traytours her prayers availle not to the peple.

[895] Preestes been aungeles as by the dignitee of hir mystere, but forsothe Saint Paul seith, that Sathanas transformeth hym in an angel of light. Soothly, the preest that hauntheth deedly synne, he may be likned to the angel of derknesse transformed in the angel of light; he semeth angel of light, but forsothe he is

angel of derknesse. Swiche preestes been the sones of Helie, as sheweth in the book of Kynges, that they weren the sones of Belial, that is the devel. 'Belial' is to seyn 'withouten juge,' and so faren they; hem thynketh they been free and han no juge, namoore than hath a free bole, that taketh which cow that hym liketh in the town. So faren they by wommen, for right as a free bole is ynough for al a toun, right so is a wikked preest corrupcion ynough for al a parisshe, or for al a contree.

[900] Thise preestes, as seith the book, ne konne nat the mystere of preesthode to the peple, ne God ne knowe they nat; they ne holde hem nat apayd, as seith the book, of soden flesh that was to hem offred, but they tooke by force the flesh that is rawe. Certes, so thise shrewes ne holden hem nat apayed of roasted flesh and sode flesh with which the peple fedden hem in greet reverence, but they wole have raw flesh of folkes wyves and hir doghtres. And certes, thise wommen that consenten to hire harlotrie doon greet wrong to Crist and to hooly chirche and alle halwes, and to alle soules; for they bireven alle thise hymn that sholde worshipe Crist and hooly chirche, and preye for cristene soules. And therefore han swiche preestes, and hire lemmanes eek that consenten to hir lecherie, the malisoun of al the court cristene, til they come to amendement.

The thridde spece of avowtrie is som tyme bitwixe a man and his wyf; and that is whan they take no reward in hire assemblynge but oonly to hire fleshly delit, as seith Saint Jerome; [905] and ne rekken of no thyng but that they been assembled. By-cause that they been married al is good ynough, as thynketh to hem. But in swich folk hath the devel power, as seyde the angel Raphael to Thobie, for in hire assemblynge they putten Jhesu Crist out of hire herte, and yeven hem-self to alle ordure.

The fourthe spece is the assemblee of hem that been of hire kynrede, or of hem

that been of oon affynyte, or elles with hem with whiche hir fadres or hir kynrede han deled in the synne of lecherie. This synne maketh hem lyk to houndes that taken no kepe to kynrede. And certes, parentele is in two maneres, outhir goostly or fleshly : goostly, as for to deelen with his godsibbes ; for, right so as he that engendreth a child is his fleshly fader, right so is his godfader his fader espiritueel ; for which a womman may in no lasse synne assemblen with hire godsib than with hire owene fleshly brother.

[910] The fiftthe spece is thilke abhominable synne of which that no man unneth eoghte speke ne write, natheles it is openly reherced in holy writ. This cursednesse doon men and wommen in diverse entente, and in diverse manere, but though that hooly writ speke of horrible synne, certes hooly writ may nat been defouled, namoore than the sonne that shyneth on the mixen.

Another synne aperteneth to lecherie that comth in slepyng ; and this synne cometh ofte to hem that been maydenes, and eek to hem that been corrupt. And this synne men clepen polucioun, that comth in thre maneres. Somtyme of langwissynge of body, for the humours been to ranke and habundaunt in the body of man ; somtyme of infermetee, for the fieblesse of the vertu retentif, as phisik maketh mencion ; somtyme for surfeit of mete and drynke ; and somtyme of vileyns thoghtes that been enclosed in mannes mynde when he gooth to slepe, which may nat been withoute synne ; for which men moste kepen hem wisely, or elles may men synnen ful greuously.

*Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie*

[915] Now comth the remedie agayns lecherie, and that is generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeyne moevynges that comen of fleshly talentes. And ever the gretter merite shal he han that moost restreyneth

the wikkede eschawfynges of the ordure of this synne, and this is in two maneres ; that is to seyn, chastitee in mariage, and chastitee of widwehode. Now shaltow understonde that matrimoyne is leefful assemblynge of man and of womman, that receyven, by vertu of the sacrament, the boond thurgh which they may nat be departed in al hir lyf, that is to seyn, whil that they lyven bothe. This, as seith the book, is a ful greet sacrament ; God maketh it, as I have seyde, in paradys, and wolde hymself be born in mariage ; and, for to halwen mariage, he was at a weddyng, where as he turned water in to wyn, which was the firste miracle that he wroughte in erthe biforn his disciples.

[920] Trewe effect of mariage clenseth fornicacioun and replenyseth hooly chirche of good lynage, for that is the ende of mariage ; and it chaungeth deedly synne into venial synne bitwixe hem that been y-wedded, and maketh the hertes al oon of hem that been y-wedded, as wel as the bodies. This is verray mariage that was establissed by God, er that synne bigan, whan natureel lawe was in his right poynt in paradys, and it was ordeyned that o man sholde have but o womman, and o womman but o man, as seith Seint Augustyn, by manye resouns.

First, for mariage is figured bitwixe Crist and holy chirche ; and that oother is, for a man is heved of a womman, — algate by ordinaunce it sholde be so. For, if a womman hadde mo men than oon, thanne sholde she have moo hevedes than oon, and that were an horrible thyng biforn God ; and eek a womman ne myghte nat plesse to many folk at oones. And also ther ne sholde never be pees ne reste amonges hem, for everich wolde axen his owene thyng and forther-over no man ne sholde knowe his owene engendrure, ne who sholde have his heritage, and the womman sholde been the lasse biloved fro the tyme that she were conjoynt to many men.

[925] Now comth how that a man sholde bere hym with his wif; and namely in two thynges, that is to seyn, in suffraunce and reverence, as shewed Crist whan he made first womman. For he ne made hire nat of the heved of Adam, for she sholde nat clayme to greet lordshipe; for ther as the womman hath the maistrie she maketh to muche desaray. Ther neden none ensamples of this, the experience of day by day oghte suffice. Also certes, God ne made nat womman of the foot of Adam, for she ne sholde nat been holden to lowe, for she kan nat paciently suffre. But God made womman of the ryb of Adam for womman sholde be felawe unto man. Man sholde bere hym to his wyf in feith, in trouthe, and in love, as seith Seint Paul, that a man sholde loven his wyf as Crist loved hooly chirche, that loved it so wel that he deyde for it; so sholde a man for his wyf, if it were nede.

[930] Now how that a womman sholde be subget to hire housbonde, that telleth Seint Peter. First, in obedience. And eek, as seith the decree, a womman that is wyf, as long as she is a wyf, she hath noon auctoritee to swere, ne bere witness, withoute leve of hir housbonde, that is hire lord,—algate he sholde be so by reson. She sholde eek serven hym in alle honestee, and been attemptee of hire array. I woot wel that they sholde setten hire entente to plesen hir housbondes, but nat by hire queyntise of array. Seint Jerome seith that wyves that been apparailled in silk and in precious purple ne mowe nat clothen hem in Jhesu Crist. What seith Seint John eek in thys matere? Seint Gregorie eek seith that no wight seketh precious array, but oonly for veyne glorie to been honoured the moore biforn the peple. [935] It is a greet folye, a womman to have a fair array outward and in hir-self soal-inward.

A wyf sholde eek be mesurable in lookyng, and in beryng, and in lawghyng, and discreet in all hire wordes and

hire dedes and aboven alle worldly thyng she sholde loven hire housbonde with al hire herte, and to hym be trewe of hir body. So sholde an housbonde eek be to his wyf, for, sith that al the body is the housbondes, so sholde hire herte been, or elles ther is bitwixe hem two, as in that, no parfit mariage.

Thanne shal men understonde that for thre thynges a man and his wyf fleschly mowen assemble. The firste is in entente of engendrure of children, to the service of God, for certes that is the cause final of matrimoyne. [940] Another cause is to yelden everich of hem to oother the dette of hire bodies, for neither of hem hath power over his owene body. The thridde is for to eschewe leccherye and vileynye. The ferthe is forsothe deedly synne. As to the firste, it is meritorie; the seconde also, for, as seith the decree, that she hath merite of chastitee that yeldeth to hire housbonde the dette of hir body, ye, though it be agayn hir likyng and the lust of hire herte. The thridde manere is venyal synne, and trewely scarsly may ther any of thise be withoute venial synne, for the corrupcioun and for the delit. The fourthe manere is for to understonde if they assemble oonly for amorous love, and for noon of the foreseyde causes, but for to accomplice thilke brennyng delit, they rekke never how ofte, soothly it is deedly synne, and yet with sorwe somme folk wol peynen hem moore to doon than to hire appetit suffiseth.

The seconde manere of chastitee is for to been a clene wydewe and eschue the embracynges of man and desiren the embracyng of Jhesu Crist. [945] Thise been tho that han been wyves and han forgoon hire housbondes, and eek wommen that han doon leccherie and been releved by penitence. And certes, if that a wyf koude kepen hire al chaaast, by licence of hir housbonde, so that she yeve never noon occasion that he aglite; it were to hire a greet merite. Thise

manere wommen that observen chastitee moste be clene in herte, as wele as in body and in thoughte, and mesurable in clothyng and in contenance, abstinent in etyng and drynkynge, in spekyng and in dede. They been the vessel, or the boyste of the blissed Magdelene, that fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour.

The thridde manere of chastitee is virginitee, and it bihoveth that she be hooly in herte, and clene of body; thanne is she spouse to Jhesu Crist, and she is the lyf of angeles. She is the preisyng of this world, and she is as thise martirs in egalitee. She hath in hire that tonge may nat telle, ne herte thynke. [950] Virginitee baar oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and virgine was hym-  
selve.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is specially to withdrawn swiche thynges as yeve occasion to thilke vileynye, as ese, etyng and drynkynge; for certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. Slepyng longe in greet quiete is eek a greet norice to leccherie.

Another remedie agayns leccherie is that a man or a womman eschue the compaignye of hem by whiche he douteth to be tempted, for al be it so that the dede is withstonden, yet is ther greet temptacioun. Soothly, a whit wal, although it ne brenne noght fully by stikynge of a candeles, yet is the wal blak of the ley. Ful ofte tyme [955] I rede, that no man truste in his owene perfeccioun, but he be stronger than Sampson, and hoolier than Danyel, and wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I have declared yow as I kan the sevene deadly synnes, and somme of hire branches and hire remedies, soothly, if I koude, I wolde telle yow the ten comandementz; but so heigh a doctrine I lete to divines; natheles I hope to God they been touched in this tretise, everich of hem alle.

*Sequitur secunda pars Penitencie*

Now, for as muche as the seconde partie of penitence stant in confessioun of mouth, as I bigan in the firste chapitre, I seye, Seint Augustyn seith, 'Synne is every word and every dede, and al that men coveiten agayn the lawe of Jhesu Crist; and this is for to synne in herte, in mouth, and in dede, by thy five wittes, that been sighte, heryng, smellyng, tastynge or savourynge, and feelyng.'

[960] Now is it good to understonde the circumstaunces that aggregeth muchel every synne. Thow shalt considere what thow art that doost the synne; whether thou be male or femele, yong or oold, gentil or thral, free or servant, hool or syk, wedded or sengle, ordred or unordred, wys or fool, clerk or seculer; if she be of thy kynrede, bodily or goostly, or noon; if any of thy kynrede have synned with hire or noon, and manye mo thynges.

Another circumstaunce is this, whether it be doon in fornicacioun, or in avowtrie, or noon, incest or noon, mayden or noon, in manere of homicide or noon, horrible grete synnes or smale, and how longe thou hast continued in synne. The thridde circumstaunce is the place, ther thou hast do synne, whether in oother mennes hous or in thyn owene, in feeld or in chirche or in chirchewawe, in chirche dedicaat or noon; [965] for if the chirche be halwed, and man or womman spille his kynde in-with that place, by wey of synne or by wikked temptacioun, the chirche is entredited til it be reconciled by the bysshope; and the preest that dide swich a vileyne, to terme of al his lif he sholde namoure synge masse; and if he dide, he sholde doon deadly synne at every time that he so songe masse. The fourthe circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messengers, as for enticement or for consentment to bere compaignye with felaweshipe,—for many a wrecche,

for to bere compaignye, wil go to the deuel of helle,—wher-fore they that eggen or consenten to the synne been parteners of the synne and of the dampnacioun of the synners.

The fiftre circumstance is, how manye tymes that he hath synned, if it be in his mynde, and how ofte that he hath falle; [970] for he that ofte falleth in synne he despiseth the mercy of God and encreaseth hys synne, and is unkynde to Crist, and he wexeth the moore fieble to withstonde synne and synneth the moore lightly. And the latter ariseth, and is the moore eschew for to shryven hym, namely to hym that is his confessour; for which that folk whan they falle agayn in hir olde folies, outhen they forleten hir olde confessours al outrelly, or elles they departen hir shrift in diverse places, but soothly swich departed shrift deserveth no mercy of God of his synnes. The sixte circumstance is, why that a man synneth, as by whiche temptacioun, and if hymself procure thilke temptacioun, or by the excitynge of oother folke; or if he synne with a womman by force, or by hire owene assent, or if the womman maugree hir hed hath been afforced or noon, this shal she telle; for coveitise, or for poverté, and if it was hire pryvyng or noon, and swiche manere narneys.

[975] The seventhe circumstance is, in what manere he hath doon his synne, or how that she hath suffred that folk han doon to hire, and the same shal the man telle pleylny with alle circumstaunces, and whether he hath synned with comune bordel wommen or noon, or doon his synne in hooly tymes or noon, in fastyng tymes or noon, or biforn his shrifte, or after his latter shrifte, and hath peraventure broken therfore his penance enjoyned; by whos helpe and whos conseil, by sorcerie or craft,—al mooste be toold. Alle thise thynges, after that they been grete or smale,

engreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest, that is thy juge, may the better been avysed of his juggement in yevyng of thy penaunce, and that is after thy contricioun. [980] For understond wel that after tyme that a man hath defouled his baptesme by synne, if he wole come to salvacioun, ther is noon other wey but by penitence, and shrifte, and satisfaccioun; and namely by the two, if ther be a confessour to which he may shriven hym, and the thriddé, if he have lyf to parfournen it.

Thanne shal man looke and considere that if he wole maken a trewe and a profitable confessioun ther mooste be foure condiciouns. First, it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte, as seyde the kyng Ezechiel to God, 'I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lif in bitternesse of myn herte.' This condicioun of bitternesse hath fyve signes. The firste is, that confessioun mooste be shamefast, nat for to covere ne hyden his synne, for he hath agilt his God and defouled his soule; [985] and ther-of seith Seint Augustyn, 'The herte travailleth for shame of his synne, and for he hath greet shamefastnesse he is digne to have greet mercy of God.' Swich was the confessioun of the pupican that wolde nat heven up his eyen to hevене, for he hadde offended God of hevене; for which shamefastnesse he hadde anon the mercy of God. And ther-of seith Seint Augustyn that swich shamefast folk been next foryevēnesse and remissioun.

Another signe is humylitee in confessioun, of which seith Seint Peter, 'Humbleth yow under the myght of God.' The hond of God is myghty in confessioun, for ther-by God foryeveth thee thy synnes, for he allone hath the power. And this humylitee shal been in herte and in signe outward; for right as he hath humylitee to God in his herte; right so sholde he humble his body outward to the preest that sit in Goddes

965. *will. R. shal.*

970. *departed shrift*, cp. 1006-11.

980. *Ezechiel, Hamekiah.*



place. [990] For which in no manere, with that Crist is sovereyn and the preest meene and mediatour bitwixe Crist and the synnere, and the synnere is the laste by wey of resoun, thanne sholde nat the synnere sitte as heighe as his confessour, but knele biforn hym or at his feet, but if maladie destourbe it; for he shal nat taken kepe, who sit there, but in whos place that he sitteth. A man that hath trespassed to a lord and comth for to axe mercy and maken his accord and set him doun anon by the lord, men wolde holden hym outrageous and nat worthy so soone for to have remissioun ne mercy.

The thridde signe is, how that thy shrift sholde be ful of teeris, if man may; and if man may nat wepe with his bodily eyen, lat hym wepe in herte. Swich was the confessioun of Seint Peter, for after that he hadde forsake Jhesu Crist he wente out and wepe ful bitterly. [995] The fourthe signe is, that he ne lette nat for shame to shewen his confessioun; swich was the confessioun of the Magdelene, that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren atte feste for to go to oure Lord Jhesu Crist and biknowe to hym hire synnes. The fifte signe is, that a man or a womman be obeisant to receyven the penaunce that hym is enjoyned for his synnes, for certes Jhesu Crist for the giltes of a man was obedient to the deeth.

The seconde condicion of verray confession is that it be hastily doon; for certes, if a man hadde a deedly wounde, ever the lenger that he taried to wariishe hymself the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to his deeth, and eek the wounde wolde be the wors for to heele; and right so fareth synne that longe tyme is in a man unshewed.

[1000] Certes a man oghte hastily shewen his synnes for manye causes; as for drede of deeth that cometh ofte sodenly, and is in no certeyn what tyme it shal be, ne in what place; and eek the drecchyng of o synne draweth in another; and eek the lenger that he tarieth the fether

he is fro Crist. And if he abide to his laste day scarcely may he shryven hym, or remembre hym of his synnes, or repenten hym for the grevous maladie of his deeth. And for as muche as he ne hath nat in his lyf herkned Jhesu Crist whanne he hath spoken, he shal crie to Jhesu Crist at his laste day and scarcely wol he herkne hym.

And understand that this condicioun moste han foure thynges. Thi shrift moste be purveyed bifore and avysed, for wikked haste dooth no profit; and that a man konne shryve hym of his synnes, be it of pride, or of envye, and so forth, of the spes and circumstances; and that he have comprehended in hys mynde the nombre and the greetnesse of his synnes, and how longe that he hath leyn in synne; [1005] and eek that he be contrit of his synnes, and in stidefast purpos, by the grace of God, never eft to falle in synne; and eek that he drede and countrewaite hymself that he fle the occasiouns of synne to whiche he is enclyned.

Also thou shalt shryve thee of alle thy synnes to o man, and nat a parcel to o man and a parcel to another; that is to understonde in entente to departe thy confessioun as for shame or drede, for it nys but stranglyng of thy soule. For certes Jhesu Crist is entirely al good; in hym nys noon imperfeccioun, and therefore outhur he foryeveth al parfitly, or never a deel. I seye nat that if thou be assigned to the penitauncer for certain synne that thou art bounde to shewen hym al the remenaunt of thy synnes of whiche thou hast be shryven to thy curaat, but if it like to thee of thy humylitee; this is no departyng of shrifte. Ne I seye nat, ther as I speke of divisioun of confessioun, that if thou have licence for to shryve thee to a discreet and an honeste preest, where thee liketh, and by licence of thy curaat, that thou ne mayst wel shryve thee to him of alle thy synnes; [1010] but lat no blotte be bihynde, lat no synne been

untoold, as fer as thou hast remembrance. And when thou shalt be shryven to thy curat telle hym eek alle the synnes that thou hast doon syn. thou were last y-shryven; this is no wikked entente of divisioun of shrifte.

Also, the verray shrifte axeth certeine condiciouns. First, that thou shryve thee by thy free wil, noght constreyned, ne for shame of folk, ne for maladie, ne swiche thynges, for it is resoun that he that trespasseth by his free wyl, that by his free wyl he confesse his trespass; and that noon oother man telle his synne but he hymself; ne he shal nat nayte ne denye his synne, ne wratthe hym agayn the preest for his amonestyng to leve synne.

The seconde condicioun is, that thy shrift be laweful, that is to seyn that thou that shryvest thee, and eek the preest that hereth thy confessioun, been verraily in the feith of hooly chirche, [1015] and that a man be nat despeired of the mercy of Jhesu Crist as Caym or Judas. And eek a man moot accusen hymself of his owene trespas, and nat another, but he shal blame and wyten hymself and his owene malice of his synne and noon oother; but natheles if another man be occasioun or enticere of his synne, or the estaat of a persone be swich thurgh which his synne is aggregated, or elles that he may nat pleynty shryven hym but he telle the persone with which he hath synned, thanne may he telle; so that his entente ne be nat to bakbite the persone, but oonly to declaren his confessioun.

Thou ne shalt nat eek make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylitee, peraventure to seyn that thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were never gilty. [1020] For Seint Augustyn seith, 'If thou by cause of thyn humylitee makest lesynges on thyself, though thou ne were nat in synne biforn, yet artow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges.' Thou most eek shewe thy synne by thyn owene propre mouth, but thou be woze dowmb,

and nat by no lettre, for thou that hast doon the synne thou shalt have the shame therefore. Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessioun by faire subtile wordes, to covere the moore thy synne, for thanne bigilestow thyself and nat the preest; thou most tellen it pleynty, be it never so foul ne so horrible.

Thou shalt eek shryve thee to a preest that is discret to conseilte, and eek thou shalt nat shryve thee for veyne glorie, ne for ypocrisie, ne for no cause, but oonly for the doute of Jhesu Crist and the heele of thy soule. Thou shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly to tellen hym lightly thy synne, as who so telleth a jape or a tale, but avysely, and with greet devocioun.

[1025] And, generally, shryve thee ofte. If thou ofte falle, ofte thou arise by confessioun, and though thou shryve thee often than ones of synne of which thou hast be shryven, it is the moore merite. And, as seith Seint Augustyn, thou shalt have the moore lightly relesyng and grace of God bothe of synne and of peyne. And certes, oones a yeere atte leeste wey is it laweful for to been housled, for certes, oones a yeere alle thynges renovellen.

Now have I toolde you of verray confessioun, that is the seconde partie of penitence.

*Explicit secunda pars penitencie et sequitur tercia pars eiusdem*

The thridde partie of penitence is satisfaccioun and that stant moost generally in almesse, and in bodily peyne. [1030] Now been ther thre manere of almesses: contricioun of herte, where a man offreth hymself to God; another is to han pitee of defeaute of his neighbores; and the thridde is in yevynge of good conseil and comfort, goostly and bodily, where men han nede, and namely in sustenance of mannes foode. And tak kepe that a man hath nede of thise thynges generally; he hath nede of foode, he hath nede of

And herberwe, he bath nede of  
 conseil and visytinge in prisone  
 and in the churche, and sepulture of his  
 body. And if thou mayst nat  
 the nedeful with thy persone, visite  
 by thy message and by thy yiftes.  
 There been generally almeses or werkes  
 of charitee of hem that han temporeel  
 riches, or discrecioun in conseilynge.  
 Of these werkes shaltow heren at the  
 day of doome.

These almeses shaltow doon of thyne  
 owene propre thynges, and hastily and  
 prively if thou mayst; [1035] but nathe-  
 lees if thou mayst nat doon it prively,  
 thou shalt nat forbere to doon almesse  
 though men seen it, so that it be nat  
 doon for thank of the world, but oonly  
 for thank of Jhesu Crist; for, as witness-  
 eth Saint Mathew, *capitulo* v., 'A citee  
 may nat been hyd that is set on a  
 montayne, ne men lighte nat a lanterne  
 and put it under a busshel, but men  
 sette it on a candlestikke to yeve light  
 to the men in the hous; right so shal  
 youre light lighten bfore men, that they  
 may seen youre goode werkes and glorifie  
 youre Fader that is in hevene.'

Now as to speken of bodily peyne; it  
 stant in preyer, in wakynges, in fast-  
 ynges, in vertuose techinges of orisouns.

And ye shul understonde that orisouns  
 or preyer is for to seyn a pitous wyl of  
 herte that redresseth it in God, and  
 expresseth it by word outward to re-  
 moeven harmes, and to han thynges  
 espirituel and durable, and somtyme  
 temporele thynges, of whiche orisouns,  
 certes, in the orison of the *Pater noster*  
 hath Jhesu Crist enclosed moost thynges.  
 [1040] Certes, it is privileged of thre  
 thynges in his dignytee, for which it is  
 moore digne than any oother preyer:  
 for that Jhesu Crist hymself maketh it;  
 and it is short, for it sholde be koud the  
 moore lightly, and for to withholden it  
 the moore eaily in herte, and helpen hym  
 self the ofter with the orisoun, and for a  
 man sholde be the lasse wery to seyen it,  
 and for a man may nat excusen hym to

lerne it, it is so short and so easy; and  
 for it comprehendeth in itself alle goode  
 preyer.

The exposicioun of this booly preyer  
 that is so excellent and digne, I brike  
 to these maistres of theologie, save this  
 muchel wol I seyn, that whan thou  
 prayest that God sholde foryeve thee  
 thy giltes as thou foryevest hem that  
 agilten to thee, be ful wel war that thou  
 be nat out of charitee. This booly  
 orisoun amenuseth eek venyal synne,  
 and therefore it aperteneth specially to  
 penitence.

[1045] This preyer moste be trewely  
 seyd, and in verray feith, and that men  
 preye to God ordinatly and discretely  
 and devoutly, and alwey a man shal  
 putten his wyl to be subget to the wille  
 of God. This orisoun moste eek been  
 seyd with greet humblesse and ful pure  
 honesty, and nat to the anyoauce of  
 any man or womman. It moste eek  
 been continued with the werkes of  
 charitee. It avayleth eek agayn the  
 vices of the soule, for, as seith Saint  
 Jerome, 'By fastyng been saved the  
 vices of the flesh, and by preyer the  
 vices of the soule.'

After this thou shalt understonde the  
 bodily peyne stant in wakyng; Jhesu  
 Crist seith, 'Waketh and preye,'  
 that ye ne entre in wikked temptacioun.  
 [1050] Ye shul understanden also, that  
 fastyng stant in thre thynges: in forber-  
 yng of bodily mete and drynke, and in  
 forberyng of worldly jolitee, and in  
 forberyng of deedly synne, this is to  
 seyn, that a man shal kepen hym fro  
 deedly synne with al his myght.

And thou shalt understanden eek that  
 God ordeyned fastyng; and to fastyng  
 appertenen foure thynges: largenesse to  
 poure folk, gladnesse of herte espirituel  
 nat to been angry ne anyoyed ne grieved  
 for he fasteth, and also resonable hour  
 for to ete by mesure, that is for to seyn  
 a man shal nat ete in untyme, ne shal  
 the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth  
 Thanne shaltow understonde the

bodily peyne stant in discipline or techynge by word and by writynge or in example; also in werynge of heyres, or of stamyn, or of haubergeons or hire naked flesh, for Cristes sake, and swiche manere penaunces. But war theowel that swiche manere penaunces on thy flesh ne make thee nat or angry or anyed of thy self; for better is to caste away thyn heyre, than for to caste away the swetnesse of Jhesu Crist. And therefore seith Seint Paul, 'Clothe yow, as they that been chosen of God, in herte, of misericorde, debonairetee, suffraunce,' and swiche manere of clothyng, of whiche Jhesu Crist is moore apayed than of heyres or haubergeons or hauberkes.

[1055] Thanne is discipline eek in knokkyng of thy brest, in scourgyng with yerdes, in knelynges, in tribulacions, in suffryng paciently wronges that been doon to thee, and eek in pacient suffraunce of maladies, or lesynge of worldly catel, or of wyf, or of child, or othere freendes.

Thanne shaltow understonde whiche thynges destourben penaunce; and this is in foure maneres; that is, drede, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperacioun. And for to speke first of drede, for which he weneth that he may offre no penaunce. Theragayns is remedie for to thynke that bodily penaunce is but short and litel, at regard of the peynes of helle, that is so cruel and so long that it lasteth withouten ende.

[1060] Now again, the shame that a man hath to shryven hym, and namely thise ypocrites that wolden been holden so parite that they han no nede to shryven hem. Agayns that shame sholde a man thynke that by wey of resoun that he that hath nat been shamed to doon soule thinges, certes hym oghte nat been ashamed to do faire thynges, and that is confessiouns. A man sholde eek thynke that God seeth and woot alle his thynges and alle his werkes; to hym

sign. swetnesse, K<sup>3</sup> sikernes.

may no thyng been hid. Man sholde eek remembre the shame that is to come at the doome to hem that been shryven and shryven in this present lyf to the creatures in erthe and in helle. And seen apertly al that they hyden in this world.

[1065] Now for to speke of the hope of hem that been negligent and slowe to shryven hem; that stant in two maneres. That oon is that he hopeth for to lyve longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delit, and thanne he wol shryven hym, and as he seith, hym semeth thanne tymely enough to come to shrifte. Another is surquidrie, that he hath in Cristes mercy. Agayns the firste vice, he shal thynke that oure lif is in no sikernes, and eek that alle the riches in this world ben in aventure and passen as a shadwe on the wal; and, as seith Seint Gregorie, that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of God, that never shal the peyne stynte, of hem that never wolde withdrawn hem fro synne hir thanks, but ay continue in synne, for thilke perpetuel wil to do synne shul they han perpetuel peyne.

[1070] Wanhope is in two maneres: the firste wanhope is in the mercy of Crist; that oother is that they thynken that they ne myghte nat longe persevere in goodnesse. The firste wanhope cometh of that he demeth that he hath synned so greetly, and so ofte, and so longe leyn in synne, that he shal nat be saved. Certes, agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he thynke that the passion of Jhesu Crist is moore strong for to unbynde than synne is strong for to bynde. Agayns the seconde wanhope he shal thynke that as ofte as he falleth he may arise agayn by penitence; and though he never so longe have leyn in synne, the mercy of Crist is alwey redy to receiven hym to mercy. Agayns the wanhope that he demeth that he sholde nat longe persevere in goodnesse, he shal thynke that the feblesse of

the devel may ho thyng doon but if men wol suffren hym, [1075] and seek he shal han strengthe of the helpe of God, and of al hooly chirche, and of the proteccioun of angels, if hym list.

Thanne shal men understonde what is the fruyt of penaunce; and, after the word of Jhesu Crist, it is the endeles blisse of hevene. Ther joye hath no contrariouste of wo, ne grevaunce; ther alle harmes been passed of this presentlyf; ther as is the sikernes fro the payne of helle; ther as is the blisful compaignye that rejoysen hem evermo everich of othere joye; ther as the body of man, that whilom was foul and derk, is moore cleer than the sonne; ther as the body, that whilom was syk, frele, and fiele, and mortal, is immortal and so strong and so hool that ther may no thyng apeyren it; ther as ne is neither hunger, thurst, ne coold, but every soule replenysed with the sighte of the parfit knowynge of God.

[1080] This blisful regne may men purchase by poverte espirituel, and the glorie by lowenesse, the plentee of joye by hunger and thurst, and the reste by travaille, and the lyf by deeth and mortificacioun of synne.

*Here taketh the Makere of this Book his Leve*

Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys or rede, that if ther be any thyng in it that liketh hem, that ther-of they thanken oure Lord Jhesu Crist, of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse; and if ther be any thyng that displese hem, I preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn unkonnyng, and nat to my wyl, that wolde ful fayn have seyde better if I hadde had konnyng; for oure poke seith, 'Al that is writen is writen for oure doctrine,' and that is myn entente.

Wherefore I biseke yow mekely, for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me and foryeve me

my giltes, [1085] and namely of my translacions and enditynges of worldly vanitee the whiche I revoke in my Retracciouns; as is the book of Troylus; the book also of Fame; the book of the xxv Ladies; the book of the Duchesse; the book of Seint Valentynes day, of the Parlement of Briddes; the Tales of Canterbury,—thilke that sownen in to synne; the book of the Leoun; and many another book, if they were in my remembrance; and many a song and many a lecherous lay, that Crist, for his grete mercy, foryeve me the synne.

But of the translacioun of Boece *De Consolacione* and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes, and omelies and moralitee, and devocioun, that thanke I oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and his blisful mooder and alle the Seintes of hevene, [1090] bisekyng hem that they from hennys forth unto my lyves ende sende me grace to biwayle my giltes and to studie to the salvacioun of my soule; and graunte me grace of verray penitence, confessioun and satisfaccioun, to doon in this present lyf, thurgh the benigne grace of hym that is Kyng of Kynges, and Preest over alle Preestes, that boghte us with the precious blood of his herte, so that I may been oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle be saved. *Qui cum Patre Spiritu Sancto vivis et regnas Deus per omnia secula. Amen.*

*Heere is ended the book of the Tales of Canterbury, compiled by Geoffrey Chaucer, of whos soule Jhesu Crist have mercy. Amen.*

1085. my Retracciouns, apparently a formal document.

1086. the book of the xxv Ladies, the 'Legend of Good Women'; Lana, xv., H xxix.

1087. the book of the Leoun, lost—probably a translation from Machault.

1087. another book, H3 other books.

1087. remembrance, H mynde or remembrance.

1088. of Legendes of, H of consolacioun and of Legendes of troos of.

## EARLIER MINOR POEMS

### THE DETHE OF BLAUNCHE THE DUCHESSE

I HAVE gret wonder, by this lyghte,  
How that I lyve, for day ne nyghte  
I may slepé wel neigh noght;  
I have so many an ydel thoght,  
Purely for defaute of slepe,  
That, by my trouthe, I take no kepe  
Of no thyng how hit cometh or gooth,  
Ne me nis no thyng leef nor looth.  
Al is y-liché good to me,—

Joye or sorwe, wherso hit be,—  
For I have felyng in no thyng,  
But as it were, a maséd thyng  
Alway in poynt to falle a-doun;  
For sorwful ymagynacioun  
Is alway hoolly in my mynde.

And wel ye woot agaynès kynde  
Hit were to liven in this wyse,  
For Nature woldé nat suffyse  
To noon erthly créature  
Not long tymé to endure  
Withoute slepe, and been in sorwe;  
And I ne may, no nyght ne morwe,  
Slepe; and this melancolye  
And drede I havé for to dye,  
Defaute of slepe and hevynesse,  
Hath sleyn my spirit of quyknesse  
That I have lost al lustihede.  
Suche fantasyes been in myn hede  
So I noot what is best to do.

But men myghte axé me why so  
I may not slepe, and what me is?  
But natheless, who aské this  
Leseth his asking trewely.  
My selven can not tellé why  
The soþe; but trewely, as I gesse,

31-66. Th. omits these lines; F has them in a  
later hand.

I holdé hit ben a siknesse  
That I have suffred this eight yere,  
And yet my boote is never the ðere;  
For ther is phisicien but oon  
That may me hele; but that is doon. 40  
Passe we over until eft;  
That wil not be, moot nede be left;  
Our first matere is good to kepe.

So whan I saw I might not slepe  
Til now late, this other nyght  
Upon my bedde I sat upryght  
And had oon reché me a book,  
A romaunce, and he hit me took  
To rede, and dryve the nyght away;  
For me thoghte it lëttre play 50  
Then playen either at chesse or tablès.

And in this book were writen fables  
That clerkès hadde, in oldé tyme,  
And other poets, put in ryme  
To rede, and for to be in mynde  
Why! men loved the lawe of kynde.  
This book ne spak but of such thynges  
Of quenès livés, and of kynges  
And many other thyngés smale.  
Amonge al this I fond a tale 60  
That me thoghte a wonder thyng.

This was the tale: There was a kyng  
That highté Seys, and hadde a wyf,  
The besté that mighte beré lyf;  
And this quene highté Alcyone.  
So hit befill, thereafter sone  
This kyng wolde wenden over see.  
To tellen shortly, whan that he  
Was in the see, thus in this wyse,  
Swich a tempest gan to ryse 70  
That brak hir mast and made it falle,  
And clefté hir ship, and dreinte hem alle,  
That never was foundé, as it telles,  
Bórd ne man, ne nothyng elles.  
Right thus this kyng Seys loste his lyf

Now for to speken of his wyf.  
 This lady, that was left at home,  
 Hath wonder that the king ne come  
 Home, for 'it was a longe terme.  
 Anon hir herté bigan to erme,  
 And for that hir thoghte evermo  
 It was not wel,—he dwelté so.  
 She longéd so after the kyng,  
 That certes, it were a pitous thyng  
 To telle hir hertely sorrowful lyf  
 That she had, this noble wyf;  
 For him she lovéd alderbest!  
 Anon she sente bothe eest and west  
 To seke him, but they foundé nought.  
 'Alas,' quoth she, 'that I was wrought!  
 I make avowe to my god here,  
 But I mowe of my lordé here,  
 And wher my lord, my love, be deed,  
 Certes, I nylle never eté breed.'

Swich sorw this lady to hir took,  
 That trewely I, which made this book,  
 Had swich pité and swich rowthe  
 To rede hir sorwe, that by my trowthe,  
 I ferde the worsé al the morwe  
 After, to thenken on hir sorwe.

So whan this lady coude heere no  
 word

That no man myghté fynde hir lord,  
 Ful oft she swouned, and seyde, 'Alas!'  
 For sorwé ful neigh wood she was,  
 Ne she koude no reed but oon;  
 But down on knees she sat anoon  
 And wepte, that pité was to here.

'A! mercy! sweté ladi dere!'  
 Quod she to Juno, hir goddessé;  
 'Helpe me out of this distresse,  
 And yeve me grace my lord to se  
 Soone, or wite wher-so he be,  
 Or how he fareth, or in what wyse,  
 And I shal make yow sacrifise,  
 And hoolly youres become I shal  
 With good wil, body, herte, and al;  
 And but-thow wilt this, ladi swete,  
 Send me grace to slepe, and mete  
 In my slepe som certeyn sweven,

80. *erme*. Ten Brink and Skeat's emendation of *germe* of MSS.

81. *he dwelle*, Skeat's emendation of *her thought* of the MSS., repeated from l. 82.

87. All MSS. read *For him alas she*, etc.

92-94. All place these couplets in reverse order.

Wher-through that I may knownen even  
 Whether my lord be quyk or deed.' 122

With that word she heng don the heed  
 And fil a-swown, as colde as ston.  
 Hir women caughte her up anon,  
 And broghten hir in bed al nakéd,  
 And she, forwepéd and forwakéd,  
 Was wery, and thus the dedé sleep  
 Fil on hir, or she toké keep,  
 Through Juno that had herd hir bone,  
 That madé hir to slepé sone; 130  
 For as she prayde, right so was don  
 In dede, for Juno right anon  
 Calledé thus hir messagere

To do hir erande, and he com nere.  
 Whan he was come, she bad him thus:  
 'Go bet,' quod Juno, 'to Morpheus,—  
 Thou knowest him wel, the god of sleep,—  
 Now understand wel, and tak keep;  
 Sey thus, on my halfé, that he  
 Go faste in-to the grété se, 140  
 And bid him that, on allé thyng,  
 He take up Seys body the kyng,  
 That lyeth ful pale and no-thing rody.  
 Bid him crepe in-to the body  
 And doo hit goon to Alcyone  
 The quené, ther she lyeth allone,  
 And shewe hir shortly—hit is no nay!—  
 How hit was dreynt this other day,  
 And doo the body speke right soo,  
 Right as hit was woned to doo  
 The whylés that hit was alyve.  
 Goo now faste, and hy the blyve!'

This messenger took leve and wente  
 Upon his wey, and never ne stente,  
 Til he com to the derke valeye  
 That stant betwixé rochés tweye,  
 Ther never yet grew corn ne gras,  
 Ne tre, ne no thyng that ought was,  
 Bést ne man, ne no wight elles,  
 Save ther were a fewé wellles 150  
 Came rennyng fro the cliffes a-doun,  
 That made a dedly, slepyng soun,  
 And ronnen down right by a cave  
 That was under a rokke y-grave  
 Amide the valey, wonder depe.

122. *messenger*, i.e. Iria.

130. *Go bet*, lit. go better, i.e. fast.

140. *He*, etc.; F Tn. B. *That he*, etc.

150. *no thyng*. All read *nought*.

159. *no wight*. All read *nought*.

Ther this goddés laye and slepe,—  
Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,  
That was the god of slepés heyre,  
That sleepe<sup>127</sup> and dide noon other werk.

This cavé was also as derk 170  
As hellé pit over-al aboute.  
They had good leyser for to route,  
To envye who might slepé beste.  
Some henge hir chyn upon hir breste  
And slepte upright, hir heed y-hede,  
And some laye naked in hir bedde  
And slepé whyles the dayés laste.

This messenger com fleynge faste 178  
And cried, 'O, hoo! a-wak anon!'  
Hit was for noght, ther herde him noon,  
'A-wak!' quod he, 'who is it lyth there!'  
And blew his horn right in hir ere,  
And cried, 'A-waketh!' wonder hyc.  
This god of slepe, with his oon yé  
Cast up, axed, 'Who clepéth there?'  
'Hit am I,' quod this messagere,  
'Juno bad thou shuldest goon,'—  
And tolde him what he shuldé doon  
As I have tolde yow here-to-fore,  
Hit is no need reherse hit more; 190  
And went his wey whan he hadde sayd.

Anoon this god of slepe a-brayd  
Out of his slepe, and gan to goon,  
And dide as he hadde bede him doon;  
Took up the dreynté body sone  
And bar hit forth to Alcyone,  
His wyf the queene, ther-as she lay,  
Right even a quarter before day,  
And stood right at hir beddés feete,  
And calléd hir right as she heete 200  
By name, and seyde, 'My sweté wyf,  
Awak! let be your sorrowful lyf!  
For in your sorwe ther lyth no need;  
For certes, swete, I am but deed,  
Ye shul me never on lyve y-se,  
But, good swete herté, [for] that ye  
Burie my body, swich a tyde  
Ye mowe hit fynde the see besyde,  
(And far-wel, swete, my worldés blisse!)

127. *Eclympasteyre*. Meaning and derivation doubtful—represents perhaps *Scelen plasters* or *Scelen Phylasters*, cp. Ovid. *Met.* xi. 640.

128. *who is*, etc. F omits it; Th. inserts *that after it*; Th. *make both*.

129. *for that*. All om. *for*; B om. *heris* also.  
130. *swich a*. All read *for swich a*.

I prayé god your sorwé lisse; 220  
To litel whyl our blissé lasteth!

With that hir eyen up she easteth  
And saw noght. 'Allas!' quod she for  
sorwe,

And deyde within the thriddé morwe.  
But what she sayde more in that snow  
I may not tellé yow as now,  
Hit were to longé for to dwelle,  
My first matere I wil yow telle,  
Wherfor I havé told this thyng  
Of Alcyone and Seys the kyng. 230

For thus moche dar I sayé wel,  
I had be dolven everydel,  
And deed, right thogh defaute of sleepe,  
Gif I naddé red and také keepe  
Of this talé next befor;  
And I wol tellé yow wherfor;  
For I ne might, for bote ne bale,  
Slepe, or I hadde red this tale  
Of this dreynté Seys the kyng  
And of the goddés of slepyng. 230

Whan I hadde red this talé wel,  
And over-loked hit everydel,  
Me thoughté wonder if hit were so,  
For I hadde never herd speke, or tho,  
Of no goddés that koudé make  
Men to sleepe, ne for to wake;  
For I ne knewe never God but oon,  
And in my game I sayde anon,—  
And yet me lyst right evel to pleye,—  
'Rather than that I shuldé deye 240

Thogh defaute of slepyng thus  
I wolde yive thilké Morpheus  
Or his goddésse, dame Juno,  
Or som wight elles, I ne roghté who,  
To make me sleepe and have som reste,—  
I wil yive him the alder-beste  
Yift that ever he abood his lyve.  
And here on warde, right now, as blyve,  
If he wol make me slepe a lite,  
Of downe of puré dowvés white 250  
I wil yive him a fether-bed,  
Rayed with golde, and right wel cled  
In syn blak satyn *doutremere*,  
And many a pilwe, and every bere  
Of clothe of Reynes, to slepé softe;  
Him thar not nede to turnen ofte.

255. *Rennes*, in Brittany. Linen is still made there.



And I wol yive him al that fallés  
To a chambre; and al his hallés  
I wol do peynt with puré golde,  
And tapite hem ful many folde  
Of oo sute: this shal he have  
If I wiste wher were his cave,  
If he kan make me sleepé sone,  
As did the goddesse quene Alcyone;  
And thus this ilké god, Morpheus,  
May wynne of me mo feés thus  
Than ever he wan; and to Juno,  
That is his goddesse, I shal so do,  
I trowe, that she shal holde hir payd.

I hadde unneth that word y-sayd 270  
Right thus as I have told it yow,  
That sodeynly, I nisté how,  
Swich a lust anon me took  
To sleep, that right upon my book  
I fil asleepe, and therwith even  
Me mette so ynly swete a sweven,  
So wonderful, that never yit  
I trowé no man hadde the wit  
To konné wel my sweven rede.  
No, not Joseph, with-outé drede, 280  
Of Egipte, he that reddé so  
The kyngés metyng, Pharno,  
No more than koude the leste of us;  
Ne nat skarsly Macrobeus,  
He that wroot al thavisoun  
That he mette, kyng Scipioun,  
The noble man, the Affrikan,—  
Swiché mervayles, fortunéd than,—  
I trowe, a-rede my dremés even. 289  
Lo, thus hit was, this was my sweven.

### The Dream

Me thoughté thus,—that hit was May,  
And in the dawyng I lay,  
(Me mette thus,) in my bed al naked,  
And lokéd forth, for I was wakéd  
With smalé foulés a gret hepe,  
That had affrayed me out of my slepe  
Through noyse and swetnesse of her song.  
And as me mette they sate a-mong  
Upon my chambre roof wyth-oute  
Upon the tyles over al a-boute, 300  
And songen, everich in his wyse,

284. *Macrobius*, famous in the Middle Ages for his commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*.

The mosté solempné servyse  
By note, that ever man, I trowe,  
Hadde herd; for sum of hem songe lowe  
Som hye, and al of oon acorde.  
To tellé shortly, at oo worde,  
Was never herd so swete a steven,—  
But hit hadde be a thyng of heven,—  
So mery a soun, so swete entunes,  
That certes, for the toune of Tewnes, 310  
I nolde but I hadde herd hem synge,  
For al my chambre gan to ryng  
Through syngyng of hir armonye.  
For instrument nor melodye  
Was nowher herd yet half so swete,  
Nor of acordé half so mete;  
For ther was noon of hem that feynéd  
To synge, for ech of hem him peynéd  
To fynde out mery crafty notes;  
They ne sparéd not hir throtes. 320

And sooth to seyn my chambre was  
Ful wel depeynted, and with glas  
Were al the wyndowes wel y-glaséd  
Ful clere, and nat an hole y-craséd,  
That to beholde hit was gret joye;  
For hoonly al the storie of Troye  
Was in the glasyng y-wroght thus,  
Of Ector, and of kyng Priamus;  
Of Achilles, and of Lamedon,  
And eke of Medea and of Jasoun; 330  
Of Paris, Eleyné, and of Lavyne;  
And alle the walles with colours fyne  
Were peynted, bothé text and glose,  
And al the Romaunce of the Rose.

My wyndowes weren shet echon  
And through the glas the sunné shon  
Upon my bed with bryghté bemés,  
With many gladdé, gilden stremés;  
And eek the welken was so fair,—  
Blew, bryght, cléré was the air, 340  
And ful attempre forsothe hit was;  
For nother to cold nor hoot it nas,  
Ne in al the welkene was a clowde.

And as I lay thus, wonder lowde  
Me thoughté I herde an hunté blowe,  
Tassaye his horn, and for to knowe  
Whether hit were clere, or hors of soume  
And I herdegoyng, bothe up and doune

310. *Tewnes*, Tunis.

329. *of Lamedon*. All read of *kyngs Lamedon*, caught from line above.

Men, hors, houndes, and other thyng,  
And al men speken of hunting; 350  
How they wolde slee the hert with  
strengthe,

And how the hert hadde upon lengthe  
So moche embosed, I not now what.

Anoon right when I herd that  
How that they wolde on hunting goon,  
I was right glad and up anoon,  
Took my hors and forth I wente  
Out of my chambre, I never stente  
Til I com to the feld withoute.

Ther overtok I a gret route 360  
Of huntres and eek of foresteres,  
With many relays and lymeres,  
And hyed hem to the forest faste,  
And I with hem. So at the laste  
I asked oon, ladde a lymere,  
'Say, fellow, who shal hunté here?'  
Quod I; and he answerde ageyn,  
'Sir, themperour Octovyein,'  
Quod he, 'and is heer fasté by.'

'A goddes half, in good tyme!' quod I.  
'Go we faste!' and gan to ryde. 371  
Whan we came to the forest syde  
Every man dide right anoon  
As to hunting fil to doon.

The mayster-hunte anoon, foot-hoot,  
With a gret horné blew three mot  
At the uncoupling of his houndes.  
With-inne a whyl the hert y-founde is,  
Y-halowed and rechaséd faste 380  
Longé tymé; so at the laste  
This hert ruséd and stal away  
Fro alle the houndes a prevy way.  
The houndes had oversheté hym alle,  
And were on a defeaute y-falle.  
Therwyth the hunté wonder faste  
Blew a 'forloyn' at the laste.

I was go walkéd fro my tree,  
And as I wente ther cam by me  
A whelp, that fawned me as I stood,  
That hadde y-folwed and koude no good.  
Hit com and crepte to me as lowe 391  
Right as hit hadde me y-knowe,  
Heekd donn his heed and joyned his erés,

380. *Octovyein*, a favourite character in the Carolingian romances. There is a M. Engl. metrical romance *Octavian Imperator*. He was an Emperor of Rome who married Florance, daughter of Dagobert (*i.e.* Dagobert), king of France.

And leyde al smothé doun his herés.  
I wolde have kaught hit, and anoon  
Hit fledde, and was fro me goon;  
And I him folwed, and hit forth wente  
Doun by a floury grené wente  
Ful thikke of gras, ful softe and sweete,  
With flourés sele, faire under feete, 400  
And litel used, hit seméd thus;  
For bothé Flora and Zephirus,  
They two that maké flourés growe,  
Had mad hir dwellyng ther, I trowe;  
For hit was oon to be-holde,  
As though the erthe envye wolde  
To be gayer than the heven,  
To have mo flourés sithés seven  
As in the welkné sterrés be.  
Hit had forgotte the povetee 410  
That wynter, through his coldé morwés,  
Had made hit suffren, and his sorwés,  
Al was for-geten, and that was sene,  
For al the wode was waxen grene;  
Sweetnesse of dewe hadde mad hit waxe.

Hit is no need eek for to axe  
Wher ther were many grené grevés,  
Or thikke of trees, so ful of levés;  
And every tree stood by him-selve,  
Fro other wel ten feet or twelve. 420  
So greté trees, so huge of strengthe,  
Of fourty, or fifty fadme lengthe,  
Clene withouté bough or stikke,  
With croppés brode and eek as thikke,—  
They weré nat an ynche a-sonder,—  
That hit was shadwe over al under;  
And many an hert and many an hynde  
Was bothe before me and be-hynde.

Of founés, sourés, bukkés, doés,  
Was ful the wode; and many roés, 430  
And many squirellés, that sete  
Ful heigh upon the trees and ete,  
And in hir maner madé festés.  
Shortly, hit was so ful of bestés,  
That though Argus, the noble countour,

408. *sithes seven*. The MSS. read *swiche seven*, which makes no sense. The reading suggested, 'seven times more flowers than there are stars in heaven,' agrees with the 'd'estre miez estelées' in the *Rom. de la Rose* (ll. 8465-8466), from which these lines are copied.

435. *Argus*, Albus the Arab mathematician, fl. early in the 9th cent.; cp. *New Engl. Dict.* s.v. *Algorism*. Through his treatise on Algebra the Arabic or 'new' numerals became known in Europe.

Sete to rekene in his countour,  
 And rekene with his figures ten—  
 For by tho figures new al ken,  
 If they be crafty, rekene and noumbre  
 And telle of every thinge the noumbre,—  
 Yet sholde he fayle to rekene even 442  
 The wondres me mette in my sweven.

But forth they romed right wonder faste  
 Down the wode; so at the laste  
 I was war of a man in blak,  
 That sat, and hadde y-turned his bak  
 To an ooke, an hugé tree.

'Lord!' thoghte I, 'who may that  
 be?

What ayleth hym to sitten here?'  
 Anoon right I wenté nere; 450  
 Than fond I sitte even upright  
 A wonder wel-faryngé knyght,—  
 By the maner me thoughté so,—  
 Of good mochel, and right yong therto,  
 Of the age of four and twenty year,  
 Upon his berde but litel heer,  
 And he was clothéd al in blake.

I stalkéd even unto his bake,  
 And ther I stood as stille as ought,  
 That, sooth to saye, he saw me nought;  
 For why he heng hys heed adoun, 462  
 And with a deedly, sorwful soun  
 He made of ryme ten veyr or twelve  
 Of a Complaynt to him-selve,  
 The mosté pitee, the mosté routhé,  
 That ever I herde; for by my trouthe,  
 Hit was gret wonder that Nature  
 Myght suffren any creature  
 To have swich sorw, and be not deed.  
 Ful pitous, pale, and no-thing reed 470  
 He sayde a lay, a maner song,  
 Withouté note, withouté song;  
 And was this, for ful wel I kan  
 Reherse hit—right thus hit began.—

*I have of sorow so grette woon  
 That joye gets I never noon,  
 Now that I see my lady bright,  
 Which I have loved with al my myght,  
 Is fro me deed and is a-noon.*

445. John of Gaunt, who was, however, twenty-nine when his wife died; cp. l. 445.

470. Th. wrongly inserts *And thus in sorow* before me alone after this line.

*Allas, Deeth, what ayleth thee 480  
 That thou noldest have taken me,  
 When thou toke my lady sweete  
 That was so fayr, so fresh, so fre,  
 So good, that men may wel se  
 Of al goodnesse she had no meete.*

Whan he hadde mad thus his com-  
 playnte,  
 His sorwful herté gan fasté faynte,  
 And his spirites waxen dede;  
 The blood was fled for puré drede 489  
 Down to his herté, to make hym warme;  
 For wel hit feled the herte hadde harme;  
 To wite eke why hit was a-drad  
 By kynde, and for to make hit glad;  
 For hit is membre principal  
 Of the body; and that made al  
 His hewé chaunge, and wexé grene,  
 And pale, for ther no blood was sene  
 In no maner lyme of his.

Anoon therwith whan I saw this,  
 He ferde thus evel ther he seet, 500  
 I went and stood right at his feet,  
 And gretté hym, but he spak noght,  
 But argued with his owné thought  
 And in his wit disputed faste,  
 Why and how his lyf myght laste,—  
 Hym thought his sorwés were so smerte  
 And lay so colde upon his herte;  
 So, through his sorw and hevly thought,  
 Made hym that he herde me noght  
 For he had wel-nygh lost his mynde 510  
 Thogh Pan, that men clepe god of  
 kynde,

Were for his sorwés never so wrooth.

But at the last, to sayn right sooth,  
 He was war of me how I stood  
 Before hym, and did of myn hood,  
 And hadde y-gret hym as I best coude.  
 Debonayrly, and no thyng loude,  
 He sayde, 'I prey the be not wrooth;  
 I herde thee not, to seyn the sooth,  
 Ne I saw thee not, sir, trewely.' 520  
 'A! goodé sir, no fors,' quod I,  
 'I am right sorry if I have ought  
 Destroubled yow out of your thought;  
 For-yive me, if I have mis-take.'

'Yis, thamendes is light to make.'

497. was. All read in.

Quod he, 'for ther lyth noon ther-to,  
Ther is no thyng missayd nor do.'

Lo ! how goodly spak this knyght,  
As hit haddē been a-nother wyght.  
He made hit nouthur tough ne queynte,  
And I saw that, and gan me aqueynte 531  
With hym, and fond hym so tretable,  
Right wonder skilful and reasonable,  
As me thoghte, for al his bale ;  
A-noon right I gan fynde a tale  
To hym, to lōke wher I might ought  
Have morē knowyng of his thought.

'Sir,' quod I, 'this game is doon ;  
I holdē that this hert be goon ;  
Thise huntēs conne hym nowher see.' 540

'I do no fors therof,' quod he,  
'My thought is ther-on never a del.'  
'Bi our Lord !' quod I, 'I trowe yow  
wel,

Right so me thinketh bi your chere.  
But, sir, oo thyng, wol ye here ?  
Me thinketh in gret sorwe I yow see ;  
But certēs, sirē, if that ye  
Wolde ought discourē me your wo  
I wolde, as wis God helpe me so,  
Amende hit, if I can or may. 550  
Ye mowē preve hit bi assay,  
For, by my trouthe, to make yow hool,  
I wol do al my power hool ;  
And telleth me of your sorwēs smerte,  
Paraunter hit may eae your herte,  
That semeth ful seke under your side.'

With that he loked on me aside,  
As who sayth, 'Nay, that wol not be.'  
'Graunt mercy ! goodē frend,' quod he,  
'I thanke the that thou woldest so, 560  
But hit may never the rather be do.  
No man may my sorwē glade  
That maketh my hewe to falle and fade,  
And hath myn understandyng lorn,  
That me is wo that I was born !  
May noght make my sorwēs slyde,—  
Nought al the remedies of Ovyde ;  
Ne Orpheus, god of melodye ;  
Ne Dedalus, with his playēs slye ;  
Ne hele me may no phisicien, 570  
Noght Ypocras, ne Galyen ;

550. *his playes slye*, his ingenious contrivances,  
i.e. his artificial wings.

570. *Ypocras*, Hippocrates.

Me is wo that I lyve hours twelve,  
But who so wol assay hym-selve,  
Whether his hertē can have pite  
Of any sorwe, lat hym see me.  
I, wrecche, that deeth hath mad al naked  
Of all the blisse that ever was makēd ;  
Y-worthē worstē of allē wightes,—  
That hate my dayēs and my nightes ;  
My lyf, my lustēs, be me lothe 580  
For al welfare, and I be wrothe.  
The purē Deeth is so ful my fo  
That I wolde deye,—hit wol not so ;  
For whan I folwe hit, hit wol flee ;  
I wolde have hym, hit nyl nat me.  
This is my peyne wythoutē reed,  
Alway deyinge and be not deed,  
That Cesiphus, that lyth in helle,  
May not of morē sorwē telle ;  
And who-so wiste al, bi my trouthe, 590  
My sorwē, but he haddē routhe  
And pitē of my sorwēs smerte,  
That man hath a feendly herte ;  
For who so seeth me first on morwe  
May seyē he hath met with Sorwe,  
For I am Sorwe, and Sorwe is I.

'Allas ! and I wol telle the why ;  
My song is turnēd to pleyning,  
And al my laughter to wepyng,  
My glādē thoghtes to hevynesse, 600  
In travaille is myn ydelnesse,  
And eek my reste ; my wele is wo,  
My good is harm, and ever mo  
In wrathe is turnēd my pleying,  
And my delit in-to sorwyng.  
Myn hele is turnēd in-to seeknesse,  
In drede is al my sykernes ;  
To derke is turnēd al my light,  
My wit is foly, my day is night,  
My love is hate, my sleep wakyng, 610  
My mirthe and melēs is fastyng,  
My countenance is nycte,  
And al abaved wher-so I be.  
My pees, in pleydyng, and in werre.  
Allas ! how myghte I farē werre ?  
'My boldnesse is turnēd to shame,  
For fals Fortune hath pleyd a game  
Atte chess with me,—allas ! the while !

588. *Cesiphus*, Sisyphus.

598. *song*. All read *sorwe*, a contamination  
from l. 596.

The trayteresse fals, and ful of gyle,  
 That al behotheth, and no thyng halt, 620  
 She goth upright, and yet she halt,  
 That baggeth foule, and loketh faire,  
 The dispitous debonaire !  
 That scorneth many a créature.  
 An ydole of fals portrayture  
 Is she, for she wol soné wrien.  
 She is the monstres heed y-wrien,  
 As filthé over y-strawed with flourés.  
 Hir mosté worship and hir flour is  
 To lyen, for that is hir nature ; 630  
 With-outé feythe, lawe, or mesure,  
 She is fals ; and ever laghyng  
 With oon eye, and that other wepyng.  
 That is broght up she set al doun ;  
 I líkne hir to the scorpoun,  
 That is a fals, flateryng beste,  
 For with his heed he maketh feste,  
 But, al amydd his flaterynge,  
 With his tayl he wol styng  
 And envenyme ; and so wol she. 640  
 She is thenvyouse Charite,  
 That is ay fals, and semeth weel,  
 So turneth she hir falsé wheel  
 Abouté, for hit is no thyng stable,  
 Now by the firé, now at table ;  
 For many oon hath she thus y-blent.  
 She is play of enchauntément,  
 That semeth oon, and is not so.  
 The falsé thief ! what hath she do,  
 Trowest thou ? By our Lord, I wol thee  
 seye. 650

'Atte ches with me she gan to pleye ;  
 With hir falsé draughtes dyvers  
 She stal on me, and took my fers ;  
 And whan I saw my fers aweye,  
 Allas ! I couthe no longer pleye,  
 But seyde, "Far-wel, swete, y-wys !  
 And far-wel al that ever ther is !"  
 Ther-with Fortuné seyde, "Chek heer !"  
 And "Mate !" in the myd poynt of the  
 chekkere,  
 With a pouné erraunt, allas ! 660  
 Ful crafter to pley she was  
 Than Athalus that made the game

621. *Atte*. All read *At the*.

660. *Athalus*. The reputed inventor of Chess.  
 According to Warton *Athalus Philometer*, King  
 of Pergamius, is meant. This whole passage is  
 imitated from the *Rom. de la Rose*, ll. 6644-6881.

First of the ches, so was his name.  
 But God wolde, I had oones or twyes  
 Y-coud and knowe the jeopardyes  
 That coude the Grek Pithagores,  
 I shulde have pleyde the bet at ches,  
 And kept my fers the bet ther-by.

'And thogh whereto ? For trewely  
 I holde that wyssh nat worth a stree ! 670  
 Hit had be never the bet for me,  
 For Fortune can so many a wyle,  
 Ther be but fewe can hir begyle,  
 And eek she is the las to blame ;  
 My-self I wolde have do the same ;  
 Before God, hadde I been as she.  
 She oghte the more excuséd be  
 For this. I say yet more ther-to,—  
 Hadde I be God and myghte have do  
 My willé, whan my fers she caughte, 680  
 I wolde have drawe the samé draughte.  
 For, also wys God yive me reste !  
 I dar wel swere, she took the beste.

'But through that draughte I have lorn  
 My blisse. Allas ! that I was born,  
 For evermore I trowe trewely,  
 For al my wil, my lust hoolly  
 Is turned ; but yet, what to doone ?  
 Be our Lorde ! hit is to deye soone,  
 For no thyng I leve hit noght, 690  
 But lyve and deye right in this thoght.  
 For there nis planete in firmament  
 Ne in ayre, ne in erthe, noon element  
 That they ne yive me a yift echoon  
 Of wepyng, whan I am alloon.  
 For whan that I avise me wel,  
 And be-thenke me every-del,  
 How that ther lyth in rekenyng  
 In my sorwé for no thyng ;  
 And how ther leveth no gladnesse 700  
 May gladdé me of my distresse,  
 And how I have lost suffisance,  
 And ther-to I have no plesance,  
 Than may I say I have right noght.  
 And whan al this falleth in my thought,  
 Allas, than am I overcome !  
 For that is doon is not to come :  
 I have more sorwé than Tantara !'

661. *jeopardyes*, problems ; O.F. *jeu parti*  
 divided game.

681. *the same draughte*, move at chess.  
 698, 699. In my account with sorrow there  
 to my credit no amount at all.

And whan I herde hym telle this tale  
Thus pitously, as I yow telle, 710  
Unnethé myghte I lenger dwelle,  
Hit dide myn herté so mochê wo.

'A, good sir!' quod I, 'say not so!  
Have som pite on your nature,  
That formed yow to creature.  
Remembre yow of Socrates,  
For he ne counted nat three strees  
Of noght that Fortune coude do.'

'No,' quod he, 'I can not so.'

'Why so, sir? yis, pardé!' quod I;

'Ne say noght soo, for trewely, 721  
Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve,  
And ye for sorwe mordred your selve,  
Ye sholde be dampned in this cas  
Bi as good right as Medea was,  
That slow hir children for Jason;  
And Phyllis also for Demophon  
Heng hir-selfe, so weylaway!  
For he had broke his termé day  
To come to hir. Another rage 730  
Had Dydo, the quene eek of Cartage,  
That slow hir self, for Eneas  
Was fals;—which a foole she was.  
And Ecquo died, for Narcisus  
Noldé nat love hir; and right thus  
Hath many another folý don.  
And for Dalida dyed Sampson,  
That slow hym-self with a pilere,—  
But ther is no man a-lyvê here  
Wolde for a fers makê this wo!' 740

'Why so!' quod he, 'hyt ys nat so;  
Thou wost ful lytel what thou menest;  
I have lost moré than thou wenest.'

'Lo, sey, how that may be?' quod I;

'Good sir, tel me al hoolly  
In what wyse, how, why, and wherefore,  
That ye have thus your blissé lore.'

'Blythly,' quod he; 'com sit adoun!  
I telle the upon a condicioun  
That thou shalt hoolly with al thy wit 750

750. *sir*. All read *good sir*, contamination  
with *quod* in line above.

750. *the ferses twelve*, i.e. 'all the pieces ex-  
cept the king, which could not be taken.' (Skeat.)

757. Phyllis committed suicide from fear that  
Demophon had forgotten her, and was changed  
into a tree. Demophon was a son of Theseus.

758. *Ecquo*, Echo. All these examples occur  
in the *Roman de la Rose*.

757. *Dalida*, Delilah.

Do thyn entent to herkene hit.'

'Yis, sir!'

'Swere thy trouthe ther-to.'

'Gladly.'

'Do than holde her-to.'

'I shal, right blythly, so God me save!  
Hoolly with al the wit I have  
Here yow as wel as I kan.'

'A Goddes half!' quod he, and began:

'Sir,' quod he, 'sith first I kouthe  
Have any maner wit fro youthe,  
Or kyndely understanding 760

To comprehende in any thyng  
What love was in myn owné wit,  
Dredeles I have ever yit  
Be tributary and yiven rente

To love, hoolly with goode entente,  
And through plesaunce become his thral  
With good wil, body, herte, and al.

Al this I putte in his servage,  
As to my lorde, and dide homage,

And ful devoutly I prayde hym to, 770  
He shulde besette myn herté so,

That hit plesancé to hym were,  
And worship to my lady dere.

'And this was longe, and many a  
yeer,

Or that myn herté was set owher,  
That I dide thus, and nysté why,  
I trowe, hit cam me kyndely.

Peraunter I was therto most able,  
As a whyt wal or a table,

For hit is redy to cacche and take 780  
Al that men wil therynné make,

Whethir-so men wil portreye or peynte,  
Be the werkés never so queynte.

'And thilké tyme I ferde right so  
I was ablé to have lernéd tho,

And to have kenned as wel or better  
Paraunter other art of letter,

But for love cam first in my thought,  
Therefore I forgot hit nought.

I chees love to my firsté craft, 790  
Therefore hit is with me laft.

For why? I took hit of so yong age  
That malice haddé my corage

Nat that tyme turnéd to no thyng,  
Through to moche knowlechyng.

For that tyme Youthé, my maistresse,  
Governéd me in ydelnesse,

For hit was in my firste youthe,  
 And tho ful litel good I couthe,  
 For al my werkẽ were flittinge  
 That tyme, and thoghtes varyinge,  
 Al were to me ylyché good,  
 That I knew tho, but thus hit stood.

800

'Hit happed that I cam on a day  
 In-to a place ther that I say  
 Frewly the fayrest companye  
 Of ladies, that ever man with yẽ  
 Had seen to-gedres in oo place.  
 Shal I clepe hyt hap, other grace  
 That broghte me ther? Nay,

but

Fortune,

810

That is to lyen ful comune,—  
 The falsẽ trayteresse, pervers !  
 God wolde I coudẽ clepe hir wers !  
 For now she worceth me ful wo,  
 And I wol tellẽ sone why so.

'Among these ladies thus echoon,  
 Soth to seyẽ, I sawgh oon  
 That was lyk noon of the route,  
 For I dar swere, withoutẽ doute,  
 That as the someres sonnẽ bryght  
 Is fairer, clerer, and hath more lyght  
 Than any other planete in heven,  
 The monẽ, or the sterrẽ seven ;  
 For al the worldẽ so had she  
 Surmounted hem alle of beaute,  
 Of maner, and of comlynesse,  
 Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse,  
 Of goodlihede, so wel be-seye,—  
 Shortly, what shal I more seye ?

820

By God, and by his halwẽs twelve,  
 Hit was my swete, ryght as hir-selve !  
 She had so stedfast countenance,  
 So noble port and meyntenance.  
 And love, that had wel herd my bone,  
 Had espyẽd me thus sone,  
 That she ful sonẽ, in my thought,  
 As helpe me God, so was y-caught  
 So sodenly, that I ne took  
 No maner counseyl, but at hir look  
 And at myn hertẽ ; for-why, hir yẽ 840  
 So gladly, I trow, myn hertẽ syen,  
 That purely tho myn ownẽ thought  
 Seyde hit were beter serve hir for noght

198. John of Gant was married at nineteen.  
 199. ss. All read and so, caught from the line  
 above.

190. By Christ and His twelve apostles.

Than with a-nother to be wẽl.  
 And it was sooth, for everydel  
 I wil a-noon right telle the why.

'I saw hir daunce so comilly,  
 Carole and synge so swetely,  
 Laughe and pleye so womanly,  
 And lokẽ so debonairly,  
 So goodly speke, and so friendly,  
 That certes, I trowe that ever-more  
 Nas seyn so blisful a tresore,  
 For every heer on hir hede,  
 Soth to seyn, it was not rede,  
 Ne nouthẽ yelw, ne broun it nas,  
 Me thoghtẽ most lyk gold it was.

830

'And whiche yẽn my lady hadde !  
 Debonair, goodẽ, glade, and sadde,  
 Symple, of goode mochel, noght to wyde,  
 Ther-to hir look nas not a-syde,  
 Ne overthwert, but beset so wel,  
 Hit drew and took up everydel  
 Alle that on hir gan be-holde.  
 Hir yẽn semed anoon she wolde  
 Have mercy,—foolẽs wenden so,—  
 But hit was never the rather do.  
 Hit nas no countrefetẽd thyng,  
 Hit was hir ownẽ pure lokyng,  
 That the goddessẽ, dame Nature,  
 Had made hem opene by mesure,  
 And close ; for were she never so glad  
 Hir lokyng was not foly sprad,  
 Ne wildely, thogh that she pleyde ;  
 But ever me thoghte hir yẽn seyde,  
 " By God, my wrathe is al for-yive ! "

840

87

'Therwith hir liste so wel to live,  
 That dulnesse was of hir a-drad.  
 She nas to sobre, ne to glad.  
 In allẽ thynges more mesure  
 Had never, I trowẽ, creature.  
 But many oon with hir loke she herte,  
 And that sat hir ful lyte at herte,  
 For she knew no-thing of hir thoght,  
 But whether she knew, or knew it noght  
 Algate she ne roghte of hem a stree !  
 To gete hir love noo ner nas he.  
 That woned at home, than he in Ynde  
 The formest was alway behynde.  
 But goodẽ folke, over al other,  
 She loved as man may do his brother,  
 Of whiche love she was wonder large  
 In skilful places that berẽ charge.

'But which a visage had she ther-to !  
 Allas, myn herte is wonder wo  
 That I ne can discryven hit !  
 Mé lakketh bothe English and wit  
 For to un-do hit at the fulle,  
 And eek my spirits be so dulle  
 So greet a thyng for to devyse. 900  
 I have no wit that can suffice  
 To comprehenden hir beauté,  
 But thus moche dar I seyn, that she  
 Was, rody, fresh, and lyvely hewed ;  
 And every day hir beauté newed ;  
 And negh hir face was alder-best ;  
 For certés, Nature had swich lest  
 To make that fair, that trewly she  
 Was hir cheef patron of beauté,  
 And cheef ensample of al hir werke, 910  
 And monstre ; for be hit never so derke,  
 Me thynketh I se hir ever-mo ;  
 And yet, more-over, thogh allé tho  
 That ever lyved were now a-lyve,  
 They ne sholde have foundé to diskryve  
 In al hir face a wikked signe ;  
 For hit was sad, symple, and benygne.  
 'And which a goodly, softé speche  
 Had that swete, my lyvés leche !  
 So friendly and so wel y-grounded, 920  
 Up al resoun so wel y-founded,  
 And so trefable to al gode,  
 That I dar swere wel by the rode,  
 Of eloquence was never founde  
 So swete a sownyngé facounde,  
 Ne trewer tonged, ne scornéd lasse,,  
 Ne bet coude hele ; that by the masse  
 I durste swere, thogh the pope hit songe,  
 That ther was never yet through hir tonge  
 Man ne woman gretly harméd, 930  
 As for hir ther was al harm hyd ;  
 Ne lassé flatering in hir worde,  
 That purely hir symple recorde  
 Was founde as trewe as any bonde,  
 Or trouthe of any mannés honde.  
 Ne chyde she koudé never a del,  
 That knoweth al the world ful wel.  
 'But swich a fairnesse of a nekke  
 Had that swete, that boon nor brekke

904. All read *white*, *rody*, etc. Skeat omits *white*, for it spoils the point of l. 948 and the metre of this line.

915. All omit *They*, which is necessary to the point.

Nas ther non sené that mys-sat ; 940  
 Hit was smothe, streght, and puré flat,  
 Wyth-outen hole ; nor canel boon,  
 As be semyng, had she noon.  
 Hir throte, as I have now memoire,  
 Seméd a round tour of yvoire,  
 Of good gretnesse, and noght to grete.  
 'And godé, fairé, White, she hete,—  
 That was my lady namé ryght,—  
 She was bothe faire and bryght,  
 She haddé not hir namé wrong. 950  
 Right fairé shuldrés, and body long,  
 She hadde, and armés, every lith  
 Fattyssh, flesshy, not greet therwith ;  
 Right whité handes, and naylés rede,  
 Roundé brestes ; and of good brede  
 Hir hippés were, a streight flat bak.  
 I knew on hir non other lak,  
 That al hir lymmes nere pursewing,  
 In as fer as I had knowyng.

'Therto she coude so wel pleye, 960  
 Whan that hir lyste, that I dar seye  
 That she was lyk to torché bryght  
 That every man may take of light  
 Ynogh, and hit hath never the lesse.

'Of maner and of comlynesse,  
 Right so ferde my lady dere,  
 For every wyght of hir manere  
 Myght cacche ynogh, if that he wolde,  
 If he had yēn hir to be-holde ;  
 For I dar swere wel if that she 970  
 Hadde among ten thousand be,  
 She woldé have be, at the leste,  
 A cheef mirour of al the feste,  
 Thogh they had stonden in a rowe,  
 To mennés yēn that coude have knowe.  
 For wher-so men had played or wakéd,  
 Me thoughte the felawship as naked  
 Withouten hir, that saw I ones,  
 As a coroune withouté stones.  
 Trewly she was to myn yē 980  
 The soleyen fenix of Arabye,  
 For ther lyveth never but oon ;  
 Ne swich as she ne knew I noon.

'To speke of goodness ; trewly she

941. All read *white*, *smothe*, etc.; cp. l. 904 note. Skeat here omits *pure*.

942. All read *or*.

947. A reference to the name of the Duchess, viz. Blauncha.

958. All read *pure sewing*.



Hadde as moche debonaire  
 As ever hadde Hester in the Bible,  
 And more, gif more were possible.  
 And soth to seyné, therwyth-al  
 She had a wyt so general,  
 So hool enclyned to allé gode, 990  
 That al hir wyt was set, by the rode,  
 With-oute malyce upon gladnesse;  
 And ther-to I saw never yet a lesse  
 Harmful than she was in doying.  
 I sey nat that she ne had knowyng  
 What harm was, or ellés she  
 Had coud no good, so thynketh me.

'And trewly, for to speke of trouthe,  
 But she hadde had, it hadde be routhe.  
 Therof she had so moche hir del, 1000  
 And I dar seyn, and swere hit wel,  
 That Trouthe hym-self, over al and al,  
 Had chose his maner principal  
 In hir, that was his restyng-place.  
 Ther-to she hadde the mosté grace  
 To have stedfast perseveraunce  
 An esy, atempre governaunce,  
 That ever I knew, or wysté yit,  
 So puré, suffraunt, was hir wyt.  
 And resoun gladly she understood; 1010  
 Hit folowed wel she coudé good.  
 She uséd gladly to do wel:

These were hir maners everydel.  
 'Therwith she lovéd so wel right,  
 She wrong do woldé to no wyght;  
 Nó wyght myghte do hir no shame,  
 She loved so wel hir owné name.  
 Hir luste to holde no wyght in honde,  
 Ne, be thou siker, she wolde not  
 fonde

To holdé no wyght in balaunce 1020  
 By half word, ne by countenaunce,  
 But if men wolde upon hir lye;  
 Ne sende men in-to Walakye,  
 To Pruyse, and in-to Tartarye,  
 To Alysandre, ne in-to Turkey;  
 And bidde hym faste, anon that he  
 Go hoodles in-to the dryé se,

986. *Hester*, Esther.

1004. *Pruyse*, Prussia.

1007. *the drye se*. According to Mr. Bras (Appendix to his ed. of Chaucer's *Astrolabe*, p. 302) this refers to the variable Lake Cirknitz, near Lailbach, N.E. of Trieste, which is sometimes dry.

And come hoom by the Carrenare;  
 And seyé, "Sir, be now right ware  
 That I may of yow heré seyn 103  
 Worship, or that ye come ageyn!"  
 She ne uséd no suche knakkés smale.  
 'But wherfor that I telle my tale?  
 Right on this same, as I have seyed,  
 Was hoolly al my lové leyed,  
 For certés, she was, that sweté wyf  
 My suffisauncé, my lust, my lyf,  
 Myn hap, myn hele, and al my blisse,  
 Myn worlde welfare, and my [goodé] lisse;  
 And I hoolly hers, and everydel.' 104

'By our Lord,' quod I, 'I trowe yow  
 wel!

Hardely, your love was wel beset,  
 I not how ye myghte have do bet.'

'Bet? ne noight so wel!' quod he.

'I trowe hit, sir,' quod I, 'parde!'

'Nay, leve hit wel!'

'Sire, so do I

I leve yow wel, that trewely  
 Yow thoughté that she was the beste,  
 And to be-holde the alderfayreste, 10  
 Who so had loked hir with your eyen'

'With myn? nay, allé that hir seyer  
 Seyde, and sworn hyt was so.

And thogh they ne hadde, I woldé the  
 Have lovéd best my lady fre,  
 Thogh I hadde had al the beauté  
 That ever hadde Alcipyades,  
 And al the strengthe of Ercules,  
 And therto hadde the worthynesse  
 Of Alysandre, and al the rychesse  
 That ever was in Babyloyné,  
 In Cartage, or in Masedoyne,  
 Or in Rome, or in Nynyvé;  
 And therto also as hardy be  
 As was Ector, so have I joye,  
 That Achilles slow at Troye,—  
 And ther-for was he slayn also  
 In a temple, for bothé two  
 Were slayn, he and Antylegyus,

1008. Mr. Bras suggests that this is the of Carnaro or Quarnaro in the Adriatic to which Dante refers; cp. *Inf.* ix. 113. It is within miles of Lake Cirknitz.

1039. *goodé lisse*. All read *goddesses*. 5 *lisse*.

1056. *Alcipyades*, Alcibiades.

1068. *Antylegyus*, Antiochus.

And so seyth Dares Frigius,  
For lovè of Polixena,— 1070  
Or ben as wys as Mynerua,  
I wolde ever, withoute drede,  
Have loved hir, for I mostè nede!  
“Nede!” nay, trewly, I gabbe  
now,—

Noght “nede,” and I wol tellè how,  
For of godd wille myn herte it wolde,  
And eek to love hir I was holde,  
As for the faireste and the beste.

“She was as good, so have I reeste,  
As ever was Penelope of Grece, 1080  
Or as the noble wyf Lucrece,  
That was the beste,—he telleth thus  
The Romain, Tytus Iyyus,—  
She was as good, and no thyng lyke,  
Thogh hir stories be autentyke;  
Algate she was as trewe as she.

“But wherfor that I tellè the  
Whan I first my lady say?  
I was right yong, soth to say,  
And ful greet need I hadde to lerne 1090  
Whan my hertè woldè yern  
To love, it was a greet emprise;  
But as my wyt coude beste suffice,  
After my yongè, childly wyt,  
Withoute drede, I be-settè hit  
To love hir in my bestè wyse,  
To do hir worship, and the servise.  
That I coude tho, by my trouthe,  
Withoutè feynynge, outhur slouthe,  
For wonder fayn I wolde hir se. 1100

“So mochel hit amended me,  
That whan I saw hir first a-morwe,  
I was warishe of al my sorwe  
Of al day after, til hit were eve;  
Me thoughtè no-thing myghte me greve,  
Were my sorwes never so smerte;  
And yet she syt so in myn herte,  
That by my trouthe, I noldè noght,  
For al this worlde, out of my thoght  
Levé my lady; no, trewely!” 1110

1069. Dares Phrygius, the Trojan priest of Vulcan, in whose name the popular spurious history of Troy was written by a Roman after the fall of Rome. The reference here, however, is to the mediæval version of the story, written by Guido delle Colonne, which was based on Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*.

1080. Possibly, as Skeat thinks, she has been omitted before *and*, but cp. l. 1180.

“Now, by my trouthe, sir,” quod I,  
“Me thynketh ye have such a chaunce,  
As shrift wythoutè répentance.”

“Répentance!” nay, fy!” quod he,  
“Shulde I now repentè me  
To love? nay, certès, than were I wel  
Wers than was Achitofel,  
Or Anthenor, so have I joye,  
The traytour that betraysed Troye,  
Or the falsè Genellon, 1120  
He that purchased the treson  
Of Rowland and of Olyvere.  
Nay, whil I am a-lyvè here  
I nyl foryete hir, never mo!”

“Now, goodè sirè,” quod I tho,  
“Ye han wel told me her-before,  
Hit is no need to reherse hit more  
How ye sawe hir first, and where;  
But wolde ye telle me the manere  
To hir which was your firstè speche,—  
Therof I woldè yow be-seche,— 1131  
And how she knewè first your thoght,  
Whether ye lovèd hir or noght,  
And telleth me eek what ye have lore,  
I herde yow tellè her-before.”

“Ye,” seyde he, “thou nost what  
thou menest;  
I have lost morè than thou wenest.”  
“What los is that?” quod I tho;  
“Nyl she not love yow? is hit so?  
Or have ye oght doon amys, 1140  
That she hath left yow? is it this?  
For Goddès lovè, telle me al.”

“Be-forè God,” quod he, “and I shal.  
I sayè right as I have seyde,  
On hir was al my lovè leyde,  
And yet she nyste it never a del  
Noght longè tyme, leve it wel!  
For be right siker, I durstè noght,  
For al this worlde, tel hir my thoght,  
Ne I wolde have wratthed hir trewely.  
For worstow why? she was lady 1151  
Of the body,—she had the herte,  
And who hath that may not asterte.

“But, for to kepe me fro ydeinesse,

1120. *Genellon*, one of Charlemagne's officers, whose treachery caused the defeat at Roncevaux and the death of Roland.

1122. *Rowland and Olyver*, the two most celebrated of Charlemagne's knights.

1146. All read *not never*.

Trewly I did my besynesse  
 To maké songes, as I best coude ;  
 And oft tyme I song hem loude,  
 And madé songes thus a greet del,  
 Al thogh I coude not make so wel  
 Songés, ne knowé the art al 1160  
 As coude Lamekes sone, Tubal,  
 That fond out first the art of songe ;—  
 For as his brothres hamers ronge  
 Upon his anvelt up and doun  
 Therof he took the firsté soun ;  
 But Grekés seyn Pictagoras,  
 That he the firsté fynder was  
 Of the art, *Aurora* telleth so ;  
 But therof no fors, of hem two.  
 Algatés, songés thus I made 1170  
 Of my felyng, myn herte to glade.  
 And lo ! this was the alther-firste,—  
 I not wher it were the werste.

*Lordé, hyt maketh myn herté lyght  
 Whan I thanke on that sweté wyght  
 That is so semely on to see ;  
 And wisse to God if myght so bee  
 That she wolde holde me for hir knyght,  
 My lady that is so fair and bright !*

'Now have I told the, soth to saye,  
 My firsté song. Upon a daye 1181  
 I be-thoghté me what wo  
 And sorwé that I suffréd tho  
 For hir, and yet she wyste it noght,  
 Ne telle hir durste I nat my thoght.  
 Allas ! thoughte I, I can no reed ;  
 And but I telle hir I nam but deed,  
 And if I telle hir, to seye right sooth,  
 I am a-dred she wol be wrooth.  
 Allas ! what shal I thannéd do ? 1190

'In this debat I was so wo,  
 Me thoghte myn herté braste a-tweyn !  
 So at the lasté, soth to sayn,  
 I be-thoghte me that Nature  
 Ne forméd never in créature  
 So moché beauté, trewely,  
 And bounté, wyth-outé mercy.

1161. *Tubal*, an error for Jubal, 'the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.'

1166. *Pictagoras*, Pythagoras.

1168. *Aurora*, a Latin metrical version of parts of the Bible allegorised by Petrus de Riga, Canon of Rheims, in the 12th century.

1172. *the alther-firste*. All omit *the*, but the *time* proves the necessity of the demonstrative.

'In hope of that my tale I tolde  
 With sorwe, as that I never sholde  
 For nedés ; and, maugree my heed, 118  
 I mooste have told hir or be deed.  
 I not wel how that I began,  
 Ful evel reheresen hit I can,  
 And eek, as helpe me God, with-al  
 I trowe hit was in the dismal  
 That was the ten woundes of *Egipte*,  
 For many a word I over-akipte  
 In my tale, for puré fere  
 Lest my wordés mys-set were,  
 With sorwful herte, and woundés dede,  
 Softe, and quakyng for puré drede 119  
 And shame, and stýntyng in my tale  
 For ferdé, and myn hewe al pale,  
 Ful ofte I wex bothe pale and reed ;  
 Bowyng to hir, I heng the heed,  
 I durste nat onés loke hir on,  
 For wit, manere, and al was goon.  
 I seyde "Mercy !" and no more.  
 Hit nas no game, hit sat me sore.

'So at the lasté, sooth to seyn, 120  
 Whan that myn herte was come ageyn,  
 To tellé shortly al my speche,  
 With hool herte I gan hir beseche  
 That she wolde be my lady swete ;  
 And swor, and gan hir hertely hete  
 Ever to be stedfast and trewe,  
 And love hir alwey freshly newe,  
 And never other lady have,  
 And al hir worship for to save  
 As I best coude,—I swor hir this,— 121  
 "For youres is al that ever ther is  
 For evermore, myn herté swete !  
 And never to false yow, but I mete,  
 I nyl, as wys God helpe me so !"

'And whan I hadde my tale y-do,  
 God wot she accounted nat a stree  
 Of al my tale, so thoghté me.  
 To tellé shortly, right as it is,  
 Trewly hir answer hit was this ;  
 I can not now wel counterfete  
 Hir wordés, but this was the grete  
 Of hir answer : she sayde, "Nay !" 122  
 Al-outerly. Allas ! that day  
 The sorwe I suffred and the wo,

1205. *dismal*, on an evil day ; Anglo-Fr. *dis mal* (Lat. *dis malus*). The form of the *t* caused it to be used as an adjective *large*.

That trewly Cassandra, that so  
 Bewayléd the destruccioun  
 Of Troyé and of Ilioun,  
 Had never swich sorwe as I tho.  
 I durste no moré say ther-to  
 For puré fere, but stal away ; 1250  
 And thus I lyved ful many a day,  
 That trewely, I hadde no need,  
 Ferther than my beddés heed,  
 Never a day to seché sorwe ;  
 I fond hit redy every morwe,  
 For why I loved hir in no gere.

'So hit befel another yere,  
 I thoughté ones I woldé fonde  
 To do hir knowe and understonde  
 My wo ; and she wel understood 1260  
 That I ne wilned no thyng but good,  
 And worship, and to kepe hir name  
 Over allé thyng, and drede hir shame,  
 And was so besy hir to serve,  
 And pite were I shuldé sterve,  
 Sith that I wilned noon harm y-wys.

'So whan my lady knew al this,  
 My lady yaf me al hoolly  
 The noble yift of hir mercy,  
 Savyng hir worship by al weyes ; 1270  
 Dredles, I mene noon other weyes.  
 And therwith she yaf me a ryng,  
 I trowe hit was the firsté thyng ;  
 But if myn herté was y-waxe  
 Glad, that is no need to axe !  
 As helpe me God, I was as blyve  
 Reyséd, as fro dethe to lyve,  
 Of al happés the alder-beste,  
 The gladdest, and the moste at reste.

For trewely that sweté wyght 1280  
 Whan I hadde wrong and she the right,  
 She wolde alway so goodely  
 For-yeve me so debonairly !  
 Alle my youthe, in allé chaunce  
 She took me in hir governaunce.

'Therwith she was alway so trewe  
 Our joye was ever y-liche newe,  
 Our hertés wern so even a payre  
 That never nas that oon contraire 1290  
 To that other, for no wo ;  
 For sothe y-liche they suffred tho  
 Oo blyssé, and eek oo sorwé bothe ;

1290. *lyngg.* All read *lyngges*, unidiomatically.

Y-liche they were bothe gladde and wrothe,  
 Al was us oon withouté were.

And thus we lyved ful many a yere  
 So wel, I can nat tellé how.'

'Sir,' quod I, 'wher is she now?'  
 "'Now !'" quod he, and stynte anon.  
 Therwith he wex as deed as stoon  
 And seyde, 'Allas, that I was bore ! 1300  
 That was the los, that her-before  
 I toldé the that I hadde lorn ;  
 Bethenk how I seyde herbefore ;  
 "Thow wost ful litel what thou menest ;  
 I have lost moré than thou wenest !"  
 God wot, alas ! right that was she !'  
 'Allas ! sir, how ? what may that be ?'  
 'She ys deed !'

'Nay !'  
 'Yis, by my trouthe !'  
 'Is that your los ? by God, hit is  
 routhe !'

And with that wordé right anon 1310  
 They gan to strake forth ; al was doon  
 For that tyme, the hert-huntyng.

With that me thoghté that this kyng  
 Gán homwardés for to ryde,  
 Unto a place was ther besyde,  
 Which was from us but a lyte ;  
 A long castel with wallés white  
 Be Seynt Johan ! on a riché hil,  
 As me mette ; but thus hyt fil.

Ryght thus me mette, as I yow telle, 1320  
 That in the castell ther was a belle,  
 As hit hadde smyten hourés twelve.

Therewith I a-wook my selve  
 And fond me lying in my bed ;  
 And the book that I hadde red,  
 Of Alcyone and Seys the kyng,  
 And of the goddés of slepyng,  
 I fond it in myn honde ful even.

Thoghte I, 'This is so queynt a sweven,  
 That I wol, be processe of tyme, 1330  
 Fonde to putte this sweven in ryme  
 As I can best' ; and that anon.  
 This was my sweven ; now hit is doon !

1314. All read *Gan homward*, which seems to make the line too short.

1317. *A long castel*, presumably Windsor.

# THE COMPLEYNTE UNTO PITE

*Complaints of the Deathe of Pite, in  
Storme's hand.*

PITE that I have sought so yore ago  
With herté sore and ful of besy payne,  
That in this worlde was never wight so wo  
With-outé dethe; and if I shal not feyne,  
My purpos was to Pite to compleyne  
Upon the crueltee and tyrannye  
Of Love, that for my trouthe doth me dye.

And when that I, by lengthe of certeyn  
yeres,  
Had evere in oon a tyme sought to speke,  
To Pite ran I, al bespreynt with teres, so  
To preyen hir on Crueltee me a wreke;  
But er I myght with any worde out-breke,  
Or tellen any of my peynés smerte,  
I fond hir deed and buried in an herte.

Adoun fel I when that I saugh the herse,  
Deed as a stoon, whyl that the swogh me  
laste;

But up I roos with colour ful dyverse,  
And pitously on hir myn eyen I caste,  
And ner the corps I gan to presen faste,  
And for the soule I shoop me for to  
preye; so  
I nas but lorne, ther was no more to sey.

Thus am I slayn sith that Pitè is deed;  
Allas the day! that ever hit shulde falle!  
What maner man dar now holde up his  
heed?

To whom shal any sorwful herté calle?  
Now Crueltee hath cast to sleen us alle,  
In ydel hope, folk redéeles of payne,—  
Sith she is deed, to whom shul we com-  
pleyne?

But yet encreaseth me this wonder newe, so  
That no wight woot that she is deed but I;  
So many men as in her tyme hir knewe,  
And yet she dyed not so sodeynly;  
For I have sought hir ever ful bealy  
Sith I first haddé wit or mannés mynde;  
But she was deed er that I coude hir fynde.

47. read. All read was. 48.

Abouté hir herse ther stoden lustily,  
Withouten any wo, as thoughté me,  
Bountee parfit, wel-armed and richely,  
And fresshé Beautee, Lust and Jolitee,  
Assured Maner, Youthe and Honestee,  
Wisdom, Estaat, and Dreed, and Govern-  
aunce,  
Confedred bothe by bonde and alliaunce

A compleynte hadde I writen in my  
hond,  
For to have put to Pite as a bille;  
But whan I al this companye ther fond  
That rather wolden al my causé spille  
Than do me help, I held my pleynté still  
For to tho folk, with-outen any faile,  
Withouté Pite may no bille availle.

Then leve I al thise vertues, sauf Pitè,  
Kepyng the corps, as ye have herd mesey  
Cofedred alle by bonde of Cruelte,  
And ben assented that I shal be sleyn.  
And I have put my Compleynte up agey  
For to my foes my bille I dar not shew  
Theffect of whichseith thusin wordés fev

## The Bills

Humblest of herte, highest of reveren  
Benygné flour, coroune of vertues alle  
Sheweth un-to your rial' excellence  
Your servaunt, if I dursté me so calle,  
His mortal harm in which he is y-fall  
And noght al only for his evel fare,  
But for your renoun, as he shal declar

Hit stondeh thus, your contr  
Crueltee  
Allied is ageynst your regalye,  
Under colour of womanly Beautee,—  
For men ne shulde not knowe  
tyrannye,—  
With Bountee, Gentilese, and Curte  
And hath depryvd yow now of your pi  
That highte 'Beautee appartenant  
Grace.'

47. All omit and after Estant; Ten Brink  
piles it.

67. All omit so, which Ten Brink supplies

For kyndly, by your heritagé right,  
Ye been annexed ever unto Bountee,  
And verrayly ye oughté do your myght  
To helpé Trouthe in his adversitee.  
Ye been also the coroune of Beautee,  
And certes, if ye wanten in thise tweyne  
Theworldislore; thernisnomoretoseyne.

Eek what availleth Maner and Gentillesse  
Withouté you, benygne creature !  
Shal Cruelte be your governeresse ? 80  
Allas ! what herte may hit long endure ?  
Wherfor but ye the rather také cure  
To breké that perilous alliaunce,  
Ye aleen hem that ben in your obeisaunce.

And further over, if ye suffre this,  
Your renoun is fordo than in a throwe ;  
Ther shal no man wite wel what Pite is.  
Allas ! that your renoun shoulde be solowe ;  
Ye be than fro your heritage y-throwe  
By Cruelte, that occupieth your place, 90  
And we despeired that seken to your grace.

Have mercy on me, thou serenous quene,  
That you have sought so tenderly and yore,  
Let som stream of your light on me be sene,  
That love and drede yow ever lenger the  
more ;

For, sothly for to seyne, I bere the sore,  
And though I benot cunnyng for to pleyne,  
For Goddés love, have mercy on my payne !

My payne is this, that what-so I desire, 99  
That have I not, ne no thing lyk therto ;  
And ever set Desire myn herte on fire,  
Eek on that other syde where-so I go.  
What maner thinge that may encrese my wo  
That have I redy, unsoght, everywhere,  
Me ne lakketh but my deth, and than my  
bere.

What nedeth to shewé parcel of my  
payne,  
Sith every wo that herte may be-thynke,  
I suffre ? And yet I dar not to you pleyne,  
For wel I woot, although I wake or wynke,  
Ye rekké not whether I flete or synke 120

99. anonymous. Mr. Liddell's emendation for  
herithal, herrenas, and vertuousse, of the MSS.  
109. All omit so.

But nathéles, my trouthe I shal sustene  
Unto my deth, and that shal wel be sene.

This is to seyne, I wol be yourés ever ;  
Though ye me slee by Cruelte your so,  
Algate my spirit shal never dissever  
Fro your servyse, for any payne or wo !  
Sith ye be deed,—allas ! that hit is so !—  
Thus for your deth I may wel wepe and  
pleyne

With herte sore, and ful of besy payne !

*Here endeth the exclamation of the Deth  
of Pyte.*

## CHAUCER'S A B C

*Incipit carmen secundum ordinem  
Litterarum alphabeti.*

Al myghty and al mercyable Queene,  
To whom that al this world fleeth for socour  
To have relees of sinne, of sorwe, and teene !  
Glorious Virgine, of allé flourés flour,  
To thee I flee confounded in errour.  
Help, and relleve, thou miht debonayre,  
Have mercy on my perilous langour !  
Venquished me hath my cruel adversaire.

Bountee so fix hath in thyn herte his  
tente,

That wel I wot, thou wolt my socour be ;  
Thou canst not warne him that with good  
entente 11

Axeth thyn helpe, thyn herte is ay so free !  
Thou art largesse of pleyn felicitee,  
Haven of refute, of quiete, and of reste.  
Lo ! how that theeves seven chasen mee !  
Help ! Lady bryght, er that my ship to-  
breste !

Comfort is noon, but in you, Lady deere !  
For loo, my sinne and my confusioun,  
Which oughten not in thy presence appeere,  
Han take on me a grevous accioun 10  
Of verrey right and desperacioun !  
And as bi right they mighten wel sustene  
That I were worthy my dampnacioun,  
Nere merci of you, blisful havené Queene !

Doute is ther noon, Queen of miseri-  
corde,

That thou nart cause of grace and merci  
here ;

God vouchéd-sauf thurgh thee with us to  
accorde.

For certés, Crystés blisful mooder dere,  
Were now the bowé bent in swich manere  
As it was first, of justice and of ire, 30  
The rightful God nolde of no mercy here;  
But thurgh thee han we grace as we desire.

Everhath myn hope of refut been in thee,  
For heer-biforn ful ofte in many a wyse  
Hast thou to misericorde resceyved me;  
But merci, Lady at the grete assyse,  
Whan we shul come bfore the hye justyse!  
So litel fruit shal thanne in me be founde  
That, but thou er that day me wel chastyse,  
Of verrey right my werk wol me confounde.

Fleeing, I flee for socour to thy tente 41  
Me for to hide from tempest ful of drede,  
Biseeching you that ye you not absente  
Though I bewikke; O helpyit at this neede!  
Al have I ben a beste in wille and deede,  
Yit, Lady, thou me clothé with thy grace.  
Thyn enemy and myn, Lady, tak heede,  
Un-to my deth in poynt is me to chace!

Glorious mayde and moder which that  
never 49

Were bitter, neither in erthé nor in see,  
But ful of swetnesse and of merci ever,  
Help that my Fader be not wroth with me!  
Spek thou, for I ne dar not him y-see,  
So have I doon in erthe, allas the while!  
That certés, but if thou my socour be  
To stynk eterne he wol my gost exile!

He vouchéd-sauf, tel him, as was his  
wille

Bicome, a man to have our alliaunce,  
And with his precious blood he wrot the  
bille

Up-on the crois as general acquitaunce  
To every penitent in ful creaunce. 61

And therfor, Lady bright, thou for us praye!  
Thanne shalt thou bothé stinte al his  
grevauunce,

And make our foo to failen of his praye.

I wot it wel thou wolt ben our socour,  
Thou art so ful of bountee in certeyn;  
For whan a soule falleth in errour  
Thi pitee goth and haleth him ageyn.

Thanne makest thou his pees with his  
sovereyn,

And bringest him out of the crooked strete.

Who-so thee loveth he shal not love in  
veyn :

That shal he fynde as he the lyf shal lete. 71

Kalenderés enlumpyed ben they  
That in this world ben lighted with thy  
name,

And who-so goth to yow the rihté wey,  
Him thar not drede in soule to be lame.

Now, Queen of comfort! sith thou art  
that same

To whom I sechê for my medicyne,  
Lat not my foo no more my wounde entame  
Myn lede in-to thyn hand al I resigne. 81

Lady, thi sorwé kan I not portreye  
Under the cros, ne his grevous penaunce  
But for your bothiés peynés I yow preye  
Lat not our alder foo make his bobaunce  
That he hath in his listés of mischaunce  
Convict that ye bothe have bought so derv  
As I seide erst, thou ground of or  
substaunce

Continue on us thy pitous eyen clere.

Moises that saugh the bush wit  
flaumés rede

Brenninge, of whiché never a stikké brend  
Wassigne of thyn unwemméd maidenhed:  
Thou art the bush on which ther go  
descende

The Holy Goost, the which that Moys  
wende

Had ben a-fyr; and this was in figure.  
Now, Lady, from the fyr thou us defend:  
Which that in helle eternally shal dure

Nobleprincesse that never haddest per  
Certés, if any comfort in us be  
That cometh of thee, thou Cristés mod  
deere,

We han noon other melodye of gleé  
Us to rejoyse in our adversitee,  
Ne advocat noon that wol and dar so pre  
For us, and that for litel hire as ye,  
That helpen for an Ave Marie or twey

O verrey light of eyen that ben blynd  
O verrey lust of labour and distresse!  
O tresorere of bountee to mankynde!  
Thee whom God ches to moder  
humblesse!

From his ancille he madé thee maistre  
Of hevене and erthe, our bille up  
to beda.

This world awaiteth ever on thy goodnesse,  
For thou ne failest never wight at nede.

Purpos I have sum tymé for to enquire  
Wherfore and why the Holy Gost the  
soughte,  
Whan Gabriellés vois cam to thyn ere;  
He not to werre us swich a wunder  
wroughte,

But for to save us that he sithen boughte;  
Than needeth us no wepen us for to save,  
But onely ther we did not as us oughte,—  
Do penitence, and merci nxe and have. 120

Queen of comfort! yit whan I me bi-  
thinke

That I agilt have bothé him and thee,  
And that my soule is wurthi for to sinke,  
Allas! I caitif, whider may I flee?  
Who shal un-to thi Sone my mené bee?  
Who, but thy-self, that art of pitee welle?  
Thou hast more reuthe on our adversitee  
Than in this world mighte any tungé telle.

Redressé me, moder, and me chastise,  
For certeynly my Fadres chastisyng 130  
That dar I nought abiden in no wise,  
So hidous is hys rightful rekenyng.  
Moder, of whom our merci gan to spryng,  
Beth ye my juge and eek my soulés leche,  
For ever in you is pitee haboundyng  
To eche that wol of pitee you biseche.

Both is that God ne granteth no pitee  
With-outé thee; for God, of his goodnesse,  
Foryiveth noon, but it like un-to thee;  
He hath thee makéd vicaire and  
maistresse 140

Of al the world, and eek governeresse  
Of hevене, and he represseth his justise  
After thy wille, and therfore in witnesse,  
He hath thee crownéd in so ryal wise.

Temple devout, ther God hath his  
wonyng  
Pro which these misbileved deprived  
been,

To you my soulé penitent I bryng.  
Receyv me,—I can no ferther flee.  
With thornés venymous, O hevéné Queen!  
For which the erthe acurséd was ful yore.  
I am so wounded as ye may wel seen 151  
That I am lost almost, it smert so sore.

Virgine, that art so noble of appaile,  
And ledest us in-to the hye tour

Of paradys, thou me wisse and counsaile  
How I may have thy grace and thy socour,  
Al have I ben in filthe and in errour.

Lady, un-to that court thou me ajourne  
That clepéd is thy bench, O freshe flour  
Ther as that merci evere shal sojourne. 160

Xristus, thi sone, that in this world  
alighte

Up-on the cros to suffre his passoun,  
Eek suffred that Longiús his herté prihte,  
And made his herté blood to renne adoun,  
And al was this for my salvacioun,  
And I to hym am fals and eek unkynde,  
And yit he wol not my dampnacioun;  
This thanke I you, socour of al mankynde!

Ysaac was figure of his deth certeyn,  
That so fer forth his fader wolde obeye, 170  
That him ne rouhté no thing to be slayn;  
Right soo thy Sone lust as a lamb to deye.  
Now, Lady ful of mercy! I you preye,  
Sithe he his mercy mesured so large,  
Be ye not skant, for alle we singe and seye  
That ye ben from vengeauncé ayoure targe.

Zacharie you clepeth the opené welle,  
To wasshé sinful soule out of his gilt;  
Therfore this lessoun ought I wel to telle,  
That nere thy tender herte we weren spilt.  
Now, Lady brihté, with thou canst and wilt,  
Ben to the seed of Adam merciabie,  
So bring us to that palais that is bilt  
To penitents that ben to mercy able.

Amen.

Explicit carmen.

## THE COMPLEYNTE OF MARS

### The Proem

'GLADETH, ye foulés, of the morwé  
gray!

Lo, Venus, risen among you rowés rede!  
And flourés fresshe, honoureth yé this day;  
For when the sonne uprist, then wol ye  
sprede.

163. All read *And* at the beginning of this line, destroying the syntax of the stanza. It is clearly caught from the lines below. All read *phis* for *pright*, which is Skeat's suggestion; *phis* does not mean 'pierced'.

a. *Venus*, the planet which sometimes rises in the morning.



But ye lovers, that lye in any drede,  
Fleeth, lest wikked tonges yow espye !  
Lo yond the sonne, the candel of jelosye !

' Wyth terés blewe, and with a  
wounded herte,  
Taketh your leve ; and with Seynt John  
to borwe, 9  
Apeseth somwhat of your sorwés smerte,  
Tyme cometh eft that cesé shal your  
sorwe ;  
The gládé nyght is worth an hevye morwe !'  
(Seynt Valentyne ! a foul thus herde Isyngé  
Upon thy day, er sonnè gan up-sprynge.)

Yet sang this foul, ' I rede yow alle a-  
wake,  
And ye that han not chosen in humblé wyse,  
With-out repentyng cheseth yow your  
make ;  
And ye that han ful chosen as I devyse,  
Yet at the leste renoveleth your serveyse ;  
Confermeth hit perpetuely to dure, 20  
And paciently taketh your aventure.'

And for the worship of this highé feste,  
Yet wol I, in my briddés wisé, syngé  
The sentence of the compleynt at the leste  
That woful Mars made atté departyngé  
Fro freshé Venus, in a morwenyngé  
Whan Phebus, with his fry torchés rede,  
Ransakéd every lover in his drede.

Whilom the thriddé hevenés lord above,  
As wel by hevenysh revolucioun 30  
As by desert, bath wonne Venus, his love,  
And she hath take him in subjeccioun,  
And as a maistresse taught him his lessoun,  
Commaundyng him that never, in her  
serveyse,  
He nere so bold no lover to despyse.

For she forbad him jelosye at alle,  
And cruéltee, and bost, and tyrannye ;  
She made hym at hir lust so humble and  
talle,  
That when hir deyned caste on hym her ye,  
He took in pacience to lyve or dye ; 40

9. *Seynt John*, the apostle of truth.  
31. All read *his* except Harl., which omits  
the word.

And thus she brydeleth him in hir maner  
With no-thing but with scourgyng of l  
chere.

Who regneth now in blissé but Vené  
That hath this worthy knyght in gover-  
aunce ?  
Who syngeth now but Mars, that serve  
thus  
The fairé Venus, causer of plesaunce ?  
He bynt him to perpetual obeisaunce,  
And she bynt hir to loven him for eve:  
But so be that his trespas hit dissever.

Thus be they knyght, and regnen as  
heven  
Be loking most ; til hit fil on a tyde  
That by her bothe assent was set a ste-  
That Mars shal entre, as fast as he r  
glyde,  
Into hir nexté paleys, and abyde,  
Walkyng his cours til she hadde him a-ta-  
And he preyde hir to haste hir for his sa

Then seyde he thus, ' Myn hertés l  
swete  
Ye knowé wel my myschef in that plai  
For sikerly, til that I with yow mete,  
My lyf stant ther in aventure and grace  
But when I se the beautee of your far  
Ther nis no dreed of deth may do mesme  
For al your lust is esé to myn herte.'

She hath sogret compassion of hir kny  
That dwelleth in solitudé til she come  
For hit stood so, that ilké tyme, no w  
Counseyléd hym, ne seyde to him  
come,—  
That nygh her wit for sorwe was overco  
Wherefore she spedde hir as faste in her  
Almost in oon day as he dide in twey

The greté joye that was betwix hem  
When they bemet, ther may no tungé t  
Ther is no more, but unto bed they  
And thus in joye and blisse I let hem dw  
This worthi Mars, that is of knygh  
welle,

62. *siz.* All read *is*.

70. The orbit of Venus is smaller than  
Mars, so her apparent motion is twice as g

The flour of fairnes lappeth in his armés,  
And Venus kisseth Mars, the god of armés.

Sojourned hath this Mars of which I rede  
In chambre amyd the paleys, prively,  
A certeyn tymé, til him fel adrede, 80  
Through Phebus, that was comen hastely  
Within the paleys gatés, sturdely,  
With torche in honde, of which the  
stremés bryghte  
On Venus chambre knockeden ful lighte.

The chambre ther as lay this fresshé  
quene  
Depeynted was with whité bolés grete,  
And by the light she knew, that shoon  
so shene,  
That Phebus cam to brenne hem with his  
hete;  
This sely Venus, nygh dreynt in terés wete,  
Enbraceth Mars, and seyde, 'Alas, I dye!  
The torch is come that al this world wol  
wrie.' 91

Up sterté Mars, hym listé not to slepe,  
When he his lady herdé so compleyne,  
But for his nature was not for to wepe,  
Instede of terés, from his eyen tweyne  
The firy sparkés brosten out for payne;  
And hente his hauberk, that lay hym besyde.  
Flee wolde he not, né myghte him-selven  
hyde.

Hethroweth on his helm of hugé wyghte,  
And girt him with his swerde; and in  
his honde 100  
His myghty spere, as he was wont to fighte  
He shaketh so that almost hit to-wonde.  
Ful hevy was he to walken over londe,  
He may not holde with Venus companye,  
But had her fleeen, lest Phebus hir espye.

O woful Mars! alas! what mayst thou  
seyn,  
That in the paleys of thy disturbaunce  
Art left behynde in peril to be sleyn?  
And yet ther-to is double thy penaunce,  
For she that hath thyn herte in govern-  
aunce 110

88. *white helme*, the sign of Taurus, in which  
both Mars and Venus now are.

Is passéd halfe the streamés of thyn yē;  
That thou nere swift wel mayst thou wepe  
and crien.

Now fleeth Venus un-to Cylenius tour,  
With voidé cours, for fere of Phebus light,  
Alas! and ther ne hath she no socour,  
For she ne fond ne saugh no maner wyght;  
And eek as ther she had but litil myght;  
Wher-for her-selven for to hyde and save,  
Within the gate she fledde in-to a cave.

Derk was this cave, and smokyng as  
the helle, 120  
Not but two pas within the gate hit stood;  
A naturel day in derk I lete her dwelle.  
Now wol I speke of Mars, furious and wood.  
For sorwe he wolde have seen his herté  
blood;  
Sith that he myghte don her no companye,  
He ne roghté not a mytē for to dye.

So feble he wex for hete and for his wo  
That nygh he swelt, he myghte unnethe  
endure,

He passeth but oo steyre in dayés two,  
But nathéles for al his hevy armure,  
He foloweth hir that is his lyvés cure; 131  
For whos departyng he toke gretter ire  
Thanné for al his brennyng in the fire.

After he walketh softely a pas,  
Compleynnyng, that it pite was to here;  
He seyde, 'O lady bryght, Venus! alas!  
That ever so wyde a compas ys my spere!  
Alas! when shal I mete yow, herté dere?  
This twelfté day of April I endure,  
Through jelous Phebus, this mysaventure.'

Now God helpésely Venus, ala-lone! 141  
But, as God wolde, hit happed for to be  
That while that Venus weping made her  
mone

112. *Cylenius*, Mercury, born on Mt. Cyllenus in Arcadia. The Tower of Cyllenus, i.e. mansion of Mercury, is the sign Gemini into which Venus now passes.

119. *cave*, according to Skeat a translation of the technical Latin astrological term *puteus*. The *putei* in Gemini are the degrees numbered 2, 12, 17, 26, 30. So Venus was now in the second degree of the sign.

129. On 12th April the sun entered Taurus.

Cylenius, ridyng in his chevauche  
 Fro Venus valance, myghte his paleys se,  
 And Venus he salueth, and maketh chere,  
 And her receyvethe as his frend ful dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his adversité,  
 Compleynyng ever in on hir departyng,  
 And what his compleynt was, remem-  
 breth me, 150  
 And therfor in this lusty morwenyng,  
 As I best can, I wol it seyn and synge,  
 And after that I wol my levé take;  
 And God yeve every wyght joye of his  
 make!

### THE COMPLEYNTE OF MARS

#### *The Proem*

The ordre of compleynt requireth skil-  
 fully,

That if a wyght shal pleyné pitously  
 Ther mot be causé wherfor that men pleyne;  
 Or men may deme he pleyneth folily,  
 And causéles; alas, that am not I!  
 Wherfor the ground and cause of al my  
 peyne, 160

So as my troubléd wit may hit ateyne,  
 I wol reherse; not for to have redresse,  
 But to declare my ground of hevynesse.

#### I

The first tyme, alas! that I was wrought,  
 And for certeyn effectes hider brought,  
 By him that lordeth ech intelligence,  
 I yaf my trewe servise and my thought,  
 For ever-more,—how dere I have it  
 bought!

To hir, that is of so gret excellence.  
 That what wyght that first sheweth his  
 presence 170

When she is wroth and taketh of hym no  
 cure,

He may not longe in joye of love endure.

145. *valance*, according to Skeat, is either the Fr. *vaillance*, *vaillance*, failure, and an exact translation of the Latin astrological term *detrimens*, or it is *avalance*, a translation of the Latin *occasus*, an alternative expression for the same thing. The *detrimens* is the sign of the Zodiac opposite the planet's mansion, and is here equivalent to Aries.

This is no feynéd mater that I telle;  
 My lady is the verrey sours and welles  
 Of beaute, lust, fredom, and gentillesse  
 Of riche aray,—how deré men it selle!  
 Of al disport in which men friendly dwelle  
 Of love and pley, and of benigne humblesse  
 Of sounne of instruments of al swetnesse  
 And therto so wel fortunéd and thewéd  
 That through the world hir goodnesse  
 y-shewed.

What wonder is then, thogh that I beset  
 My servise on suche oon that may me knett  
 To wele or wo, sith hit lyth in her myght  
 Therfor my herte for ever I to her hett  
 Ne trewly for my dethe I shal not lette  
 To ben her trewest servaunt, and her  
 knyght.

I flater noght, that may wite every wygh  
 For this day in hir servise shal I dye;  
 But gracé be, I se hir never with fye.

#### II

To whom shal I then pleyne of my  
 distresse?

Who may me help? Who may my har-  
 redresse?

Shal I compleyne unto my lady fre?  
 Nay, certes! for she hath such hevynesse  
 For fere, and eek for wo, that, as I geas  
 In litil tyme it wol her bané be.  
 But were she sauf, it were no for of me  
 Alas! that ever lovers mote endure,  
 For love, so many a perilous aventure!

For thogh so be that lovers be as trewe  
 As any metal that is forged newe,  
 In many a cas hem tydeth oft sorwe.  
 Somtyme hir ladies will not on hem rew  
 Somtyme if that Ielosie hit knewe,  
 They myghten lightly leve hir heed  
 borwe;  
 Somtyme envyous folke with tunges horn  
 Depraven hem; alas! Whom may the  
 plese?

But he be fals, no lover hath his ease!

But what availleth suche a long sermoun  
 Of aventures of love up and down?

I wol returne and speken of my peyne ;  
 The poynt is this of my destruccioun,—  
 My righte lady, my salvacyoun,  
 Is in affray, and not to whom to pleyne.  
 O herté swete ! O lady sovereyne !  
 For your disese wel oghte I swoune and  
 swelte,  
 Thogh I non other harm ne dredé felte.

## III

To what fyn made the God that sit so hye,  
 Be-nethen him love other companye,  
 And streyneth folk to love malgré hir hede,  
 And then hir joye, for oght I can espye, <sup>221</sup>  
 Ne lasteth not the twynkelyng of an ye ;  
 And somme han never joye til they be dede.  
 What meneth this? what is this mystihede?  
 Wherto constreyneth he his folk so faste  
 Thyng to desyré, but it sholdé laste?

And thogh he made a lover love a thyng,  
 And maketh it semé stedfast and duryng,  
 Yet putteth he in it such mysaventure  
 That resté nis ther noon in his yevyng ; <sup>230</sup>  
 And that is wonder that so just a kyng  
 Doth such hardnesse to his creature.  
 Thus, whether lové breke, or ellés dure,  
 Algate he that hath with love to done  
 Hath offer wo then changéd is the mone.

Hit semeth he hath to lovers enmyte,  
 And lyk a fassher, as men alday may se,  
 Baiteth his angle-hook with som plesaunce,  
 Til mon ya fish is wood, til that he be <sup>239</sup>  
 Seseé ther-with ; and then at erst hath he  
 Al his desire, and ther-withal myschaunce ;  
 And thogh the lyné breke, he hath pen-  
 aunce,  
 For with the hook he wounded is so sore  
 That he his wages hath for ever-more.

## IV

The broche of Thebés was of such a  
 kynde ;

<sup>245</sup> The broche of Thebes or magic bracelet (cf. *Statius*, *Flk. ii.*) was made by *Harmonia*, a daughter of *Mars* and *Venus*, in order to bring an evil fate on her and the lovers of it.

So ful of rubies, and of stonés Inde,  
 That every wyght that sette on hit an ye,  
 He wende anon to worthe out of his  
 mynde,—

So sore the beauté wold his herté bynde,—  
 Til he hit hadde him thoghte he mosté dye,  
 And whan that hit was his, then sholdé  
 he drye <sup>251</sup>  
 Such wo for drede, ay while that he hit  
 hadde,  
 That welnygh for the fere he sholdé madde.

And whan hit was fro his possessioun  
 Then hadde he double wo and passioun,  
 For he so fair a tresor had forgo ;  
 But yet this broche, as in conclusioun,  
 Was not the cause of this confusioun ;  
 But he that wroghte hit enfortuned hit so  
 That every wyght that hadde hit sholdé  
 have wo ; <sup>260</sup>  
 And therfor in the worcher was the vyce,  
 And in the covetour that was so nyce.

So fareth hit by lovers and by me ;  
 For thogh my lady have so gret beauté  
 That I was mad til I had gete hir grace,  
 She was not cause of myn adversité,  
 But he that wroghte hir, also mot I thee,  
 That putté such a beaute in hir face,  
 That madé me coveten and purchase <sup>269</sup>  
 Myn owné deth ; him wyte I that I dye,  
 And myn unwit that ever I clomb so hye.

## V

But to yow, hardy knyghtés of renoun,  
 Syn that ye be of my divisoun,—  
 Al be I not worth to so grete a name,  
 Yet seyn these clerkes I am your patroun,—  
 Ther-for ye oghte have som compassioun  
 Of my disese, and take hit nought a gane,  
 The proudest of yow may be mad ful tame.  
 Wherfor I prey yow of your gentillesse,  
 That ye compleyné for myn hevynesse. <sup>280</sup>

And ye, my ladies, that ben trewe and  
 stable,  
 By way of kynde, ye oghten to been able  
 To have pité of folk that been in peyne ;

<sup>246</sup> *Inde* is an adjective ; cf. *Romance of the Rose*, l. 67.

Now have ye cause to clothé yow in sable;  
 Sith that your empericé, the honorable,  
 Is desolat, wel oghté ye to pleyne;  
 Nowsholde your holyterés falle and reyne.  
 Alas! your honour and your emperice,  
 Nighdeed fordrede, necan hir not chevisé!

Compleyneth eek, ye lovers, al in-fere,  
 For hir that with unfeynéd humblé chere  
 Was ever redy to do yow socour;  
 Compleyneth hir that ever hath had yow  
 dere;

Compleyneth beaute, fredom, and manere;  
 Compleyneth hir that endeth your labour;  
 Compleyneth thilkeensample of al honour,  
 That never didé but al gentillesse;  
 Kytheth therfor on hir som kyndénesse!

### A COMPLEYNTE TO HIS LADY

#### I

THE longé nightes, whan every creature  
 Shulde have hir rest in somewhat, as by  
 kynde,  
 Or elles ne may hir lif nat long endure,  
 Hit falleth most into my woful mynde  
 How I so fer have broght myself behynde,  
 That, sauf the deeth, ther may no-thing  
 me lisse,  
 So desespaié I am from allé blisse.

Thissamé thoght me lasteth til the morwe  
 And from the morwé forth til hit be eve;  
 Ther nedeth me no caré for to borwe,  
 Forbothe I have good leyser and good leve;  
 Ther is no wyght that wol me bereve  
 To wepe y-nogh, and wailen al my fille;  
 The soréspark of peynenow doth mespille.

#### II

This Love, that hath me set in swich  
 a place  
 That my desir wol never he fulfille,  
 For neither pitee, mercy, neither grace,

1. 3. Shirley, *they're* for *hir*.

13-15. This passage is in *forma rimata*, the first  
 example of the measure in English literature.

16. Shirley omits *he*.

Can I nat fynde; and yit my sorwfu  
 herte,  
 For to be deed, I can hit nought arage;  
 The more I love, the more she doth m  
 smerte.  
 Through which I see, withouté remedy  
 That from the deeth I may no wys  
 asterite;

#### III

Nowsothly, whatshehight I wol reherse  
 Hir pame is Bountee, set in womanhede  
 Sadnesse in youthe and Beaute  
 prydelees.

And Plesaunce, under governaunce  
 and drede;

Her surname is eek Fairé Rewthélees,  
 The Wyse, y-knit un-to Good Aventure  
 That, for I love hir, she sleeth m  
 gyltélees.

Ifir love I best, and shal, whyl I may dure  
 Bet than my-self an hundred thousand  
 deel,

Than al this worldes richesse or créature  
 Now hath not Lové me bestowéd weel  
 To lové ther I never shal have part?

Allas! right thus is turned me the wheel  
 Thus am I slayn with Lovés fryr dart.  
 I can but love hir best, my sweté fo;  
 Love hath me taught no more of his ar  
 But serve alwy, and stinté for no wo.

#### IV

In my trewe and careful herte ther is  
 So moché wo, and [eek] so litel blis  
 That wo is me that ever I was bore;

23. It is possible that another line to rim  
 with l. 22 is missing here.

24. Skeat thinks two lines have fallen out before  
 this, forming the opening to this section, but it is  
 more probable that l. 24, which is not necessary to  
 the sense, has been inserted. Shirley or his author  
 ity has tried to reduce this passage of *forma rimata*  
 to a series of eight-line stanzas. He divides at  
 23, 24, 35, and l. 41; the last stanza, being hard to  
 amend, had to remain with nine lines.

39. This line seems to be a syllable short.  
 42. So Shirley, who first wrote *In my trewe*  
*Arre*, etc., and then corrected *Arre* into *Arre*. The  
 line is probably corrupt. Ed. 1567 omits *and*.

44. Shirley omits *sch*, which Skeat supplies.

For al that thyng which I desyre I mys,  
 And al that ever I woldé not, y-wys,  
 That finde I redy to me evermore;  
 And of al this I not to whom me pleyne.  
 Forsheth that mighté me out of this brynge  
 Ne reccehth nought whether I wepe  
 or synge; 49  
 So litel rewthe hath she upon my peyne.

Allas! whan slepyng-tyme is, than I wake,  
 Whan I shulde daunce, for feré than I  
 quake;  
 This hevy lif I ledé for your sake  
 Thogh ye ther-of in no wyse hedé take,  
 My hertés lady, and hool my lyvés quene!  
 For trewly dorste I seye, as that I fele,  
 Me semeth that your sweté herte of stele  
 Is whettéd now ageynés me to kene.

My deré herte and best beloved fo,  
 Why liketh yow to do me al this wo, 60  
 What have I doon that greveth yow, or  
 sayd,  
 But for I serve and love yow and no mo?  
 And whilst I lyve I wol ever do so;  
 And therfor, swéte, ne beth nat yvel  
 apayd.  
 For so good and so fair as ye be  
 Hit weré right gret wonder but ye hadde  
 Of allé servantes, bothe of goode and  
 badde;  
 And leest worthy of alle hem, I am he.

But never-the-les, my righté lady swete,  
 Thogh that I be unconnyng and unmete  
 To serve, as I coude best, ay your  
 hynesse. 71  
 Yit is ther fayner noon, that wolde I hete,  
 Than I, to do yow ese; or ellés bete  
 What so I wiste that were to your  
 [distresse];

And hadde I myght as good as I have wille  
 Than shulde ye fele wher it were so  
 or noon;  
 For in this worldé lyvyng is ther noon  
 That fayner wolde your hertés wil fulfille.

For bothe I love and cek drede yow so sore,  
 And algates moot, and have doon yow,  
 ful yore, 80  
 That betré loved is noon, ne never shal;  
 And yit I wolde beseche yow of no more,  
 But leveth wel, and be not wrooth ther-fore,  
 And lat me serve yow forth; lo, this is al!  
 For I am not so hardy, ne so wood,  
 For to desire that ye shulde lové me;  
 For wel I wot, alas! that may nat be;  
 I am so litel worthy, and ye so good.

For ye be oon the worthiest on-lyve  
 And I the most unlikely for to thryve; 90  
 Yit for al this witeth ye right wele  
 That ye ne shal me from your servyce dryve  
 That I nil ay, with alle my wyttés fyve,  
 Serve yow trewly, what wosó that I fele.  
 For I am set on yow in swich manere,  
 That, thogh ye never wil upon me rewe,  
 I moste yow love, and beén everas trewe  
 As any man can, or may, on-lyvé [here].

But the moré that I love yow, goodly free,  
 The lassé fynde I that ye loven me; 100  
 Allas! whan shal that hardé wyt amende?  
 Wher is now al your wommanly pitee,  
 Your gentillesse and your debonairstee  
 Wil ye no-thing ther-of upon me spende?  
 And so hool, swete, as I am yourés al,  
 And so gret wil as I have yow to serve,  
 Now, certes, and ye leté me thus sterve,  
 Yit have ye wonné ther on but a smal.

For at my knowyng, I do nought why?  
 And this I wol beseche yow hertély, 110  
 not in the original text and *wiste* was pronounced  
 as a dissyllable.

91. Skent inserts *now* before *witeth*, but the  
 whole poem is experimental, and possibly this line  
 is as Chaucer wrote it. Cp. ll. 99, 109, and 116.  
 In all a heavy stress on the first syllable lends  
 dramatic value to the line.

93. Shirley, *ne wil*.

98. *here* supplied by Skent.

99. Shirley, *But the more*, etc. Skent omits  
*But*.

44-46. Cp. *Parl. Foules*, ll. 90, 91, and *Compl.*  
*File*, ll. 90-104.

47. Cp. *Anelida*, l. 237.

51. Shirley inserts *to* before *than*.

52. This stanza is different in form from those  
 that precede and follow it.

53. Shirley inserts *to* after *ledé*.

63. *For* seems here to be dissyllabic as in A.S.

74. Shirley, *now fayner*.

74. Shirley, *if yours hynesse*, caught from l. 71.  
 Skent made *to* from *distress*. Perhaps that was

That, ther ever ye fynde, whil ye lyve,  
A trewer servant to yow than am I,  
Leveth thanne, and sleeth me hardely  
And I my deeth to yow wol al foryive.  
And if ye fynde no trewer verely  
Will ye suffre than that I thus spille,  
And for no maner gilt but my good wille?  
As good wer thanne untrewes as trewe to be.

But I, my lyf and deeth, to yow obeie,  
And with right buxom herte hooley I preie  
As is your moste plesure, so doth by me;  
Wel lever is me liken yow and dye 122  
Than for to anythyng or thynke or seie  
That myghte yow offende in any tyme.  
And ther-for, swete, rewe on my peyns  
smerte

And of your gracie granteth me som  
drope;

For ellis may me laste ne blis, ne hope,  
Ne dwellen in my trouble careful herte.

### THE COMPLEYNTE OF FAIRE ANELIDA AND FALSE ARCITE

THOU fersé God of armés, Mars the rede,  
That in the frosty contree calléd Trace,  
Within thy grisly temple ful of drede,  
Honoured art, as patrour of that place!  
With thy Bellona, Pallas, ful of grace!  
Be present, and my song contynue and gye.  
At my begynnynge thus to the I crye.

For hit ful depe is sonken in my mynde,  
With pitous herte, in Englysh for tendyte  
This oldé storie, in Latyn which I fynde, 10  
Of quene Anelyda and fals Arcite,  
That elde, which that al can frete and  
bite,—

122. Shirley, *whyles*.

123. Shirley, *no trawer so verragly*. Ed. 1361  
*no trawer verely*, a false rime.

127-128. This stanza is only found in the Philippe  
MS., and I take the text from Skeat. I am doubt-  
ful of its authenticity.

129-130. These first ten stanzas are based on the  
Parnaso, I. and II.

131. *Mars the rede*, 'O Marte rubicundo,' *Tes.*

132. *Trace*, Thracia.

As hit hath fretén mony a noble storie,—  
Hath nygh devoured out of our mémorie.

Be favorable eek, thou Polymnyá,  
On Párnaso that with thy sustrés glade,  
By Elicon, not fer from Cirréa,  
Syngeest with vois memorial in the shade,  
Under the laurer, which that may not fade,  
And do that I my shippe to haven wyne.  
First folwe I Stace, and after him Corynne.

### [The Story]

When Theséus, with werrés longe and  
grete, 22  
The aspré folk of Cithé hadde overcome,  
With laurer crouné, in his char, gold bete,  
Home to his contré houses is y-come;  
For which the peple, blisful al and somme,  
So crydén, that un-to the sterres hit wente,  
And him to honouren dide al hir entente.

Beforn this duke, in signe of hy victorie,  
The trompés come, and in his baner large,  
The ymáge of Mars; and in tokenyng of  
glorie, 31  
Men myghté seen of trésor mony a charge,  
Mony a bright helm, and mony a spere  
and targe,  
Mony a fresh knyght, and mony a blis-  
ful route,  
On hors, and fote, in al the felde aboute.

Ipolita, his wyf, the hardy quene  
Of Cithia, that he conquéréd hadde,  
With Emelye her yongé suster shene,

15. *Polymnaya*, Πολυμνία, one of the nine  
Muses.

16. *Parnaso*, Mount Parnassus.

17. *Elicon*, Mount Helicon in Boeotia, but  
Chaucer seems to have confused it with the  
Castalian spring. Cp. *H. of F.* I. 322, and  
*Troil.* III. 1200.

18. *Cirra*, Cirra, an ancient town near Delphi  
at the foot of Parnassus.

19. *Stace*, Statius, whose *Thebaid* is the source  
of some of the following stanzas.

20. *Corynne*, Corinna, who is said to have  
written an account of the Trojan war in Dask  
Greek.

21. *Cithé*, Scythia.

22. Cp. *Rn.* 7. 109, 121.

23. Cp. *Ibid.* 117, 118.

24. Cp. *Ibid.* 23, 24.

25. Cp. *Ibid.* 114.

Faire in a char of golde he with hym ladde,  
That al the ground aboute her char she  
spradde

With brightnesse of the beautee in her face,  
Fulfilled of largesse and of al grace.

With his tryumph, and laurer-crouned  
thus,

In al the floure of fortunés yevynge,  
Letz I this noble prince, this Theseus,  
Toward Athenés in his way ridynge,  
And founde I wol in shortly for to brynge  
The alye way of that I gan to write,  
Of queene Anélida and fals Arcite.

Mars, which that through his furious  
course of yre,

The oldé wrath of Juno to fulfille,  
Hath set the peples hertés bothe on fire  
Of Thebes and Grece, eche other for to kille  
With bloody speres, ne restéd, never stille,  
But throng now her, now ther, among hem  
bothe,

That everych other slough, so were they  
wrothe.

For when Amphiorax and Tydëus,  
Ipomedon, Parthonopec also  
Were dede, and slawen proud Campanëus,  
And when the wrecchéd Thebans bretheren  
two

Were slayn, and kyng Adrastus home a-go,  
So desolat stood Thebés and so bare,  
That no wyght coude remédie of his fare.

And when that oldé Creon gan espye  
How that the blood roial was broght adoun,  
He held the cite by his tyrannye,  
And didde the gentils of that regioun  
To ben his frendes, and wonnén in the toun.

50-70. Cp. *Tesside*, ll. st. 10-12.

57. *Amphiorax*, Amphiarus, swallowed up by the earth at the siege of Thebes.

58. *Tydëus*, married a daughter of Adrastus.

59. *Ipomedon*, Hippomedon, one of the *Septem contra Thebas*, as also was *Parthonopec* (*Parthenopæus*), and *Campanëus* (*Capaneus*) who was struck with lightning by Jupiter.

60. *Cx. slayn and proud; rest slayn proud.*

61. *L. Egeocles and Polynices, who caused the war.*

62. *Adrastus*, King of Argos, who assisted his son-in-law Polynices.

So, what for love of him, and what for awe,  
The noble folk wer to the toun y-drawe.

Among al these, Anélida the queene  
Of Ermony was in that toun duellynge,  
That fairer was then is the sonnè shene;  
Throughout the world so gan her namé  
sprynge,

That her to seen had every wyght likynge;  
For, as of trouthe, ther is noon her liche,  
Of al the women in this worldé riche.

Yong was this queene, of twenty yeer  
of elde,

Of mydel stature, and of swich fairnesse,  
That Nature had a joye hir to behelde;  
And for to spoken of her stidfastnesse,  
She passed hath Penelope and Lucesse,  
And shortly, yf she shal be comprehended,  
In her ne myghté nothing been amended.

This Theban knyght [Arcite] eek, soth  
to seyn,

Was yonge, and ther-withal a lusty knyght,  
But he was double in love, and nothyng  
pleyn,

And subtil in that crafte over any wyght,  
And with his cunnyng wan this lady bright:  
For so forforth he can hir trouthe assure, so  
That she him trust over any creature.

What shulde I seyn? She lovede  
Arcité so

That when that he was absent any throwe,  
Anon hir thoughte hir herté brast a-two?  
For in hir sight to hir he bar him lowe,  
So that she wende have al his herte y-knowe;  
But he was fals, hit nas but feynéd chere,—  
As nedeth not to men such craft to lere!

But nathéles ful mychel besynesse

Hadde he, er that he myghte his lady wyne,  
And swor he woldé dyén for distresse,  
Or from his wyt, he seyde, he woldé twynne.

71. *Ermony*, Armenia.

72. So *L.*; the rest is *ther*; perhaps Chaucer wrote *his ther*.

73. *Lucesse*, Lucretia.

74. *Sheet inserts Arcite*.

75. *Sheet reads trust; B L. F H D Ca. trusted; Ha. Th. trusteth.*



Alas the while! for hit was routhe and synne,  
That she upon his sorwés woldé rewe,  
But nothyng thenketh the fals as doth the  
trewé.

Hir fredom fond Arcite in swich manere,  
That al was his that she hath, moche or lyte;  
Ne to no créature ne made she chere,  
Ferther than that it lykédé to Arcite;  
Ther was no lak with which he myghte  
hir wyte, 110  
She was so ferforth yeven him to plesé,  
That al that lykédé him it dide hir ese.

Ther nas to hir no maner lettre y-sent  
That touchéd love, from eny maner wyght,  
That she ne shewed hit him er hit was  
brent;  
Sopleyn she was, and dide hir fullé myght,  
That she nyl hiden nothyng from her  
knyght,  
Lest he of any untrouth hir upbreide; 119  
Withouté bode his hesté she obeyde.

And eek he made him jelous over here,  
That that that eny man hadde to hir seyde,  
Anoon he woldé preyén hir to swere  
What was that word, or make him evel  
apaid;  
Then wendé she out of her wyrt have brayde,  
But al this nas but sleight and flaterie;  
Withoutén love, he feynéd jelousye.

And al this took she so debonairly,  
That al his wyllé, hir thoghte hit skilful  
thyng;  
And ever the lenger she loved him tenderly,  
And dide him honour as he were a kyng. 120  
Hir herte was to him wedded with a ring;  
So ferforth upon trouthe is hir entente,  
That wher he goth, hir herté with him wente.

When she shal etc, on him is so hir  
thoght,  
That wel unnethé of meté took she kepe;  
And whan that she was to her resté brought,  
Ouhim she thoghte alwey til that she sleep;  
When he was absent, prevély she weep.  
Thus lyveth fair Anelida the quene, 129  
For fals Arcite, that dide her al this tene.

This fals Arcite, of his newfangelnesse,  
For she to him so lowly was and trewe,  
Took lessé deyntee for her stedfastnesse,  
And saw another lādý, proud and newe,  
And right anon he cladde him in hir  
hewe,—  
Wot I not whether in whitte, rede, or  
grene,—  
And falséd fair Anelida the quene.

But nathélesse, gret wonder was hit nōor  
Thogh he were fals, for hit is kynde of man,  
Sith Lamek was, that is so longe agoon, 124  
To been in love as fals as ever he can;  
He was the firsté fader that began  
To lovén two, and was in bigamyé.  
And he found tentés first, but if men lye.

This fals Arcite somewhat moste he feyne  
When he was fals, to covere his traitorye  
Right as an hors, that can both bite and  
pleyne;  
For he bar hir on honde of trecherye,  
And swoor he coude her doublenesse espye  
And al was falsnes that she to him menté  
Thus swoor this theef, and forth his way  
he wente. 126

Alas! what herté myghte endurén hit  
For routhe or wo, hir sorwé for to telle;  
Or what man hath the cunnyng or the wyrt  
Or what man myghte within the chambér  
duelle,  
If I to him rehersén shal the helle  
That suffreth fair Anelida the quene  
For fals Arcite, that dide her al this tene

She wepeth, wailéth, swouneth pitously  
To groundé deed she falleth as a stoon;  
Al crampissheth hir lymés crokedy; 127  
She speketh as hir wyrt were al agoon;  
Other colour then ashen hath she noon,  
Non other word she speketh moche or lyte  
But 'Mercy! cruel herté myn, Arcite!'

And thus endureth, til she was a  
mate

126. But not blue, the colour of constancy.

127. All read *speketh she*.

That she ne hath foot, on which she may  
sustene,  
But forth, languissching evere in this estate,  
Of which Arcite hath nother routhe ne  
tene;  
His herte is elléswher so newe and grene,  
That on hir wo ne deyneth him not to  
thinke, 181  
Him rekketh never wher she flete or synke.

His newé lady holdeth him so narwé  
Up by the bydel, at the stavés ende,  
That every word he dradde hit as an arwé;  
Hir daunger made him bothé bowe and  
bende,  
And as hir listé, made him turne or wende;  
For she ne graunted him in her lyvyng  
No gracé, why that he hath lust to synge;

But 'drof him forth, unnethé liste hir  
knowe 190  
That he was servaunt to her ladishippe;  
But lest that he wer proude, she helde  
him lowe.  
Thus serveth he, withoutén fee or shipe  
She sent him now to londé, now to shippe,  
And for she yaf him daunger al his fille,  
Therfor she hadde him at her owné wille.

Ensample of this, ye thrifty wymmen,  
alle,  
Take here of Anelida and fals Arcite,  
That for hir liste him 'deré herté' calle,  
And was so meke, therfor he loved hir lyte;  
The kynde of mannés herte is to delyte 201  
In thyng that straunge is, also God me  
save!  
For what he may not gete, that wolde he  
have

Now turne we to Anelida ageyn,  
That pyneth day be day in languisschyng:  
But when she saw that hir ne gat no geyn,  
Upon a day, ful sorwfully wepyng,  
She ciste hir for to make a compleynyng;  
And with her owné hond she gan hit wryte,  
And sente it to her Theban knyght Arcite.

189. A metaphor borrowed from a horse lightly  
harnessed to the pole of a cart.  
192. All read *este*.

[*The Complaynt of Faire Anelyda upon  
Fals Arcyte*]

(*Poem*)

So thirleth with the poynt of remem-  
brance, 211  
The swerd of sorwe, y-whet with fals  
plesaunce,  
Myn herté bare of blis, and blak of hewe,  
That turned is to quakyng al my daunce,  
My sureté in a-whaped countenaunce,  
Sith hit availleth not for to ben trewe:  
For who-so trewest is, hit shall hir rewe  
That serveth love, and doth hir observaunce  
Alwey to oon, and chaungeth for no  
newe.

(*Strophe*)

I wot my-self as wel as any wyght, 220  
For I loved oon with al my herte and myght,  
More then my-self an hundred thousand  
sithe,  
And calléde him my hertés lyf, my knyght,  
And was al his, as fer as hit was right;  
And when that he was glad, than was  
I blithe,  
And his disce was my deeth as swythe,  
And he ageyn his trouthe me haddé plight,  
For ever-more, his lady me to kythe.

Now is he fals, alas! and causéles,  
And of my wo he is so routhéles, 230  
That with a worde him list not onés deyne  
To bringe ageyn my sorwful herte in pees,  
For he is caught up in another lees;  
Right as him list, he laugheth at my  
payne,  
And I ne can myn herté not restreyne  
That I ne love him alwey nathéles,  
And of al this I noot to whom me pleyne.

And shal I pleyne (alas! the hardé  
stounde) 238  
Unto my foo, that yaf my herte a wounde,  
And yet desireth that myn harm be more?  
Nay, certés! ferther wol I never founde  
Non other help my sorés for to sounde;  
My desteny hath shapen hit ful yore,  
I wil non other medecyne ne lore,

229. F B H *Allas now hath she left me  
causéles.*

I wil benay ther I was onés bounde ;  
That I have seid, be seid for evermore.

Alas ! wher is become your gentilesce ?  
Your wordés ful of plessaunce and hum-  
blesse ?

Your observaunces in soo low manere ?  
And yourawayting, and your besynesse, 250  
Upon me, that ye calléde your maistresse,  
Your sovereyn lady in this world here ?  
Alas ! and is ther now nother word ne  
chere,

Ye vouchésauf upon myn hevynesse ?  
Alas ! your love, I bye hit al to dere !

Now certés, sweté, thogh that ye  
Thus causéles the cause be,  
Of my dedly adversité,  
Your manly resoun oghte it to respyte,  
To slee your frend, and namely me, 260  
That never yet in no degré  
Offended yow, as wisly he,  
That al wot, out of wo my soule quyte.

But for I was so pleyn, Arcite,  
In alle my werkés, muche and lite,  
And so besy yow to delyte,—  
Myn honour save,—meke, kynde, and fre,  
Therfor ye putte on me this wyte :  
And of me recché not a myte,  
Thogh that the swerde of sorwé byte 270  
My woful herté, through your cruelté.

My sweté foo, why do ye so, for shame ?  
And thanké ye that furtheréd be your  
name,

To lovea-newe, and ben untrewé ? Nay !  
And putté you in sclaunder now and blame,  
And do to me adversitee and grame,  
That love you most—God, wel thou  
wost !—alway ?

And come ageyn, and be al pleyn som  
day,  
And then shal this, that hath be mys,  
be game,

And al foryivé, why ! I lyvé may. 280

245-266. F B Tn. H D L. Ff.—

But for I shewed you, Arcite,  
All that man wold to me wryte,  
And was so busy, etc.

270. F B Tn. And turne al this, . . . to.

(*Antistrophe*)

Lo, herté myn, al this is for to seyn,  
As whether shal I preye or ellés pleyn ?  
Which is the way to doon yow to be  
trewé ?

For either mot I have yow in my cheyn,  
Or with the dethe ye mot departustweyn ;  
Ther ben non other mené weyés newe,  
For, God so wisly upon my soule rewe,  
As verily ye sleen me with the peyn ;  
That may ye see unfeynéd of myn hewe.

Forthus ferforth have I my deethy-soght,  
My-self I mordre with my prevy thoght ; 290  
For sorwe and routhe of your unkyndé-  
nesse,  
I wepe, I wake, I faste ; al helpeth noght ;  
I weyvé joy that is to speke of oght,  
I voydé companye, I fleé gladnesse ;  
Who may avaunte hir bet of hevynesse  
Then I ? And to this plyte have ye me  
brought,  
Withouté gilt,—me nedeth now witness.

And sholde I preye, and weyvé woman-  
hede ? 299  
Nay ! rather deeth, then do so cruel dede,  
And axé mercy, causéles,—what nede ?  
And if I pleyné what lyf that I lede,  
Than wol ye laugh ; I knowit out of drede ;  
And if I unto you myn othés bede  
Formyn excuse, a scorn shal be my mede,  
Your chere floureth, but it wol not sède,  
Ful longeagoon I oghte have také dede.

Forthogh I haddé yow to-morweageyn,  
I myghte as wel holde Avérill fro reyn,  
As holdé yow to maké yow stedfast. 300  
Almyghty God, of trouth the sovereyn !  
Wher is the trouthe of man ? who hath it  
sleyn ?

Who that hem lovéth, shal hem fynde  
as fast

As in a tempest is a roten mast.  
Is that a tamé best, that is ay seyn  
To renne away, when he is leest agayn ?

300. Hari. Cx. omit this stanza. All read  
302.

303. F B Tn. L. Ff. H You requite not that.  
D You requite not that.

Now mercy, swete, if I mysseye !  
 Have I seyde oght amys, I preyre ?  
 I noot, my wit is al aweye.  
 I fare as doth the songe of *Chauntepleure* ;  
 For now I pleyne, and now I pleye, 321  
 I am so mased that I deye,  
 Arcite hath born away the keye  
 Of al my worlde, and my good aventure.

For in this worlde nys créature,  
 Walkynge, in more discomfiture,  
 Then I, ne moré sorwe endure ;  
 And if I slepe a furlong wey or tweye,  
 Than thinketh me, that your figure  
 Before me stant clad in asure, 330  
 To profren eft a newe assure,  
 For to be trewe, and mercy me to preyre.

The longé nyght, this wonder sight I  
 drye,  
 And on the day for this afay I dye,  
 And of al this rightnought, ywys, yerecche ;  
 Ne nevermo myn yen two be drye,  
 And to your routhe and to your trouthe  
 I crie !

But, welaway ! to fer be they to fecche,  
 Thus holdeth me my destynce a wrecche,  
 But me to rede out of this drede, or gye,  
 Ne may my wit, so weyke is hit, not  
 strecche. 341

(Conclusion)

Thenende I thus, sith I may do no more,—  
 I yove hit up for now and evermore ;  
 For I shal never eft puttén in balaunce  
 My sekernes, ne lerne of love the lore ;  
 But as the swan, I have herd seye ful yore,  
 Ayeys his deeth shal singén his penaunce,  
 So singe I here the destyny or chauce,  
 How that Arcite, Anelida so sore  
 Had thirléd with the poynnt of remem-  
 braunce. 350

[The Story continued]

¶ When that Anelida, this woful quene,  
 Hath of her handé written in this wyse,

320. *Chauntepleure*, the name of a famous poem of the 13th century addressed to those who dwell in this world shall weep in the next.

321. *Li. Th. may plainly.*

330. This stanza is found only in Tn. D Fl.

With face deed, betwyzé pale and grene,  
 She fel a-swowe ; and sith she gan to rise,  
 And unto Mars avoweth sacrifice  
 Within the temple, with a sorwful chere,  
 That shapen was, as ye shal after here.

THE PARLEMENT OF FOULES

Here begynyth the Parlement of Foulys

The Proem

THE lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,  
 Thassay so hard, so sharp the conqueringe,  
 The dredful joye, alwey that slit so yerne  
 Al this mene I be love, that my felyng  
 A-stonyeth with his wondrousful werkyng,  
 So sore y-wis, that whan I on hym thynke  
 Nat wot I wel wher that I flete or synke.

Foral be that I knowe not Love in dede,  
 Ne wot how that he quyeth folk hir hyre,  
 Yit happeth me ful ofte in bokés rede 12  
 Of his myracles and his cruel yre ;  
 Ther rede I wel he wol be lord and syre,  
 I dar nat seyn, his stokes been so sore,  
 But God save swich a lord ! I sey no more.

Of usage, whatfor lust and what for lore,  
 On bokés rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.  
 But wherfor that I speke al this ? Not yore  
 Agon, it happéd me for to be-holde 11  
 Up-on a bok, was write with lettrés olde  
 And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne,  
 The longé day ful faste I radde and yerne.

For out of oldé feldés, as men seith,  
 Cometh al this newé corn from yeeft 10  
 yere ;  
 And out of oldé bokés, in good feith,  
 Cometh al this newé science that men lere  
 But now to purpos as of this matere,—  
 To redé forth it gan me so delyte,  
 That al the day me thoughté but a lyte.

This bok, of which I maké mencion  
 Entitled was al thus as I schal telle.

357. *Li. Th. may plainly.*

1. Hippocrates' first aphorism—

6 *Πρώτη, 4 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100*

'Tullys, of the Dream of Scipioun.'

Chapitres it hadde sevene, of hevene and helle

Anderthe, and soulés that thereynné dwelle,  
Of whiche, as shortly as I can it trete,  
Of his sentence I wol you seyn the grete.

See p. 10

First, tellethit, whan Scipioun was come  
In Affrik, how he metté Massynisse  
That him for joye in armes hath y-nome.  
Than telleth he hir speche, and al the blisse

39

That was betwix hem til the day gan misse,  
And how his auncestre, African so dere,  
Gan in his slep that nyght to him appere.

Than telleth it, that from a sterry place,  
How African hath him Cartagé shewed,  
And warnéd him be-fore of al his grace,  
And seyde him, what man leréd other lewéd  
That loveth comun profit, wel y-thewéd,  
He shulde in-to a blisful placé wende,  
Ther as joye is that last with-oute end.

Than axéde he if folk that heer been dede

50

Han lyf and dwellyng in another place.  
And African seyde, 'Ye, withouté drede,'  
And that our present worldés lyvés space  
Nis but a maner deth, what wey we trace,  
And rightful folk shul gon after they dye  
To hevéné; and shewéde him the Galaxye.

Than shewede he hym the litel erthe  
that here is,—

At regard of the hevénés quantité,—  
And after stiewede he hym the nynyé sperés,  
And after that the melodye herde he  
That cometh of thilké sperés thryés three,  
That welle is of musik and melodye  
In this world heer, and cause of armony.

32. Marcus Tullius Cicero, whose *Somnium Scipionis* was originally included in the *De Republica*, Bk. vi.

33. Scipioun, P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus Minor, who won the third Punic War. He went in 130 B.C. to meet Masinissa, King of Numidia, who had received many favours from his auncestre Africanus Major.

62, 63. An allusion to the so-called 'harmony of the spheres' which arose from the supposed connection between the number of the planets and

Than bad he him, syn erthe was so ly  
And ful of torment and of hardé grace  
That hene schulde him in the world dely  
Thanne tolde he him in certeyn yerés sp  
That everysterre shulde come into his pl  
Ther it was first, and al shulde out of myr  
That in this world is don of al mankyne

Than prayde him Scipioun to tellehyn  
The weye to come in-to that hevéné blis  
And he seyde, 'Know thy-self f  
immortál,

And loke ay besily thow werche and wy  
To comoun profit, and thowshalt not my  
To comén swiftly to that placé dere  
That ful of blysse is and of soulés cler

'But brekers of the lawé, soth to se  
And lecherous folk, after that they be de  
Shul whirle a-bouté the erthe alwey  
peyne,

Til many a world be passéde, out of dre  
And than, for-yeven alle hir wikked de  
Thanshul they come in-to that blysfyl pla  
To which to comén God thee sende  
grace !'

The daygan failen, and the derké nyg  
That reveth bestés from hir besynesse,  
Berafté me my book for lakke of lygh  
And to my bed I gan me for to dresse  
Fulfil of thought and besy hevynesse;  
For bothe I haddéthyng which that I nol  
And ek I ne haddé that thyng that I wol

But fynally, my spirit at the laste,  
For-wery of my labour al the day,  
Took rest, that madé me to slepé fast  
And in my sleep I mette, as that I la:  
How African right in the same aray  
That Scipioun him saw before that ty  
Was come and stood right at my bed  
syde.

the number of musical notes in the scale.  
Shak. *M. of V.* v. 60.

80. *whirle a-bouté*, 'voluntarily,' Cicero.  
85 f. Cp. *Inferno*, li. 1-3.

Lo giorno se n'andava per air bruno  
Toglieva gli animali, che sono in terra  
Dalle spicche loro.

90. Cp. Boethius. *Ek. III.* pr. 2.

The wery hunter, slepyng in his bed,  
 To wode ayein his mynde goth anon; 100  
 The jugé dremeth how his plees ben sped;  
 The carter dremeth how his carte is goon;  
 The riche of gold; the knyght fight with  
 his foen;  
 The syké met he drynkeþ of the tonne;  
 The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not seyn if that the causé were  
 For I hadde red of African befor,  
 That madé me to mete that he stood there,  
 But thus seyde he: 'Thou hast thee so  
 wel born  
 In loking of myn oldé book to-torn, 110  
 Of which Macrobie roghté not a lyte,  
 That somdel of thy labour wolde I quyte.'

Cythera, thou blisful lady swete,  
 That with thy fyrbrond dauntest whom  
 thee lest,  
 And madest me this sweven for to mete,  
 Be thou my helpe in this, for thou mayst  
 best  
 As wisly as I say the north-north-west,  
 Whan I began myn sweven for to wryte;  
 So yif me myght to ryme it and endyte.

### The Story

This forseyd African me hente a-noon,  
 And forth-with him unto a gate me broghte  
 Right of a park, walléd with grené stoon;  
 And over the gate with lettrés large  
 y-wroghte  
 There werén vers y-written, as me thoghte,  
 On eyther syde of ful gret difference,  
 Of which I shal now seyn the pleyn  
 sentence.

'Thurgh me men goon in-to that blisful  
 place  
 Of hertés hele and dedly woundés cure;  
 Thurgh me men gon un-to the welle of  
 Grace

99. Cp. Claudian, *In Sextum Consul-tum Honorii Augusti Praefatio*, ll. 3-10.

100. Cp. *Inferno*, l. 83.

110. *Cythera*, Venus.

117. A reference to the planet Venus. *see, saw.*

109. Cp. *Inferno*, iii. 1 ff.

Ther grene and lusty May shal ever  
 endure; 130  
 This is the wey to al good aventure;  
 Be glad, thowreder and thysorwe-of-caste.  
 Al open am I, pas in and sped the  
 faste!'

'Thurgh me men gon,' than spak that  
 other syde,  
 'Unto the mortal strokes of the spere  
 Of which Dislaynand Daunger is thegyde,  
 Ther never tre shal fruyt ne levés bere.  
 This stream you ledeth to the sorful were  
 Ther as the fish in prison is al drye;  
 Theschewing is only the remedye.' 140

Thise vers of gold and blak y-written  
 were,  
 The whiche I gan a-stonied to be-holde;  
 For with that oon encrescle ay my fere,  
 And with that other gan myn herté holde;  
 That oon me hette, that other dide me  
 colde;  
 No wit hadde I, for errour, for to chese  
 To entre or fleen, or me to save or lese.

Right as be-twixén adamauntés two  
 Of even myght a pece of yren set,  
 That hath no myght to mevé to ne fle,—  
 For what that oon may hale that other let,—  
 Ferde I, that nyste whether me was best  
 To entre or leve, til African, my gyde,  
 Me hente, and shoof in at the gatés wyde.

And seyde, 'It stondeth written in thy  
 face  
 Thynerrour, though thou telle it not to me,  
 But dred thee not to come in-to this place,  
 For this wrytyng nis no thyng ment by thee,  
 Ne by noon, but he Lovés servaunt be,  
 For thou of love hast lost thy tast, I gesse,  
 As seek man hath of swete and bittermess.'

'But nathéles, al-though that thou be  
 dulle, 160  
 Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou se,  
 For many a man that may not stonde a  
 pulle,  
 It liketh him at wrastlyng for to be,  
 And demén yit wher he do bet or be;

And, if thou haddest cunnyng for tendite,  
I shal thee shewé mater of to write.<sup>1</sup>

With that my hond in his het took a noon,  
Of which I comfort caughte, and wente  
in faste; <sup>170</sup>

But Lord! so I was glad and wel begoon!  
For overal wher that I myn eyen caste  
Were treës clad with leves that ay shal  
laste,

Eche in his kynde, of colour fresch and  
grene

As emeraude, that joye it was to sene.

The bildere ook and eek the hardy asshe;  
The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne;  
The boxtree piper; holm to whippé lasshe;  
The saylyng firr; the cipres, deth to  
pleyne;

The sheter ew; and the asp for shaftés pleyne;  
The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken  
vyne; <sup>182</sup>

The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

A garden saw I ful of blosmy bowés  
Up-on a river in a grené mede,  
There as ther swetnesse evermore y-now is;  
With flourés whité, blewé, yelwe, and rede,  
And coldé wellé-stremés, no-thing dede,  
That swommen ful of smalé fischés lighte,  
With fynnés rede and scalés silver-brighte.

On every bough the briddés herde I  
syngé, <sup>190</sup>  
With voys of aungel in her armonye;  
Som besyede hem hir briddés forth to  
bryngé.

The litel conyes to hir pley gunne hye;  
And further al aboute I gan aspye  
The dredful roo, the buk the hert and  
hynde,  
Bquerels and bestés smale of gentil kynde.

<sup>159</sup> f. Cp. *Inferno*, iii. 19.  
<sup>170</sup> f. Cp. *Fairy Queen*, I. l. 8, 9. The above  
is based on *Tesside*, xl. 22-24, and *R. de la R.*  
<sup>171</sup> 136-138.

<sup>177</sup> f. *iller elm*, Spenser 'vine-prop elm.'

<sup>178</sup> f. *iller, the*, used for pipes or horns.

<sup>180</sup> f. *sheter ew*, because used for bows.

<sup>182</sup> f. *to devyne*, because used for divination.

<sup>183</sup> f. Cp. *Tesside*, vii. st. 31-40; also *Kingis*  
*Quest*, i. st. 33, 125, 133.

Of instruments of strengés in acord  
Herde I so pleye a ravishyng swetnes  
That God, that maker is of al and Lo  
Ne herdé never betér, as I gesse;  
Therwith a wynd, unnethe it myghte  
lesse,

Made in the levés grene a noysé softe,  
Accordant to the foulés songe on-lofte.

The air of that place so attempré w  
That never was grevaunce of hoot ne co  
There wex eek every holsum spice and gr  
Ne no man may ther wexé seek ne ok  
Yit was ther joyé more a thousand fol  
Than man can telle; ne never woldé  
nyghte,

But ay cleer day to any mannés sighte.

Under a tre beside a welle, I say  
Cupide our lord his arwés forge and fi  
And at his fet his bowe al redy lay,  
And Wille his doghter tempré al this wi  
The hedés in the welle; and with hir w  
She couchéde hem after as they shu  
serve,  
Som for to sleé, and som to wounde a  
kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon-ri  
And of Aray and Lust and Curtesye,  
And of the Craft that can and hath  
myght

To doon be force a wyght to doon foly  
Disfigurat was she, I nyl not lye;  
And by him-self, under an ok I gesse,  
Saw I Delyt that stood with Gentilesse

I saw Beauté, withouten any atyr;  
And Youthe, ful of game and Jolyté;  
Fool-hardinesse, Flatery and Desyr,  
Messagerye and Mede and other three,  
Hir namés shal not here be told for me,  
And upon pilers grete of Jasper longe,  
I saw a temple of bras y-founded strong

Aboute the temple daunsédén alway  
Wommen y-nowe, of whiché somme th  
were

Faire of hem-self, and somme of he  
were gay;

In kirtels, al disshavele<sup>d</sup> wente they  
there,—

That was hir office alwey, yeer be yere,—  
And on the temple of doves white and  
faire

Saw I sittynge many an hundred peire.

Be-fore the temple dore, ful soberly,  
Dame Pees sat with a curteyn in hir  
hond,

And hir besyde, wonder discretly,  
Dame Pacience sittynge ther I fond  
With face pale, up-on an hille of sond;  
And aldernext within and eek with-out,  
Bebeste and Art, and of hir folk a route.

Within the temple, of syghes hote as  
fyre

I herde a swogh that gan aboute renne;  
Whiche syghes were engendred with  
desyre

That maden every auter for to brenne  
Of newe flume; and wel espyed I  
thenne

That al the cause of sorwes that they  
drye

Com of the bitter goddesse Jelousye.

The god Priapus saw I as I wente  
Within the temple, in sovereyn place  
stonde

In swich aray as whan the asse him  
shente,

With cry by nyght, and with his ceptre  
in honde.

Ful besily men gunne assaye and fonde  
Up-on his hede to sette, of sondry hewe  
Garlondes ful of freshe flourés newe.

And in a privee corner in desporte  
Fond I Venus and hir portere Richesse,  
That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir  
porte;

Dark was that place, but afterward  
lightnesse

I saw a lyte, unnethe it myghte be leese,  
And on a bed of golde she lay to reste  
Ill that the hote sonnē gan to weste.

272. Cp. Ovid, *Fasti*, l. 425.

273. Cp. *Tesside*, vii. st. 63-66.

Hir gyltē heres with a golden thred  
Y-bounden were, untrussēd as she lay,  
And naked fro the breste unto the hed  
Men myghte hir seen; and sothly for to  
say,

The remenaunt was wel keverēd to my  
pay,

Right with a subtil kerchief of Valence,  
Ther nas no thikker cloth of no defence.

The placē yaf a thousand savours swote,  
And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hir besyde,  
And Sercis next, that doth of hungir  
bote;

And as I seyde, amyddēs lay Cypride,  
To whom, on knees two yongē folkēs cryde  
To ben hir help; but thus I let hir lye,  
And ferther in the temple I gan espye

That, in dispit of Dianē the chaste,  
I'ul many a bow y-broke heng on the wal,  
Of maydens swiche as gunne hir tymēs  
waste

In hir serveyse; and peynted overal  
Ful many a story of which I touchē shal  
A fewē, as of Calyxtē and Athalante,  
And many a mayde of which the name I  
wante:

Semyramus, Candace and Herculēs,  
Biblis, Dido, Thisbē, and Piramus,  
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achillēs,  
Eleynē, Cleopatre, and Trōilus,  
Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus,—

272. *Valence*, probably Valence near Lynos, where silk is still made. Boccaccio has 'Testa, tanta sottile.'

276. *Servis*, Ceres.

277. *Cypride*, i.e. Venus, because of her worship in Cyprus.

281-294. Cp. *Tesside*, vii. st. 61, 62.

286. *Calixte*, daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, and mother of Arcas, changed by Juno from jealousy into a she-bear, and raised to heaven by Jupiter as Ursa Major.

288. *Semyramus*, Semiramis, Queen of Assyria.

288. *Candace*, an Indian queen loved by Alexander the Great.

290. *Tristram, Isoude*, Tristan (or Tristram) and Ysolt (Ysolt) of French medieval romance.

292. *Silla*, Scylla, daughter of Naxos, who for love of Minos cut off her father's hair, on which his life depended, and was turned into the bird Ciris.

294. *moder of Romulus*, Rhea Silvia, daughter of Numitor.



Alle these were peynted on that other  
syde,  
And al hir love and in what plyt they  
dyde.

Whan I was come ayen un-to the  
place  
That I of spak, that was so swote and  
grene,  
Forth welk I tho my-selven to solace.  
Tho was I war wher that ther sat a  
quene  
That as of light the somer-sunné shene  
Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure 300  
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde upon an hille of  
flourés  
Was set this noblé goddessé Nature.  
Of braunchés were hir hallés and hir  
bourés  
Y-wrought after hir craft and hir mesure ;  
Ne there nas foul that cometh of engen-  
drure,  
That they ne weré prest in hir presence,  
To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.

For this was on Seynt Valentynés  
day,  
Whan every bryd cometh ther to chese  
his make, 310  
Of every kyndé that men thynké may ;  
And that so huge a noysé gan they maké,  
That erthe and eyr and tre and every  
lake  
So ful was, that unnethé was there space  
For me to stonde, so ful was al the  
place.

And right as Aleyn, in the Pleynt of  
Kynde,  
Devyseth Nature of aray and face,  
In swich aray men myghtén hir ther  
fynde.  
This noble empéressé, ful of grace,  
Bad every foul to take his owné place, 320

316. A reference to the *Planctus Naturæ* of  
Alanus de Insulis or Alain Delille, a poet of the  
12th century.

319. MSS. unanimous as to this line.

As they were wont alwey fro yeer to yeer  
Seynt Valentynés day to stonden there.

That is to seyn, the foulés of ravyne  
Were hiest set, and than the foulé  
smale,  
That eten as hem nature wolde énclyne,  
As worm or thyng, of whiche I telle n  
tale ;  
And water-foul sat lowest in the dale,  
But foul that lyveth by seed sat on th  
grene,  
And that so fele that wonder was to sene

Theré myghté men the royal egle fynde  
That with his sharpé look perséth th  
sonne ; 3  
And other eglés of a lower kynde,  
Of whiche that clerkés wel devysé cunn  
Ther was the tyraunt with his fethrés donr  
And greye, I mene the goshawk that do  
pyne  
To bryddés for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentil faucon that with his fe  
distreyneth  
The kyngés hond ; the hardy sperhaw  
eke,  
The quaylés foo ; the merlion that payne  
Hym-self ful ofte the larké for to seke  
There was the douvé, with hir eyén mek  
The jalous swan, ayens his deth th  
syngeth ;  
The oule eke, that of deth the bo  
bryngeth ;

The crane the géaunt, with his trom  
souné ;  
The theef the chough, and eek  
jangelyng pye ;  
The scornynge jay ; the élés foo,  
heroune ;  
The falsé lapwyng, ful of trecherye ;  
The staré, that the counseyl can be-wr  
The tamé ruddok, and the coward ky  
The cok, that orloge is of thorpes lyte

342, 343. From Alanus ; cp. *Anglo-L  
Satirical Poets*, vol. ii. p. 74 (Record Ser  
Most of the natural history of this whole pas  
comes from him.

The sparwé, Venus sone ; the nyhtyn-  
gale, <sup>351</sup>  
That clepeth forth the grené levés newe ;  
The swallow, mortrer of the flyés smale,  
That maken hony of flourés fresshe of  
hewe ;  
The wedded turtel, with hire herté trewe,  
The pecok, with his aungels fethrés  
bright ;  
The fesaunt, scorner of the cok by nyght ;

The waker goos ; the cuckow ever un-  
kynde ;  
The popynjay, ful of delicasye ; <sup>359</sup>  
The draké, stroyer of his owné kynde ;  
The stork, the wreker of avouterye ;  
The hoté cormeraunt of glotenye ;  
The raven wys ; the crow, with vois of care ;  
The throstel old ; the frosty feldéfare.

What shulde I seyn ? Of foulés every  
kynde  
That in this world han fethrés and stature,  
Men myghtén in that place assembled fynde  
Before the noble goddcssé Nature.  
And everich of hem did his besy cure  
Benygnely to chese or for to take <sup>370</sup>  
By hir acord his formel or his make.

But to the poynt,—Nature held on  
hir hond  
A formel egle, of shap the gentiléste  
That ever she a-mong hire werkés fond ;  
The moste benygné and the goodliéste ;  
In hir was every vertu at his reste  
So ferforth, that Nature hir-selfe hadde  
blisse  
To loke on hir and ofte hir bek to kisse.

Nature, the vicaire of the almyghty  
Lord,  
That hoot, cold, hevvy, light, and moist,  
and dreye <sup>380</sup>  
Hath knyht, with evené noumbres of a-cord,  
In esy vois began to speke and seye,  
'Foulés, tak hede of my sentence, I preye,

<sup>351.</sup> The sparrow was sacred to Venus.  
<sup>359.</sup> Cp. Neckam, *Liber de Naturis Rerum*  
(2d. Wright, lib. I. c. 64).  
<sup>370.</sup> *with vois of care*, a mistranslation of  
Virgil, *Georg.* I. 388.

And, foryouresein furtheryng of yournede,  
As faste as I may speke I wol me speede.

'Ye know wel howseynt Valentynés day,  
Bymy statut and through mygouvernaunce,  
Ye comen for to chese—and flee your  
way—  
Your makés, as I prike yow with plesaunce ;  
But nathéles my rightful ordénaunce <sup>390</sup>  
May I nat late for al this world to wynne,  
That he that most is worthy shal begynne.

'The tercel eglye, as that ye knowén wel,  
The foul royal, a-bove yow in degree,  
The wyse and worthy, secree, trewe as stel,  
The which I have y-formed, as ye may see,  
In every part as it best liketh me,—  
I lit nedleth not his shap yow to devyse,—  
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

'And after him by order shul ye chese,  
After your kyndé, everich as yow lyketh,  
And as your hap is shul ye wynne or lese ;  
But which of yow that lové most entriketh  
God sende him hir that sorest for him  
syketh.'  
And therewithal the tercel gan she calle,  
And seyde, 'My sone, the choys is to  
thee falle.

'But nathéles, in this condicioun  
Mot be the choys of everich that is here,  
That she a-gree to his eleccioun,  
Who-so he be that shuldé be hir fere ; <sup>410</sup>  
This our usage alwey from yeer to yeer,  
And who-so may at this tyme have his grace,  
In blisful tyme he com into this place.'

With hed enclynéd and with humblé  
chere  
This royal tercel spak, and taried nought :  
'Un-to my sovereyn lady, and nought  
my fere—  
I chese, and chese with wille and berte  
and thought,  
The formel on your hond, so wely-wrought,  
Whos I am al and ever wol hir serve, <sup>419</sup>  
Do what hir list, to do me live or sterve.

<sup>411.</sup> *This*—this is. Cp. *ll.* 680, 649; also *K.T.*  
233 and 285.

'Beseechyng hir of mercy and of grace,  
As she that is my lady sovereyne;  
Or let me dyé present in this place;  
For certès, longe I may nat live in payne,  
For in myn herte is corven every veyne;  
And havyn reward only to my trouthe,  
My deré herte have of my wo som routhe!

'And if that I to hir be founde untrewé,  
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,  
Avauntour, or in proces love anewe, 430  
I preye to yow this be my jugément,  
That with these foulés be I al to-rent,  
That ilké day that ever she me fynde  
To hir untrewé, or in my gilt unkynde.

'And, syn that noon loveth hir so welas I,  
Al be she never of lové me behette,  
Thanought she be myn thorough hir mercy,  
For other bond can I noon on hir knette;  
Ne never for no wo ne shal I lette 439  
To serven hir, how fer so that she wende;  
Say what yow list, my tale is at an ende.'

\* Right as the fresshé, redé rosé newe  
A-yen the somer sonnè coloured is,  
Right so for shame al weẏen gan the hewe  
Of this formel. Whan she herde al this,  
She, neyther answerd 'Wel,' ne seyde  
amys,  
So sore abashed was she, til that Nature  
Seyde, 'Doughter, dred yow nought, I  
yow assure.'

Another tercel egle spak anoon,  
Of lower kynde, and seyde, 'That shal  
not be! 450  
I love hir bet than ye do, by Seynt John!  
Or atté leste I love as wel as ye,  
And lenger have servéd hir in my degree;  
And if she shulde have loved for long  
lovyng,  
To me allone hadde been the guerdonyng.

'I dar eek seyn, if she me fyndé fals,  
Unkynde, janglere, or rebel any wyse,  
Or jalous, do me hangen by the hals!  
And, but I beré me in hir servyse, 459  
As wel as that my wit can suffyse,

A short line, but so in all MSS. Perhaps  
this is the true reading.

Fro poynt to poynt hir honour for to save,  
Tak she my lif and al the good I have.'

The thriddé tercel egle answerd tho,  
'Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leyser here,  
For every foul cryeth out to ben a-go  
Forth with his make, or with his ladydere,  
And eek Nature hir-self ne wol not here,  
Fortaryng here, not half that I wolde seye,  
And but I speke I mot for sorwé deye.

'Of long servyse avaunte I me nothing  
But as possible is me to deye to-day 471  
For wo, as he that hath ben languyssyng  
Thise twenty winter, and wel happen may  
A man may servén bet and more to pay  
In half a yer, although it were no more  
Than som man doth that hath servéd ful  
yore.

'I ne sey not this by me, for I ne can  
Don no servyse that may my lady pleae;  
But I dar seyn I am hir trewest man, 479  
As to my dom, and feynest wolde hir ease;  
At shorté wordés, til that deth me sese,  
I wol ben hirés, whether I wake or wynke,  
And trewe in al that herté may bethynke.'

Of al my lyf syn that day I was born  
So gentil ple in love or other thyng  
Ne herdé never no man me beform,  
Who-so that haddé leyser and cunnyng  
For to reherse hir chere and hir spekyng:  
And from the morwé gan this speché laste  
Tildownward drow the sonnè wonder faste.

The noyse of foulés for to ben deliyveréd  
So loudé rong, 'Have doon and let us  
wende!'

That wel wende I the wode hadde al to-  
shyveréd.

'Come of!' they cryde, 'allas, ye wil  
us shende!'

Whan shal your curséd playng have at  
ende?

How shulde a jugé eyther party leve  
For yee or nay, with-outen any preve?'

The goos, the cokkow, and the  
also,

So cryden, 'Kek, kek !' 'Kokkow !'  
'Quek, quek !' hye, <sup>499</sup>

That thurgh myn eres the noysé wenté tho.  
Tha goos seyde, 'Al this nys not worth  
a flye !

But I can shape hereof a remedye,  
And I wol sey my verdit faire and swythe,  
For water-foul, who-so be wrooth or  
blythe.'

'And I for worm-foul !' quod the fol  
cokkow ;

'And I wol of myn owne autorité,  
For comun sped take on the chargé now,—  
For to delyvere us is gret charité.'

'Ye may abyde a whille yet, *pardé !*  
Seidé the turtill, 'if it be your wille <sup>510</sup>  
A wight may speke, him were as fayr be  
stille.'

'I am a seed-foul, oon the unworthieste,  
That wot I wel, and litel of cunnyng,  
But bet is that a wyghtés tongé reste,  
Than entrémétén him of swiche doyngé  
Of which he neyther redé can, ne syngé ;  
And who-so doth, ful foule himself acloyeth,  
For office uncommyttyd ofte anoyeth.'

Naturé, which that alway hadde an ere  
To murmur of the lewédnes behynde, <sup>520</sup>  
With facound voyse seyde, 'Hold your  
tungés there !

And I shal sone, I hope, a conseyl fynde,  
Yow to delyvere, and fro this noyse un-  
bynde.

I juge, of every flok men shal oon calle  
To seyn the verdit for yow foulés alle.'

Assentéd were to this conclusioun  
The briddés alle ; and foulés of ravyne  
Han chosen first, by playn eleccioun,  
The tercelet of the faucon, to diffyne <sup>530</sup>  
Al hir sentence as him list to termyne ;  
And to Nature him gonnén to presente,  
And she accepteth him with glad entente.

The tercelet seidé then in this manère :  
'Foulés were hit to prevén by resoun  
Whiche hath best this gentil formel here,  
For swich hath swich replicacioun

That noon by skillés may be brought a-  
doun ;

I can not se that arguments avayle ;  
Than semeth hit ther musté be batayle.'

'Al redy !' quod these eglés tercels  
tho. <sup>540</sup>

'Nay, sirs,' quod he, 'if that I dorste  
it seye

Ye doon me wrong, myn tale is not y-do,  
For sirs, ne taketh nought a-gref, I preye,  
It may not gon, as ye wolde, in this weye ;  
Oure is the voys that han the charge in  
honde,

And to the jugés dome ye moten stonde ;

'And therfor, pes ! I seye, as to my wit,  
Me woldé thynke how that the worthieste  
Of knyghthode, and lengest hath uséd hit,  
Moste of estat, of blod the gentileste, <sup>550</sup>  
Were sittingest for hir, if that hir leste,  
And of these thre she wot hir-self, I trowe,  
Which that he be, for hit is light to knowe.'

The water-foulés han her hedés leyd  
Togedre, and of a short avysément,  
Whan everich hadde his largé golee seyde,  
They seyden sothly, al by oon assent,  
How that the 'goos, with hir facoundégent,  
That so desyareth to pronounce our nede,  
Shal telle our tale,' and preyden 'god hir  
spede.' <sup>560</sup>

And for these water-foulés tho began  
The goos to speke, and in hir kakelynge  
Sheseyd, 'Pees ! nowtak keepeveryman,  
And herkeneth which a resoun I shal  
brynge ;

My wit is sharp, I love no tarynge ;  
I seye, I rede him, though he were my  
brother,  
But she wol love him let him take another.'

'Lo here ! a perfit resoun of a goos !  
Quod tho the sperhauke, 'never mot she  
the !

Lo, sich it is to have a tungé loos ! <sup>570</sup>  
Now pardé, fool, yet were it bet for the  
Han holde thy pes, than shewed thy  
nycté !

It lyth nat in his wit, né in his wille,  
But sooth is seyd, "a fool can noght be  
stille."

The laughter aroos of gentil foulés alle,  
And right a-noon the seed-foul chosen hadde  
Theturtel trewe, and gunne hir to hem calle  
And preyden hir to seyn the sothé sadde  
Of this matere, and asked what she radde.  
And she answerde, that pleynly hir entente  
She woldé shewe, and sothly what she  
mente. 581

'Nay, god forbede a lover shulde  
chaunge!' <sup>1</sup>  
The turtel seyde, and wex for shamé red;  
'Though that his lady ever more be  
straunge,  
Yet let him serve hir til he be deed.  
Forsothe I preysé noght the goosés reed,  
For though she deyede I wol non other  
make,  
I wol ben hires til that the deth me take!'

'Wel bouredé, quod the doké, 'by my  
hat!  
That men shul lovén alwey, causéles, 590  
Who can a resoun fynde, or wit in that?  
Daunceth he mury that is myrthéles?  
Who shuldé recche of that is recchéles?  
Ye, kek!' yit seyde the gos, ful wel  
and fayre,  
'There been mo sterrés, god wot, than a  
payre!'

'Nowfy, cherl!' quod the gentil tercélet,  
'Out of the donghil com that word ful right,  
Thou canst not see what thyng is wel be-set;  
Thow farest by love as oulés doon by light,  
The day hem blent, but wel they sen by  
nyght; 600  
Thy kynde is of so lowe a wrechednesse,  
That what love is thow canst nat see ne  
gesse.'

Thou gan the cuckow put him forth in  
prees

573. Cp. 'A fool's bolt is soon shot,' *As You Like It*, v. 4, 67, and *Henry V*, iii. 7, 132.  
581. So H<sub>1</sub>, except that it reads *as quike*.

For foul that eteth worm, and seyde blythe,  
'So I,' quod he, 'may have my make in  
pees

I recché nat how longé that ye stryve;  
Lat ech of hem be soley n al hir lyve;  
This is my reed, syn they may not acorde,  
This shorté lessoun nedeth not recorde.'

'Ye! I have the glotoun fild y-nogh his  
paunche, 610  
Than are we wel,' seyde the merlioun;  
'Thow morder of the heysugge on the  
braunche  
That broghte thee forth! thou [rethéles]  
glotoun!  
Live thou soley n, wormés corrupcioun!  
For no fors is of lakke of thy nature!  
Go, lewé be thou, while the world may  
dure!'

'Now pees,' quod Nature, 'I comaundé  
here!  
For I have herd al your opynoun,  
And in effect yet be we never the nere;  
But fynally, this my conclusioun,— 620  
That she hir-self shal han the éleccioun  
Of whom hir list, who-so be wrooth or  
blythe,  
Him that she cheseth, he shal hir han as  
swythe;

'For syn it may not here discusséd be  
Who loveth hir best, as seyde the tercélet,  
Than wol I don hir this favour, that she  
Shal han right him on whom hir herte is  
set,  
And he hir that his herte hath on hir knet,  
Thus juge I, Nature, for I may not lye  
To non estat, I have non othir ye. 630

'But as for conseyl for to chese a make,  
If I were Resoun, certés than wolde I  
Conseylé yow the royal tercel take,  
As seyde the tercélet ful skylfully,  
As for the gentilest and most worthy  
Which I have wrought so wel to my  
pleasaunce  
That to yow oughté been a suffisaunce.'

613. Skeat's emendation for *rethéles* most  
MSS. *Gg. rethéles; P. rethéles.*

With dredful vois the formel hir  
answerde :

'Myn rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,  
Soth is that I am ever under your yerde,  
Like as is everich other creature, 64  
And mot ben yourès whil my lyf may dure;  
And therfor graunteth me my firste bone,  
And myn entent I wol yowseyñ right sone.'

'I graunte it yow,' quod she, and right  
a-non

This formel egle spak in this degre :  
'Almyghty quene, unto this yer be gon  
I aské réspit for to a-visé me,  
And after that to have my choys al fre ;  
This al and som that I wol speke and  
seye;  
Ye gete no more al-though ye do me deye.

'I wol not servén Venus ne Cupide,  
For sothe as yet, by no manèr weye.'  
'Now, syn it may non otherweys betyde,'  
Quod tho Nature, 'here is no more to  
seye ;  
Than wolde I that these foulès were a-weye,  
Ech with his make, for taryng lenger  
here,'—  
And seyde hem thus, as ye shal after here.

'To you speke I, ye tercelets,' quod  
Nature,  
'Beth of good herte and serveth, alle thre ;  
A yeer nis nat so longé to endure, 66  
And ech of yow peyne him in his degre  
For to do well ; for, God wot, quit is she  
Fro you this yeer ; what after so be-falle ;  
This entremés is dresséd for you alle.'

And whan this werk al broght was to  
an ende,  
To every foulé Nature yaf his make  
Byeven acorde, and on hir wey they wende ;  
And, Lord, the blisse and joyé that they  
make !

For ech gan other in his wyngés take, 670  
And with hir nekkés ech gan other wynde,  
Thankyng alwey the noble quene of kynde.

But first were chosen foulès for to synge,  
As, yeer be yeer, was alwey hir usance  
To synge a roundel at hir departyng,  
To don to Nature honour and plesauce.  
The note, I trowe, y-makéd was in  
Fraunce ;  
The wordés were swiche as ye may here  
fynde  
The nexté vers, as I now have in mynde.

'Now welcom, somer, with thy sonné softe,  
That hast this wintres weders over-  
shake 68  
And driven a-wey the longé nyghtés blake ;

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy on lofte,  
Thus syngeñ smalé foulès for thy sake  
*Now welcom, somer, with thy sonné  
softe,  
That hast this wintres weders over-  
shake.*

Welc han they causé for to gladen ofte, '  
Sith ech of hem recoveréd hath his make ;  
Ful blisful mowe they ben when they  
awake.  
*Now welcom, somer, with thy sonné  
softe, 690  
That hast this wintres weders over-  
shake  
And driven a-wey the longé nyghtés  
blake ;'*

And with the showtyng whan the song  
was do  
That foulès madén at hir flight away,  
I wook, and other bokés tok me to,  
To rede up-on ; and yet I rede alwey ;  
In hope y-wys to redé so sum day,  
That I shall meté somthyng for to fare  
The bet ; and thus to rede I nyl not spare.

675. *roundel*, also called *triolet* in its oldest form, a short poem in which the first line or lines recur in the middle and at the end.

676. All but Gg. om. second *to*.  
685 f. These lines are not repeated either here or at l. 690 ff. in Gg. and Jo., the only MSS. which give the roundel. In Jo. the first three lines are wanting altogether.

## BOECE

## INCIPIT LIBER BOECII DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE

*Carmina qui quondam studio florentis peregrini.*—Metrum I

ALLAS I I, wepynge, am constreyned to bygynnen vers of sorwful matere, that whilom in floryaschyng studie made delitable ditees. For lo I rendyng Muses of poetes enditen to me thynges to ben writen, and drery vers of wrecchidnesse weten my face with verray teres.

At the lecate, no drede ne myghte overcomen tho Muses, that thei ne were felawes, and folwyden my wey (that is to seyn, whan I was exiled). They that weren glorie of my youthe, whilom weleful and grene, conforten now the sorwful wyrdes of me, olde man. For celde is comyn unwarly uppon me, hasted by the harmes that y have, and sorwe hath comandid his age to ben in me. [5] Heeris hore arn schad over-tymeliche up-on myn heved, and the slakke skyn trembleth of myn emptid body.

Thilke deth of men is weleful that ne comyth noght in yeeris that ben swete, but cometh to wrecches often yclepid. Allas I allas I with how deef an ere deth, cruwel, turneth away fro wrecches, and nayteth to closen wepyng eien. Whil fortune, unfeithful, favourede me with

lyghte goodes, the sorwful houre (that is to seyn, the deth) hadde almoost dreynt myn heved. But now, for fortune cloudy hath chaunged hir deceyvable chere to me ward, myn unpious lif draweth along unagreable duellynges in me. [10]

O ye, my frendes, what, or wher-to avainted ye me to be weleful? For he that hath fallen stood noght in stedefast degre.

*'Hec dum mecum tacitus.'*—Prosa I

In the mene while that I, stille, recorded these thynges with my-self, and merkid my weply compleynte with office of poyntel, I sawe, stondyng aboven the heighte of myn heved, a womman of ful greet reverence by semblaunt, hir eien brennyng and clêr seyng<sup>10</sup> over the comune myghte of men; with a lifly colourand with swich vigour and strengthe that it ne myghte nat ben emptid, al were it so that sche was ful of so greet age that men ne wolden not trowen in no manere that sche were of our elde. [15] The stature of hire was of a doutous jugement, for som-tyme sche constreyned and schronk hir-selven lik to the comune mesure of men, and som-tyme it semede that sche touchede hevene with the heighte of here heved; and whan sche hef hir heved heyere, sche percede the selve hevene so that the sighte of men lokyng was in ydel.

Hir clothes weren makid of right delye thredes and subtile craft, of perdurable matere, the whiche clothes sche hadde

10. *unpleyous*, 'impla.' C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> omit *in me*.

11. *what* here, as often, is Chaucer's translation of 'quid,' 'why.'

12. Supply 'with' before *subtile*. In *the beaute* belongs to the next sentence, 'specimen,' etc.

For the relation of MSS. see Introduction.

Abbreviations—C<sub>1</sub>, Camb. Univ. Libr. II. I. 8; A<sub>2</sub>, Brit. Mus. Additional 16,165; H, Brit. Mus. Harleian 2481; Cx., Caxton's Ed.; B, Bodleian Libr., Bodley 797; C<sub>2</sub>, Camb. Univ. Libr. II. 3. 21; A<sub>1</sub>, Brit. Mus. Add. 10,340; Hn., the Hongwrt Fragment, MS. Peniarth 393; Com., the fragment of a commentary in Bodl. MS. Auct. F. 3. 5; Fr., Bibl. Nat. Fonds Franc. 1079, or French text in general; L, Bibl. Nat. Fonds Lat. 16,424 (French and Latin parallel text); Lat., Latin text of Opharbus, Jona 1843; A<sub>2</sub>, the so-called Aquinas Commentary.

*unpleyous*, 'impla.'

woven with hir owene handes, as I knewe wel afir by hir-selve declarynge and schewynge to me the beaute. The whiche clothes a derknesse of a for-leten and despised elde hadde duskid and dirked, as it is wont to dirken besmokede ymages. In the nethereste hem or bordure of thise clothes, men reddene y-woven in a Grekisch P (that signifieth the lif actif); [20] and aboven that lettre, in the heieste bordure, a Grekyssh T (that signifieth the lif contemplatif). And bytwixen thise two lettres ther were seyn degrees nobly y-wrought in manere of laddres, by whiche degrees men myghten clymben fro the nethereste lettre to the uppereste.

Natheles handes of some men hadden korve that cloth by violence and by strengthe, and everich man of hem hadde boren away swiche peces as he myghte geten. And for sothe this forseide womman bar smale bokis in hir right hand, and in hir left hand sche bar a ceptre. And whan she saughe thise poetical Muses aprochen aboute my bed and enditynge wordes to my wepynges, sche was a litil amoeved, and glowede with cruel eighen. [25] 'Who,' quod sche, 'hath suffred aprochen to this sike man thise comune strompettis of swich a place that men clepen the theatre; the whiche not onely ne asswage nought his sorwes with none remedies, but thei wolden fedyn and noryssen hym with sweete venym. For sothe thise ben tho that with thornes and prikkynge of dylentes or affecciouns, whiche that ne ben nothyng fructifyenge nor profitable, destroyen the corne plentyvous of fruytes of reson. For thei holden hertes of men in usage, but thei delyvre nought folk fro maladye. But yif ye muses hadden with-drawn fro me with youre

flateries, any unkunynge and unprofitable man as men ben wont to fynde comonly among the peple, I wolde wene suffre the lasse grevously; [30] for-whil, in swych an unprofitable man, myne ententes weren nothyng endamaged. But ye with-drawn me this man, that hath ben noryssed in the studies or scoles of Eleaticis and of Achademycis in Grece. But goth now rather away, ye mermaydenes, whiche that ben swete til it be at the laste, and suffreth this man to be-cured and heeled by myne muses (that is to seyn, by noteful sciencis). And thus this compagne of Muses, I-blamed, casten wrothly the chere downward to the erthe, and, schewing by rednesse hir schame, thei passeden sorwfully the thresschefolde. And I, of whom the sighte, ploungid in teeres, was dirked so that y ne myghte nought knowen what that womman was of so imperial auctorite, [35] I wax al alaysched and astoned, and caste my syghte down to the erthe, and bygan, stille, for to abide what sche wolde doon aftirward. Tho com sche ner, and sette her down upon the uttereste corner of my bed; and sche, byholdynge my chere that was cast to the erthe hevy and grevous of wepynge, compleynede, with thise wordis that I schal seyn, the perturbacion of my thought.

*'Heu quam precipiti mersa profundo.'*

Metrum 2

'Allas how the thought of this man, dreynt in overthrowng depnesse, dulleth and for-leteth his propre clernesse, myntynge to gon in-to foreyne dirknesses as ofte as his anoyos bysynes waxeth withoute mesure, that is dryven with worldly wyndes. This man, that whilom was fre, to whom the hevne was opyn and known, and was wont to gon in hevne-liche pathes, [40] and saughe the lyghtnesse of the rede sonne, and saughe the sterres of the cooide mone, and whiche sterre in hevne usgh wandrynge recourses

39. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> com. *dryven to and fro.*

20. 21. P, T, L. *Ἰπαστρίαι, Θεωπρίαι*, referring to the two divisions of philosophy.

22. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H read *or* for *first and*

27. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> read *cornea*.

27. *Abundantius of fruytes*, 'uberem fructibus.'

28. *Minimus mentes adudeficiunt morbo*, non *mentes*. But Chaucer has mistranslated, 'The smallest of the mindes of the hommes in costume et ne souffrent pas de maladie.'



I-flyt by diverse speeris, this man; overcomere, hadde comprehendid al this by nombres (of acountynge in astronomye). And, over this, he was wont to seken the causes whennes the sounynge wyndes moeven and byaien the smothe watir of the see; and what spirit turneth the stable hevене; and why the sterre ariseth out of the rede est, to fallen in the westrene wawes; and what attemprith the lusty houres of the firste somer sesoun, that highteth and apparileth the erthe with rosene floures; [43] and who maketh that plentyvous autumpne in fulle yeris fletith with hevye grapes. And eek this man was wont to tellen the diverse causes of nature that weren yhidde. Allas! now lyth he emptid of lyght of his thought, and his nekke is pressyd with hevye cheynes, and bereth his chere enclyned adoun for the grete weyghte, and is constrained to loken on the fool erthe!

'*Set medicine inquit tempus.*'—Prosa 2

'But tyme is now,' quod sche, 'of medycyne more than of compleynte.' Forsothe thanne sche, entendinge to me ward with al the lookynge of hir eien, seyde:—[50] 'Art nat thou he,' quod sche, 'that whilom, norissched with my melk and fostred with mynemetes, were escaped and comyn in-to corage of a parfit man. Certes I yaf the swiche armures that, yif thou thi-selfe ne haddest first cast hem a-wey, they schulden han defended the in sekernesse that mai nat ben overcomyn. Knowestow me nat? Why arttow stille? Is it for schame or for astonyng? It were me leve that it were for schame, but it semeth me that astonyng hath oppresside the.' [55] And whan she say me nat only stille, but withouten office of tynge and al dowmbe, sche leyde hir hand softly uppon my brest, and seide:

43. *I-flyt by diverse speeris*, 'flexa, i.e. mota, per varios orbes,' refers to the ancient theory of direct and retrograde planetary motions; cp. *Astr.* II. concl. 35.

44. *Cy A<sub>2</sub> H C<sub>2</sub> B A<sub>1</sub>* read *And thus crike*; Lat. *stolidam terram*; Fr. *la folle terre*.

'Here nys no peril,' quod sche, 'he is fallen in-to a litargye, whiche that is a comune seknesse to hertes that been desceyved. He hath a litil foryeten hym-selfe, but certes he schal lightly remembre hymself, yif it so be that he hath knowen me or now; and that he may so doon, I will wipe a litil his eien that ben dirked by the cloude of mortal thynges.' [60] 'Thise woordes seide sche, and with the lappe of hir garment, yplited in a frownce, sche dryede myn eien, that weren fulle of the wawes of my wepynges.

'*Tunc me discussa.*'—Metrum 3

Thus, whan that nyght was discussed and chased a-wey, dirknesses forleten me, and to myn eien repeyred ayen hir firste strengthe. And ryght by ensaumple as the sonne is hydd whan the sterres ben clustred (that is to seyn, when sterres ben covered with cloudes) by a swyft wynd that hyghte Chorus, and that the firmament stant dirked with wete plowngy cloudes, and that the sterres nat apereyn upon hevене, so that the nyght semeth sprad upon erthe: yif thanne the wynde that hyghte Boreas, I-sent out of the kaves of the cuntre of Trace, betith this nyght (that is to seyn, chaseth it a-wey), [65] and discovereth the closed day, thanne schyneth Phebus I-schaken with sodeyn light, and smyteth with his beemes in mervelyng eien.

'*Haut aliter tristicis.*'—Prosa 3

Ryght so, and noon other wise, the cloudes of sorwe dissolved and door a-wey, I took hevене, and receyved mynde to knowe the face of my facyen, so that I sette myne eien on hir and fastned my lookynge. I byholde my noryce, Philosophie, in whoos houses

63. *sterres ben clustred*, literal rendering of *sidera glomerantur*.

64. *I took hevене*, Fr. *'le pris le ciel*, a literal translation of *'hausi caelum* (I looked up).

hadde conversed and hauntyd fro my youthe; and I seide thus: 'O thou maystresse of alle vertues, descended from the sovereyne sete, whi arttow comen in-to this solitarie place of myn exile? Artow comen for thou art maad coupable with me of false blames?' [70] 'O!' quod sche, 'my nory, schulde I forsake the now, and schulde I nat parten with the, by comune travaile, the charge that thow hast suffred for envye of my name? Certes it nere nat levelul ne syttyng thyng to philosophie, to leten with-outen companye the weye of hym that is innocent. Schulde I thanne redowte my blame, and agrysen as though ther were by-fallen a newe thyng? For trowestow that philosophie be now alderferst assailed in periles by folk of wykkide maneris? Have I noght stryven with ful greet strif in olde tyme, byfor the age of my Plato, ayens the foolhardynesse of folye? [75] And eek, the same Plato lyvyng, his mayster Socrates deserved victorie of unryghtful deth in my presence. The heritage of the whiche Socrates (the heritage is to seyn, the doctryne of the whiche Socrates in his opinyoun of felicity, that I clepe welefulnesse) whan that the peple of Epycuriens and Stoyciens and many othere enforceden hem to gon ravyssche everyche man for his part (that is to seyn that everych of hem wolde drawn to the defense of his opinyoun the wordes of Socrates), they as in partye of hir preye to-drown me, cryinge and debatyng ther ayens, and korven and to-rente my clothes that I hadde woven with myn handes; and hadde the cloutes that thei hadden arased out of my clothes, thei wenten a-wey wenyng that I hadde gon with hem every del. [80] In whiche Epycuriens and Stoyciens for as myche as ther semede some traces or steppes of myn abyte, the folie of men wenyng the Epycuryens and Stoyciens my familiers pervertede some thurw the errour of the wykkide or unkyngyng multitude of hem. (This is to seyn, that, for they semeden philoso-

phres, thei weren pursued to the deth and slayn.) So yif thou ne hast noght knownen the exilyng of Anaxogore, ne the enpoisonyng of Socrates, ne the turmentes of Zeno, for they weren straungiers, yit myghtestow han knownen the Seneciens, and the Canyos, and the Soranas, of whiche folk the renoun is neyther over-oolde ne unsollempne. [85] The whiche men no thyng elles broght hem to the deeth, but only for thei weren enformyd of myne maneris, and semyde moost unlyk to the studies of wykkid folk. And for-thi thou oughtest noght to wondren thoughe that I, in the bytter see of this lif, be fordryven with tempestes blowyng aboute. In the whiche this is my mooste purpoos, that is to seyn to displeen to wykkide men. Of whiche schrewes al be the oost nevere so greet, it is to despise; for it nys nat governyd with no ledere (of resoun), but it is ravyssched only by sleetyng errour follyly and lightly; and yif they som-tyme, makyinge an oost ayens us, assayle us as strengere, our ledere draweth to-gidre his richesses in-to his tour, and they ben ententyf aboute sarpieris or sachellis, unprofitable for to taken. [90] But we that ben heighe above, syker fro alle tumolte and wood noyse, warnstord and enclosed in swiche a paleys whider as that chateryng or anoyng folye ne may nat atayne, we scornwe swiche ravyneres and henteres of fouleste thynges.

'*Quisquis composito.*'—Metrum 4

Who-so it be that is cleer of vertue, sad and wel ordynat of lyvyng, that hath put under fote the proude weedes and loketh, up-right, up-on either fortune, he may holden his chere undiscofited.

84. *Anaxogore*, like *Canyos* (and *Soranus*) below, owes its form to the Latin text.

85. *the Seneciens*, etc., i.e. men like *Seneca*, *Canius*, and *Soranus*. *Seneciens* is probably due to Fr. *Seneciens*.

90. *cleer of vertue*, 'serenus' glossed 'clarus virtute.'

The rage ne the manaces of the see, commoevyng ne chasyng upward hete fro the botme, ne schal nat moeve that man. Ne the unstable mowntaigne that highte Visevus, that writhith out thurw his brokene chemeneyes smokynge fieres, ne the wey of thonder leit, that is wont to smyten hye toures, ne schal nat moeve that man. Whar-to thanne, o wrecches, drede ye tirauntes that ben wode and felenous withouten ony strengthe? [95] Hope afir no thyng, ne drede nat; and so schaltow desarmen the ire of thilke unmyghty tiraunt. But who so that, qwakynge, dredeth or desireth thyng that nys noght stable of his ryght, that man that so dooth hath cast away his scheeld, and is remoeved from his place, and enlaceth hym in the cheyne with whiche he mai ben drawn.

'Sentis ne inquit.'—Prosa 4

'Fellastow,' quod sche, 'thise thynges, and entren thei aughte in thy corage? Artow like an asse to the harpe? Why wepstow, why spillestow teeris? Yif thou abidest after helpe of thi leche, the byhoveth discovre thy wownde.'

Tho I, that hadde gaderyd strengthe in my corage, answeride and seide: 'And nedeth it yit,' quod I, 'of rehersynge or of ammonicioun? [100] And scheweth it nat y-noghe by hym-selve the sharpnesse of fortune, that waxeth wood ayens me? Ne moeveth it nat the to seen the face or the manere of this place? Is this the librarye whiche that thou haddest chosen for a ryght certain sege to the in myn hous, there as thow disputedest ofte with me of the sciences of thynges touchynge dyvynite and mankynde? Was thanne myn habit swiche as it is now? Was my face or my chere swyche as now when I soghte with the

the secretis of nature, whan thow enforcedest my maneris and the resoun of al my lif to the ensaunple of the ordre of hevene? Is noght this the gerdouns that I referre to the, to whom I have ben obeisaunt? [105]

Certes thou confermedest by the mouth of Plato this sentence, that is to seyne that comune thynges or comunalityes weren blisful yif they that hadden studied al fully to wysdom governeden thilke thynges; or elles yif it so befille that the governours of comunalityes studieden to geten wysdom. Thou seidest eek by the mouth of the same Plato that it was a necessarie cause wise men to taken and desire the governance of comune thynges, for that the governementz of citez, I-lefte in the handes of felonous turmentours citezeens, ne schulde noght bryngen in pestilence and destruccioun to good folk. And therefore I, folwynge thilke auctorite, desired to putten forth in execucion and in acte of comune administracioun thilke thynges that I hadde lernyd of the among my secre restyng-whiles. [110]

Thow and god, that putte the in the thoughtes of wise folk, ben knowynge with me that no thyng ne brought me to maistrie or dignyte but the comune studie of alle goodnesse. And therof cometh it that bytwixen wikkid folk and me han ben grevous discordes, that ne myghte nat ben releessed by preyeris; for this liberte bath fredom of conscience, that the wraththe of more myghty folk hath alwey ben despised of me for savacioun of right. How ofte have I resisted and withstonden thilke man that highte Conigaste, that made alwey assawtes ayens the prospere fortunes of pore feble folk! How ofte eek have I put of or cast out hym Trygville, provost of the kyngis hous, bothe of the wronges that

95. *Asse*, 'astutus,' which means 'surge' here; cp. 222.

97. *Asse*, its. Chaucer follows L., 'estables [et Fr.] de son droit,' not Lat. 'stabilis sive iuris.'

100. *Asses to the harpe*, the Greek proverb 'stasis ad iura' through Lat. 'astutus ad iuram.'

105. *Is noght this*, etc., 'Hæcne primis referimus tibi?'

108. *Wise men*, etc., gerundive idiom, *is* 'for wise,' etc.

111. *Ben knowynge*, etc., 'mihi consci,' or Fr. 'consciables avecques moi.'

112. *For this*, etc., should be *and*, *for this*, etc.

he hadde bygunne to doon, and ek fully performed ! [113] How ofte have I covered and defended by the auctorite of me put ayens perils (that is to seyn, put myn auctorite in peril for) the wrecche pore folk, that the covetise of straungiers unpunyschid tormentyde alwey with mysases and grevances out of nombre !

Nevere man ne drowe me yit fro right to wrong. When I say the fortunes and the riches of the peple of the provinces ben harmed or amanued outhur be pryve raunyes or by comune tributes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffriden the harm. (Glosa. When that Theoderic, the kyng of Gothes, in a dere year, hadde his gerneeris ful of corn, and comaundede that no man schulde byen no coorn til his corn were soold, and that at grevous dere prys, Boece with-stood that ordenaunce and overcome it, knowynge al this the kyng hym-selve. [120] Coempcioun is to seyn comune achat or beyng to-gidre, that were establissed up-on the peple by swiche a manere imposicioun, as whoso boughte a busschel corne, he most yve the kyng the fyfte part.) Textus. When it was in the sowre hungry tyme, ther was establissed or cryed grevous and unplitable coempcioun, that men sayen wel it schulde gretly tormenten and endamagen al the provynce of Campayne, I took stryf ayens the provost of the pretorie for comune profit ; and, the kyng knowynge of it, overcom it, so that the coempcioun ne was nat axid ne took effect. Paulyn, a conseillear of Rome, the riches of the whiche Paulyn the howndes of the paleys (that is to seyn the officeres) wolden han devoured by hope and covetyse, yit drowe I hym out of the jowes of hem that gapeden. And for as moche as the peyne of the accusacioun ajugid byform ne schulde noght sodeynli henten ne punysche wrongfully Albyn, a conseillear

of Rome, I putte me ayens the hates and indignacions of the accusour Cyprian. [125] Is it not thanne I-noghe sene, that I have purchaced grete discordes ayens my-self? But I oughte be the more assured ayens alle othere folk, that, for the love of rightwinesse, I ne reservede nevere no thyng to my selve to hem ward of the kyngis halle, by whiche I were the more syker. But thurw the same accusours accusynge I am condempned. Of the nombre of whiche accusours, oon Basilius, that whilom was chased out of the kyngis servyse, is now compelled in accusynge of my name for nede of foreyne moneye. Also Opilion and Gaudencius han accused me, al be it so that the justise regal hadde whilom demed hem bothe to gon in-to exil for hir trecheries and frawdres withouten nombre, [130] to whiche juggement they nolden nat obeye, but defendeden hem by the sikernes of holl houses (that is to seyn, fledden into seynte warie) ; and when this was aperceyved to the kyng, he comandise that, but they voydide the cite of Ravenne by certeyn day assigned, that men scholde marken hem in the forheved with an hoot iren and chasen hem out of towne. Now what thyng semyth myghte ben likned to this cruelte? For certes thilke same day was resceyved the accusynge of myn name by thilke same accusours. What may ben seyde her-to? Hath my studie and my kunnyng diserved thus? Or elles the forseide dampnacioun of me —made that hem ryghtfulle accusours or no? Was noght fortune aschamed of this? [135] Certes, al hadde noght fortune ben aschamed that innocence was accused, yit oughte sche han hadde schame of the fylthe of myn accusours. But axestow in somme of what gylt I am

127. to hem ward is due to a mistranslation of 'vers' in 'vers ceus du palais royal' ; Lat. 'apud aulicos.'

129. for nede, etc., 'alieni eris necessitate.'

132. C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> C<sub>3</sub> B of the town.

133. As A<sub>1</sub> *asemeth the* ; B *asemeth you* ; *likned* should be 'added,' *posse adstrui*. Chaucer has understood Fr. 'pareille,' p. part. of 'pareiller' (adstruere), as that of *pareiller*, 'to liken.'

126. C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> B C<sub>3</sub> read *tormentyden*.

129. this refers to what precedes, 121: to what follows.

accused? Men seyn that I wolde save the companye of the senatours. And desirestow to heren in what manere? I am accused that I schulde han disturbed the accusour to beren lettres, by whiche he scholde han maketh the senatours gylty ayens the kynges real maieste. O Maystresse, what demestow of this? Schal I forsake this blame, that y ne be no schame to the? Certes I have wolde it (that is to seyn the savacioun of the senat), ne schal I nevere letten to wilne it; and that I confesse and am aknowe; but the entente of the accusour to ben disturbed schal cease. [140] For shal I clepe it thanne a felonye or a synne, that I have desired the savacioun of the ordre of the senat? And certes yit hadde thilke same senat don by me thurw hir decretes and hir jugementes as though it were a synne and a felonye (that is to seyn, to wilne the savacioun of hem). But folye, that lyeth alwey to hym-selve, may nought change the merite of thynges, ne I trowe nat by the jugement of Socrates, that it were leveful to me to hide the sothe, ne assente to lesynges. But certes, how so evere it be of this, I putte it to gessen or prisen to the jugement of the and of wys folk. Of whiche thyng alle the ordenaunce and the sothe, for as moche as folk that been to comen aftir our dayes schullen knowen it, I have put it in scripture and in remembrance. [143] For touchyng the lettres falsly maketh by whiche lettres I am accused to han hoped the freedom of Rome, what aperteneth me to speken ther-of? Of whiche lettres the fraude hadde ben schewed apertely, yif I hadde had liberte or to han used and ben at the confessioun of myn accusours, the whiche thyng in alle redes hath greet strengthe. For what ther freedom mai men hopen? Certes I wolde that som other freedom myghte ben hoped; I wolde thanne han answeryd

by the wordys of a man that byghte Canyus. For when he was accused byfore Gaius Cesar, Germaines sone, that he was knowyng and consentyng of a coniuracioun ymaketh ayens hym, this Canyus answeride thus: "Yif I hadde wyst it, thou haddest nought wyst it." In whiche thyng sorwe hath nought so dullid my wyt, that I pleyne oonly that schrewed folk apparailen felonyes ayens vertu; but I wondre gretly how that thei may performe thynges that thei han hoped for to doon. [150] For-why to wyline schrewydnese—that cometh peraventure of our defeute; but it is lyk a monstre and a merveylye, how that, in the presente sight of god, may ben achieved and performed swiche thynges as every felonous man hath conceyved in his thocht ayens innocentes. For whiche thyng oon of thy familiers nought unskilfully axed thus: "Yif god is, whennes comen wikkide thyngis? And yif god ne is, whennes comen gode thynges?" But al hadde it ben leveful that felonous folk, that now desiren the blood and the deeth of alle gode men and ek of al the senat, han wilned to gon destroyen me, whom they han seyn alwey bataylen and defenden gode men and eek al the senat, yit hadde I nought disservyd of the faderes (that is to seyn, of the senatours) that they schulden wilne my destruccioun. Thow remembreth wel, as I gesse, that when I wolde doon or seyn any thyng, thow thi-selve alwey present reuledest me. [155] Atte cite of Verone, what that the kyng, gredy of comune slaughtre caste hym to transporten up-on al the ordre of the senat the gilt of his real maieste, of whiche gilt that Albyn was accused, with how gret sykerneesse c peril to me defended I al the senat. Thow woost wel that I sey sooth, ne ne awawntede me nevere in preysyng of my-selve. For alwey when any wygh

140. and that I confesse, etc., should be *Shal I confesse?* 'Fatebimur?'

147. in alle redes, 'omnibus negotiis,' 'en toutes besognes.' Chaucer read 'besoignes' (besoignes) as *besoignes* (besoignes).

153. to gon destroyen, 'perditum ire,' 'al destruire.'

156. the gilt, etc., 'malestaris crimen,' 'le blâme de la royal maieste.'

resceyveþ precious renoun in avauntynge  
 ym-selve of his werkes, he amenuseth  
 the secre of his conscience. But now  
 how mayst wel seen to what eende I  
 am comen for myn innocence; I resceyve  
 peyne of fals felonye for guerdoun of  
 verral vertue. And what opene con-  
 fessioun of felonye hadde evere juges so  
 accordaunt in cruelte (that is to seyn, as  
 myn accusynge hath) that either error  
 of mannys wit, or elles condicion of  
 fortune, that is uncerteyn to alle mortel  
 folk, ne submytted some of hem (that is  
 to seyn, that it ne enclynede some juge  
 to have pite or compassioun)? [160] For  
 al-thoughe I hadde ben accused that I  
 wolde brenne holi houses and straunge  
 preestis with wykkid sweerd, or that I  
 hadde greythed deth to alle gode men,  
 algethe sentencescholde hanpunysshed  
 me present, confessed or convict. But  
 now I am remuwed fro the cite of Rome  
 almost fyve hundred thowsand paas, I am  
 withoute defense dampnyd to proscriptioun  
 and to the deth for the studie and bountes  
 that I have doon to the senat. But O  
 wel ben thei worthy of meryte! (As who  
 seith, nay.) Ther myghte nevere yit  
 noon of hem ben convicte of swiche a  
 blame as myn is. Of whiche trespas  
 myne accusours sayen ful wel the dignete;  
 the whiche dygnyte, for thei wolden  
 derken it with medlynge of some felonye,  
 they bare me on hande and liden that  
 I hadde pollut and defouled my con-  
 science with sacrilegie for covetise of  
 dignyte. And certes thou-thi-selve, that  
 art plaunted in me, chacedest out of the  
 sege of my corage alle covetise of mortel  
 hynges, ne sacrilege hadde no leve to han  
 place in me byforn thyne eien. [165]  
 For thouw droppiddest every day in myn  
 ris and in my thought thilke comaundement  
 of Pittagoras, that is to seyn men  
 schal serve to god, and noght to goddes.

157. *the secre*, etc., 'se probantis conscientie  
 secretum (sc. pretium)'. The same mistake occurs  
 in Fr.

164. For *liden* H Cx. read *seyden*, B *seyden*  
 corrected in same hand from *leyden*.

Ne it was noght convenient ne no nede  
 to taken help of the fouleste spirites—I,  
 that thou hast ordeyned and set in  
 swiche excellence, that thou makedest  
 me lyk to god. And over this, the right  
 clene secre chaumbre of myn hous (that  
 is to seyn my wif), and the companye of  
 myne honeste freendes, and my wyves  
 fadir, as wel holi as worthy to ben  
 revered thurw his owne dedes,  
 defenden me fro alle suspicioun of swiche  
 blame. But O malice! For they that  
 accusen me taken of the, philosophie,  
 feith of so greet blame, for they trowen  
 that I have had affinite to malefice or  
 enchauntement, bycause that I am  
 replenysshid and fulfild with thy  
 techynges, and enformed of thi maneria.  
 And thus it suffiseth nat oonly that thi  
 reverence ne avayle me nat, but that thou  
 of thy free wil rather be blemessched  
 with myne offencioun. [170] But certes  
 to the harmes that I have ther bytideth  
 yit this encres of harm, that the gessynge  
 and the jugement of moche folk loken  
 no thyng to the desertes of thynges, but  
 oonly to the aventure of fortune; and  
 jugen that oonly swiche thynges ben  
 purveied of god, whiche that temporel  
 welefulnesse commendeth. (Glose. As  
 thus: that yif a wyght have prosperite,  
 he is a good man and worthy to han that  
 prosperite; and who-so hath adversite,  
 he is a wikkid man, and god hath forsake  
 hym, and he is worthy to han that  
 adversite. This is the opinyoun of some  
 folk.) Textus. And ther-of cometh  
 that good gessynge, first of alle thynges,  
 forsaketh wrecches. Certes it greveth  
 me to thyne ryght now the diverse  
 sentences that the peple seith of me,  
 [175] And thus moche I seie, that the  
 laste charge of contrarious fortune is this,

167. For *was* C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H B read *is*; C<sub>2</sub> omits.  
 168. *the right clene*, etc., 'penetral innocens  
 domus', i.e. 'my unblemished private life'. Chau-  
 cer translates a glose, 'uxor'.

170. *of thy free wil*, 'ultro', i.e. 'for thy part';  
 but Fr. 'de ton gre'.

171. *bytideth*. Chaucer has read 'accidit' as  
 'accidit'.

that when that eny blame is leid upon a caytif, men wenen that he hath deaservyd that he suffreth. And I, that am put a-wey fro gode men, and despoyled of dignytes, and defouled of myn name by geasyng, have suffride torment for my gode dedes. Certes me semyth that I se the felonous covynes of wykkid men habounden in joye and in gladnesse; and I se that every lorel schapeth hym to fynde out newe fraudes for to accuse good folk; and I se that goode men ben overthronen for drede of my peril, and every luxurious turmentour dar doon alle felonye unpunyschyd, and ben excited ther-to by yiftes; and innocentes ne ben nocht oonly despoiled of sikernes, but of defence; and ther-fore me lyst to crie to god in this manere: ' [180]

'O stelliferi conditor orbis.'—Metrum 5

'O thou makere of the wheel that bereth the sterres, whiche that art festnyd to thi perdurable chayer, and turnest the bevene with a ravysschyng sweighe, and constreynest the sterres to suffren thi lawe; so that the moone som-tyme, schynnyng with hir fulle hornes metyng with alle the beemes of the sonne hir brothir, hideth the sterres that ben lasse, and som-tyme, whan the moone pale with hir derke hornes aprocheth the sonne, leeseth hir lyghtes; and that the eve sterre, Hesperus, whiche that in the first tyme of the nyght bryngeth forth hir colde arsynges, cometh eft ayen hir used cours, and is pale by the morwe at rysyng of the sonne, and is thanne clepid Lucyfer! Thou restreynest the day by schortere duellyng in the tyme of coold wynter, that maketh the leeves falle. Thou devydest the swyfte tydes of the nyght, whan the

hote somer is comen. [185] Thy myghte attempteth the variauntes seasons of the yer, so that Zephirus, the debonere wynd, bryngeth ayen in the first somer sesoun the leeves that the wynd that hyghte Boreas hath reft away in autumpne (that is to seie, the laste ende of somer); and the seedes that the sterre that highte Aucturus saugh, ben waxen heye cornes whan the sterre Syrius eschaufeth hem. Ther nys no thyng unbounde from his olde lawe, ne foreteth the werk of his propre estat. O governour, governyng alle thynges by certein ende, whi refusetow oonly to governe the werkes of men by duwe manere? Why suffrestow that alydyng fortune turneth so grete enterchaungynges of thynges; so that anyoyus peyne, that scholde duweliche punysche felons, punyscheth innocentes? [190] And folk of wikkide maneres sitten in heit chayeres; and anyoyng folk treden and that unrightfully, on the nekkes o holi men; and vertue, cleer and schynnyng naturely, is hidde in derknesses; and the rightful man bereth the blame and the peyne of the feloun ne the for-sweryng, ne the fraud covered and kembd with a false colour, ne anoieth nat to schrewes? The whiche schrewes, whan hem list to usen hir strengthe, they reioyssen hem to putten undir hem the sovereyne kynges, whiche the peple withowten nombre dreden. O thou, what so evere thou be that knytttest alle bondes of thynges, loke on thise wrecchide erthes. We men, that ben nocht a foul partie, but a fair partie of so greet a werk, we ben turmented in this see of fortune. Thou governour withdraughe and restreynest the ravysschyng flodes, and fastne and ferme thise erthes stable with thilke boond by whiche thou governest the bevene that is so large.' [195]

182. *wheel*, etc., 'stelliferi orbis,' 'la roue qui porte les étoiles.'

183. *starry*, 'nexus' variant of Lat. text for *stars*.

184. *cometh aft*, etc., i.e. returns in the opposite direction.

186. C<sub>3</sub> A<sub>3</sub> H B in the laste ende.

187. For saugh, 'vidit,' H<sub>2</sub> reads *saugh*, *awes*, B *sewyn*.

189. *alydyng fortune*, 'habitus fortune.'

*'Hec ubi continuato dolore delatravi.'*—

Prosa 5

Whan I hadde, with a contynuel sorwe, sobbyd or borken out these thynges, sche, with hir cheere peisible and no thyng amoeved with my compleyntes, seide thus: 'Whan I saugh the,' quod sche, 'sorrowful and wepyng, I wiste anon that thou were a wrecche and exiled; but I wyste nevere how fer thy exile was yif thy tale ne hadde schewid it me. But certes, al be thou fer fro thy cuntre, thou nart nat put out of it, but thou hast fayled of thi weye and gon a-mys. And yif thou hast levere for to wene that thou be put out of thy cuntre, thanne hastow put out thy-selfe rather than any other wyght hath. For no wyght but thy-selfe myghte nevere han doon that to the. [200] For yif thou remembre of what cuntre thou art born, it nys nat governed by emperoures, ne by gouernement of multitude, as weren the cuntrees of hem of Atthenes; but o lord and o kyng, and that is god, is lord of thi cuntre, whiche that reioisseth hym of the duellynge of his citezeens, and nat for to putten hem in exile; of the whiche lord it is a sovereyn fredom to ben governed by the brydel of hym and obeye to his justice. Hastow foryeten thilke ryghte oolde lawe of thi citee, in the whiche cite it is ordeyned and establisshid, that what wyght that hath levere founden ther-in his sete or his hous than elles where, he may nat ben exiled by no ryght fro that place? For who-so that is contented in-with the palays and the clos of thilke cite, ther nys no drede that he mai deserve to ben exiled; but who that leteth the wil for to enhabyten there, he for-leteth also to deserve to ben citezen of thilke cite. [203] So that

196. *Jordan*, 'delatravi'; A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. read *broken*; B *spoken*.

200. *emperoures* is due to the Fr. trans. of 'empereur,' 'our empire ne par commandement.'

202. *lord*, that is *lord* (B *he is lord*).

203. Cx. A<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> Hn. omit *and the clos*.

I seie that the face of this place ne moeveth me noght as mochel as thyn owene face, ne I ne axe nat rather the walles of thy librarye, apparayled and wrought with yvory and with glas, than after the sete of thi thought, in which I put noght whilom bookes, but I putte that that maketh bokes wurthy of prys or precyous, that is to seyn the sentence of my bookes.

And certeynly of thy dessertes bystowed in comune good thou hast seyde soth, but after the multitude of thy gode dedes thou hast seyde fewe. And of the honestete or of the falsnesse of thynges that ben opposed ayens the, thou hast remembred thynges that ben known to alle folk. And of the felonyes and fraudes of thyn accusours, it semeth the have touched it for sothe ryghtfully and schortly, al myghten tho same thynges betere and more plenteuously ben couth in the mouth of the peple that knoweth all this. [210] Thou hast eek blamed gretly and compleyned of the wrongful dede of the senat, and thou hast sorwyd for my blame, and thou hast wepen for the damage of thi renoun that is apayred; and thi laste sorwe eschaufede ayens fortune and compleyndest that guerdouns ne ben nat eveneliche yolden to the dessertes of folk. And in the lattre eende of thy wode muse, thou preydest that thilke pees that governeth the hevene schulde governe the erthe.

But for that many tribulacions of affections han assailed the, and sorwe and ire and wepyng to-drawen the diversely, as thou art now feble of thought, myghtyere remedies ne schullen noght yit touchen the. For wyche we wol usen somdel lyghtere medicynes, so that thilke passiouns that ben waxen hard in swellunge by perturbacions flowyng in to thy thought, mowen waxen esy and softe to resceyven the

208. *dessertes*, etc., 'de tuis in commune bonum meritis.'

212. *compleyndest*, subject omitted, as often; cp. 49, 'bereth.'



strengthe of a more myghty and more  
egre medycyne, by an esyere touch-  
yng. [225]

*'Cum Phœbi radiis grave Cancrī sidus  
inastuat.'*—Metrum 6

Whan that the hevy sterre of the  
Cancrē eschaufeth by the bemes of  
Phebus (that is to seyn, whan that  
Phebus the sonne is in the sygne of the  
Cancrē), who-so yeveth thanne largely  
his seedes to the feeldes that refusen to  
resceyven hem, lat hym gon, be-giled of  
trust that he hadde to his corn, to  
accornes of okes. Yif thou wolt gadere  
vyolletes, ne go thou nat to the purple  
wode whan the feeld, chirkyng, agryseth  
of cold by the felnesse of the wind that  
hyghte Aquilon. Yif thou desirest or  
wolt usen grapes, ne seek thou nat with  
a glotonous hand to streyne and presse  
the stalkes of the vyne in the first somer  
sæson; for Bachus, the god of wyn,  
hath rather yyven his yiftes to autumpne  
(the latter ende of somer). God tokneth  
and assigneth the tymes, abyngne hem to  
hir propre office, ne he ne suffreth nat  
the stowndes whiche that hym-self hath  
devyded and constreyned to ben I-  
medded to-gidre. [220] And for-thy  
he, that forleteth certain ordenaunce of  
doynge by overthrowng wey, he hath  
no glad issue or ende of his werkes.

*'Primum igitur paterisne me pauculis  
rogacionibus.'*—Prosa 6

First wiltow suffre me to touche and  
assaye the staat of thi thought by a fewe  
demaundes, so that I may understande  
what be the manere of thi curacioun?

'Axe me,' quod I, 'at thi wille what  
thou wolt, and I schal answer.' Tho  
seyde sche thus: 'Whethir wenestow,'  
quod sche, 'that this world be governed  
by foolysche happes and fortunows, or  
elles wenestow that ther be inne it ony  
gouvernement of resoun?'

226. *any sterre*, 'grave Cancrī sidus.'

227. *by overthrowng wey*, 'principiū via.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat in  
no manere that so certeyn thyngesschulden  
be moeved by fortunows [folie]; [225] but  
I woot wel that god, makere and maister,  
is governour of his werk, ne nevere nas  
yit day that myghte putte me out of the  
sothnesse of that sentence.'

'So it is,' quod sche, 'for the same  
thyng songe thou a litil here by-forn,  
and by-wayledest and by-weptest, that  
only men weren put out of the cure of  
god; for of alle othere thynges thou ne  
doutedest the nat that they nere governed  
by resoun. But owgh I wondre gretly,  
certes, whi that thou art sik, syn that  
thow art put id so holsome a sentence:  
but lat us seken deppere; I coniecte that  
ther lakketh y not what. But sey me  
this: syn that thow ne doutest noght  
that this world be governed by god,  
with whiche governayles takestow heede  
that it is governed?'

'Unnethes,' quod I, 'knowe I the  
sentence of thy questioun, so that I ne may  
nat yit answeren to thy demandes.' [230]

'I nas nat desceyved,' quod sche,  
'that ther ne failleth som-what, by whiche  
the maladye of perturbacion is crept in to  
thi thought, so as [thorw] the strengthe  
of the paly chynynge [and] open. But  
sey me this: remembrestow what is the  
ende of thynges, and whider that the  
entencion of alle kende tendeth?'

'I have herd tolde it som-tyme,' quod  
I, 'but drerynesse hath dilled my mem-  
orie.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'thou wost wel  
whennes that alle thynges bien comen  
and proceded?'

'I woot wel,' quod I, and answerede  
that god is bygynnyng of al. [235]

225. Instead of *folie* all MSS. read *fortune*.  
But Lat. 'fortuita temeritate' and Fr. 'for-  
tunele folie' point to *folie* as the word Chaucer  
used.

226. *ough*, 'papee.'

227. *y not what*, 'nescio quid'; L. 'is as scy  
quod.'

231. *as at*, etc., 'velut hianti valli robore'; the  
MSS. omit *thorw* and read *is open* instead of *and  
open*. The correction, justified by the Lat. and  
Fr. versions, is necessary to the sense.

'And how may this be,' quod sche, 'that, syn thou knowest the bygynnyng of thynges, that thou ne knowest nat what is the ende of thynges? But swiche ben the customes of perturbaciouns, and this power they han, that they mai moeve a man from his place (that is to seyn, fro the stabelnesse and perfeccion of his knowynge); but certes, thei mai nat al arrace hym, ne aliene hym in al. But I wolde that thou woldest answere to this: Remembrestow that thou art a man?'

'Whi schulde I nat remembren that?' quod I.

'Maystow noght telle me thanne,' quod sche, 'what thyng is a man?'

'Axestow me nat,' quod I, 'whether it that I be a resonable mortel beste? I woot wel, and I confesse wel that I am it.' [240]

'Wystestow nevere yit that thou were any othir thyng?' quod sche.

'No,' quod I.

'Now woot I,' quod sche, 'other cause of thi maladye, and that ryght greet: thou hast left for-to knowen thy-selfe what thou art. Thurw whiche I have playnly fownde the cause of thi maladye, or elles the entree of recoveryng of thyn hele. For-why, for thou art confunded with foryetyng of thi-self, for-thi sorwestow that thou art exiled fro thy propre goodes; and for thou ne woost what is the ende of thynges, for-thi demestow that felouns and wikkide men ben myghty and weleful; [245] and for thou hast foryeten by whiche governe-mentes the world is governed, for-thy weenestow that these mutacions of fortunes fleten withouten governour. These ben grete causes, noght oonly to maladye, but: certes gret causes to deth. But I thanke the auctour and the makere of hele, that nature hath nat al forleten the.

<sup>243.</sup> *Thurw whiche*, etc., 'quare plenissime . . . inveni'; Fr. 'par quoy (for *pourquoy*) le ai plaignement (i.e. *plainement*, mistaken by Chaucer for O.F. *plainement*, overttement) trouvee', etc.

<sup>246.</sup> *Fortunes*, 'fortunarum'; found only in C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub>; others *fortune*.

I have gret noryssynge of thy hele, and that is, the sothe sentence of governance of the world, that thou by-levest that the governynge of it is nat subgit ne underput to the folye of these happes aventureous, but to the resoun of god. And ther-fore doute the nothing, for of this litel spark thine heet of lijf schal shine.

But for as moche as it is nat tyme yet of fastere remedies, and the nature of thoughtes desceyved is this, that, as ofte as they casten awcy sothe opynyouns, they clothen hem in false opynyouns, [250] of the whiche false opynyouns the derknesse of perturbacion waxeth up, that confowndeth the verray insyghte—that derknesse schal I assaie som-what to maken thynne and wayk by lyghte and meneliche remedies; so that, afir that the derknesse of desceyvynge desyrynges is doon away, thou mowe knowe the schynyng of verray light.

'*Nubibus atris condita.*'—Metrum 7

The sterres, covred with blake cloudes, ne mowen yeten a-doun no lyght. Yif the truble wynd that hyghte Auster, turnynge and wallwynge the see, medleth the heete (that is to seyn, the boyl-ynge up fro the botme), the waves, that whilom weren clere as glas and lyk to the fayre bryghte dayes, withstant anon the syghtes of men by the filthe and ordure that is resolved. [255] And the fleetyng stream, that royleth doun diversely fro heye montaynes, is areastid and resisted ofte tyme by the encountryng of a stoon that is departed and fallen fro some roche. And for-thy, yif thou wolt loken and demen soth with cleer lyght, and hooden the weye with a ryght path, weyve thou joie, dryf fro the drede,\* fleme thou hope, ne lat no sorwe aproche (that is to seyn, lat non of these passaciouns overcomen the or blenden the). For

<sup>248.</sup> *noryssynge*, 'fomentum'; found only in C<sub>2</sub>; B *trust*; others *noryssynge*.

<sup>251.</sup> Before *that derknesse* all MSS. insert *and*.

<sup>257.</sup> C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> H<sub>2</sub>. *this fourre passaciouns*.

cloudy and derk is thilke thought, and bownde with bridelis, where as thise thynges reiguen.'

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS

'Postea paulisper conticuit.'—Prosa I

After this sche stynte a lytel; and after that sche hadde gadrede by atempre stillenesse myn attentcioun (as who so myghte seyn thus: after thise thynges sche stynte a litil, and whan sche aperceyved by atempre stillenesse that I was ententyf to herkne hire), sche bygan to speke on this wyse: 'If I,' quod sche, 'have undirstonden and knowne outrely the causes and the habyt of thy maladye, thow languyssest and art defetted for desair and talent of thi rather fortune. [260] Sche (that ilke Fortune) oonly, that is chaunged, as thow feynest, to the ward, hath perverted the cleernesse and the estat of thi corage. I understonde the fele folde colours and desceytes of thilke merveyulous monstre (Fortune) and how sche useth ful flatteryng famylarite with hem that sche enforceth to bygyle, so longe, til that sche confounde with unsuffrable sorwe hem that sche hath left in despeir unpurveied. And yif thou remembrest wel the kynde, the maneris, and the desserte of thilke fortune, thou shalt wel knowe that, as in hir, thow nevere ne haddest ne hast ylost any fair thyng. But, as I trowe, I schal nat greetly travaillen to don the remembren on these thynges. [265] For thow were wont to hurtlen hir with manly woordes whan sche was blaundyssching and present, and pursuydest hir with sentences that weren drawn out of myn entre (that is to seyn, of myn enformacion).

264. *as in hir*, i.e. as far as she is concerned.

266. *C. Hn. Cx. hurtelen and despyren*; Lat. 'molestare'; Fr. 'assailir'.

267. *entre*, cp. *Aq.*, 'aditu id est de nostra infortuna'. The received text has simply *entre*.

But no sodeyn mutacioun ne bytidedh noight with-outen a manere chaungynge of corages; and so is it by-fallen that thou art a litil departed fro the pees of thi thought.

But now is tyme that thou drynke and a-taste some softe and delitable thynges, so that whanne thei ben entred with-ynne the, it mowen maken wey to strengere drynkes of medycines. Com now forth, therefore, the suasyoun of swetnesse rethorien, whiche that goht oonly the righte wey while sche forsaketh nat myn estatutes. And with Rethorice com forth Musice, a damoysele of our hous, that syngeth now lightere moedes or prolacions, now hevvere. [270] What eyleth the, man? What is it that hath cast the in-to moornyng and in-to wepyng? I trow that thou hast seyn some newe thyng and unkouth. Thou weneest that fortune be chaunged ayens the; but thow weneest wrong, yif thou that wene: alway-tho ben hir maneris. Sche hath rather kept, as to the ward, hir propre stablenesse in the chaungynge of hir-self. Ryght swiche was sche whan sche flateryd the and desceyved the with unfeul lykynges of false welefulnesse. Thou hast now knqwen and ateynt the doutous or double visage of thilke blynde goddesse (Fortune). [275] Sche, that yit covereth and wympleth hir to other folk, hath schewyd hir every del to the. Yif thou <sup>270</sup>approvest here and thynkest that sche is good, use hir maneris and pleyne the nat; and yif thou agrisest hir false trecherie, despise and cast away hir that pleyeth so harm fully. For sche, that is now cause of a mochel sorwe to the, scholde han caus to the of pees and of joye. Sche hat forsaken the, forsothe, the whiche thou nevere man mai ben siker that sche schal forsaken hym. (Glose. But natheles some bookes han the texte thus: fo

270. *modes or prolacions*, 'modes'; but probably due to some gloss.

277. *use hir maneris*, 'utere moribus'.

280. *some bookes*, i.e. the French text.

sothe sche hath forsaken the, ne ther nys  
no man siker that sche hath nat forsake.)  
[180] Holdestow thanne thilke weleful-  
nesse precious to the, that schal passen?  
And is present Fortune dere-worth to the,  
whiche that nys nat feithful for to duelle,  
and whan sche goth away that sche  
bryngeth a wyght in sorwe? For syn  
sche may nat ben with-holden at a mannys  
wille, sche maketh hym a wrecche when  
sche departeth fro hym. What other  
thyng is flyttinge Fortune but a maner  
schewyng of wrecchidnesse that is to  
comen? Ne it suffiseth nat oonly to loken  
-n thyng that is present byforn the eien  
f a man; but wisdom loketh and mesur-  
th the ende of thynges. And the same  
haungyng from oon in-to another (that  
is to seyn, fro adversite in-to prosperite),  
maketh that the manaces of Fortune ne  
en nat for to dreden, ne the flaterynge  
f hir to ben desired. Thus, at the  
aste, it byhoveth the to suffren wyth  
vene wil in pacience al that is doon in-  
with the floor of Fortune (that is to seyn,  
n this world), syn thou hast oonys put  
by nekke undir the yok of hir. [185]  
?or yif thou wilt writen a lawe of wend-  
inge and of duellynge to Fortune, whiche  
hat thou hast chosen frely to ben thi  
ady, artow nat wrongful in that, and  
nakest Fortune wroth and aspre by thyn  
pacience? And yit thou mayst nat  
shaungen hir. Yif thou committest and  
re-takest thi seyles to the wynd, thou  
halt ben shoven, nat thider that thou  
woldest, but whider that the wynd  
shouveth the. Yif thou castest thi  
seedes in feeldes, thou sholdest han in  
mynde that the yeres ben amonges  
outher-while plenteuous and outher-  
while bareyne. Thou hast by-taken thi-  
self to the governaunce of Fortune and  
for-thi it byhoveth the to ben obeisaunt  
to the maneris of thi lady. Enforcestow  
the to aresten or withholden the swyft-  
nesse and the sweighe of hir turnyng  
wheel? O thou fool of alle mortel  
foolis! Yif Fortune bygan to duelle stable,  
she comede thanne to ben Fortune. [190]

'*Hec cum superba.*'—Metrum 1

Whan Fortune with a proud ryght  
hand hath turned hir chaungyngestowndes,  
sche fareth lyke the maneres of the  
boylyng Eurippe. (Glossa. Eurippe is  
an arm of the see that ebbeth and floweth,  
and som-tyme the stream is on o side, and  
som-tyme on the tothir.) Textus. She  
cruel (Fortune) casteth adoun kynges  
that whilom weren y-dradd; and sche,  
desceyvable, enhaunceth up the humble  
chere of hym that is discourfited. Ne  
sche neither heereth, ne rekketh of  
wrecchide wepynges; and she is so hard  
that sche leygheth and scorneth the  
wepynges of hem, the whiche sche hath  
maked wepe with hir free wille. Thus  
sche pleyeth, and thus sche proeveth hir  
strengthes, and scheweth a greet wonder  
to alle hir servautes yif that a wyght  
is seyn weleful and overthrowe in an  
houre. [195]

'*Vellem autem pauca.*'—Prosa 2

Certes I wolde pleten with the a fewe  
thynges, usynge the woordes of Fortune.  
Take hede now thy-self, yif that sche  
asketh ryght: "O thou man, wherfore  
makestow me gylty by thyne every dayes  
pleynnynges? What wrong have I don  
the? What godes have I byrest the that  
weren thyne? Stryf or plect with me  
byforn what juge that thou wolt of the  
possessioun of rychesses or of dignitees;  
and yif thou maist schewen me that ever  
any mortel man hath receyved any of  
the thynges to ben hise in propre, thanne  
wil I graunte freely that thilke thynges  
weren thyne whiche that thou axest.

Whan that nature brought the forth  
out of thi modir wombe, I receyved the  
nakid and nedy of alle thynges, and I  
norissched the with my richesses, and  
was redy and ententyf thurwe my favour

195. in an houre, &c. in one hour.

196. asketh right, 'his postulat.'

197. C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub>. A<sub>2</sub> read gyltyf.

199. ever goes with any, 'cuiusquam.'

to sustene the [300]—and that maketh the now incipient ayens me; and I envyrounde the with al the habundaunce and schynnyng of alle goodes that ben in my ryght. Now it liketh me to with-drawe myn hand. Thow hast had grace as he that hath used of foreyne goodes; thow hast no ryght to pleyne the, as though thou haddest outrelly forlorn alle thy thynges. Why pleynestow thanne? I have doon the no wrong. Richesses, honours, and swiche othere thynges ben of my right. My servautes knowen me for hir lady; they comen with me, and departen whan I wende. I dar wel affermen hardely that, yif tho thynges of whiche thow pleyne that thou hast for-lorn [hem] hadden ben thyne, thow ne haddest nat lorn hem. Schal I thanne, oonly, be defended to usen my ryght? Certes it is leueful to the hevene to maken clere dayes, and after that to coveren the same dayes with dirke nyghtes. [305] The yer hath eek leve to apparaylen the visage of the erthe, now with floures, and now with fruyt, and to confownden hem som-tyme with reynes and with coldes. The see hath eek his ryght to ben som-tyme calm and blaundysschyng with smothe watir, and som-tyme to ben horrible with wawes and with tempestes. But the covetise of men, that mai nat be stawnched,—schal it bynde me to ben stidfast, syn that stidfastnesse is uncouth to my maneris? Swiche is my strengthe, and this pley I pleye continually. I torne the whirlynge wheel with the turnynge sercle; I am glad to chaungen the loweste to the heyeste, and the heyeste to the loweste. Worth up yif thow wolt, so it be by this lawe, that thow ne holde nat that I do the wrong, though thow descende a-down whan the resoun of my pley axeth it. [320] [Wystestow nat thanne my maneris?] Wystestow nat how Cresus, kyng of Lydyens, of whiche kyng Cirus was ful

304. *hem*, supplied from Fr. B omits *of*, and for that *thou hast* reads *to have*.

312. *Wystestow*, etc. Supplied from Lat. and Fr.; probably omitted by Adam Scrivener.

sore agast a lytil byforn,—that this rewliche Cresus was caught of Cirus and lad to the fyer to ben brend; but that a rayn descendede down fro hevene that rescowde hym. And is it out of thy mynde how that Paulus, consul of Rome, whan he had taken the kyng of Percyens, weep pitously for the captivite of the selve kyng. What other thyng by-waylen the crynges of tragedyes but oonly the dedes of fortune, that with unwar strook overturneth the realmes of greet nobleye? (Glose. Tragedye is to seyn a dite of a prosperite for a tyme, that endeth in wrecchidnesse.) Textus. [315] Lersedest nat thow in Greek whan thow were yong, that in the entre or in the seler of Juppiter ther ben cowched two tonnes; the toon is ful of good, and the tother is ful of harm. What ryght hastow to pleyne, yif thou hast taken more plenteuously of the gode side (that is to seyn of my riches and prosperites)? And what ek yif y ne be nat al departed fro the? What eek yif my mutabilite yeveth the ryghtful cause of hope to har yit bettere thynges? Natheles dismaye the nat in thi thought; and thow that art put in the comune realme of alle desire nat to lyven by thyn oonly propr ryght.

'*Si quantas rapidis.*'—Metrum 2

Though Plente (that is, goddesse o rychesses) hielde a-down with ful horn and withdraweth nat hir hand, as man riches as the see torneth upward sandes whan it is moeved with ravysshyng blasts, [320] or elles as manye rychesses as ther schynen bryghte sterres in hevene on the sterry nyghtes; yit for all that mankynde nolde nat cese to wepe wrecchide pleyntes. And al be it so that god resceyveth gladly hir preiers,

323. *kyng of Percyens* (should be *kyng Perses*), 'regis Persi'; but Fr. 'le roy de Perse'.

326. *serles*, possibly a mistake for *seils*, 'limbs'; Fr. 'sueil'.

329. *desire nat*, 'desideres vivere'; but cp. variant in Nocker, 'ne desideras v.'

and yveth hem, as fool large, moche gold, and apparayleth covetous folk with noble or cleer honours; yit semeth hem haven I-geten no thyng, but alwey hir cruel ravyne, devourynge al that they han geten, scheweth othere gapynge (that is to seyn, gapyn and desiren yit after mo rychesses). What brydles myghte withholden to any certeyn ende the disordene covetise of men, whan evere the rather that it fletith in large yiftes, the more ay brenneth in hem the thurst of havynge? Certes he that qwakynge and dredful weneth hym-selven nedy, he ne lyveth never-mo ryche." [325]

*'Hiis igitur si pro se.'*—Prosa 3

Therefore, yif that fortune spake with the for hir-self in this manere, for-sothe thow ne haddest noght what thou myghtest answer. And yif thow hast any thyng wher-with thow mayst rightfully defenden thi compleynthe, it behoveth the to schewen it, and I wol yive the space to tellen it.'

'Certeynly,' quod I thanne, 'thise ben faire thynges and enoynted with hony swetnesse of Rethorik and Musike; and oonly whil thei ben herd thei ben delicious, but to wrecches it is a deppere felyng of harm. (This is to seyn, that wrecches felen the harmes that thei suffren more grevously than the remedies or the delices of thise wordes mowen gladen or conforten him.) So that, whanne thise thynges stynten for to sounne in eris, the sorwe that is in-set greveth the thought.' [330]

'Right so it is,' quod sche. 'For thise ben yit none remedies of thy maladye, but they ben a maner norisschynges of thi sorwe, yit rebel ayen thi curacioun. For whan that tyme is, I schal moeve and adiust swiche thynges

323. *scheweth*, etc., 'pandit i.e. manifestat alios huiusmodi.'

328. *it is*, i.e. there is. C<sub>2</sub> Hn. A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H omit it.

334. C<sub>2</sub> Hn. A<sub>1</sub> C<sub>1</sub> omit *and adiust*; B and others; R. *adjustet*.

that percen hem-selve depe. But natheles that thow schalt noght wilne to leten thi-self a wrecche, hastow foieten the nowmbre and the maner of thi welefulnesse? I holde me stille how that the sovereyn men of the city token the in cure and in kepyng, whan thow were orphelyn of fader and of modir, and were chose in affynite of prynces of the cite; and thow by-gonne rather to ben leef and deere than for to been a neyghelour, the whiche thyng is the moste precyous kinde of any propinquite or alliance that mai ben. [335] Who is it that ne seide tho that thow neere right weleful, with so gret a nobleye of thi fadres-in-lawe, and with the chastete of thy wyf, and with the oportunyte and noblesse of thyne masculyn children (that is to seyn, thy sones)? And over al this—me list to passen of comune thynges—how thow haddest in thy youthe dignytes that weren wernd to oolde men. But it deliteth me to comen now to the synguler uppepyng of thi welefulnesse. Yif any fruyt of mortel thynges mai han any weyghte or pris of welefulnesse, myghtestow evere forgeten, for any charge of harm that myghte byfalle, the remembraunce of thilke day that thow seye thi two sones maked conseileries, and I-ladde to-gidre fro thyn hous under so greet assemble of senatours and under the blihtnesse of peple; [340] and whan thow saye hem set in the court in hir chayeres of dignytes? Thow, rethorien or pronouncere of kynges preysynges, desservedst glorie of wit and of eloquence when thow, syttinge bytwixen thi two sones conseylers, in the place that highte Circo, fulfildest the abydyng of the multitude of peple that was sprad abouten the with so large preysynge and laude as men syngen in victories. Tho yave

335. *neere*, C<sub>2</sub> *weir*.

336. *fadres-in-lawe*, 'socerorum.'

337. *over al this*, etc., 'Præterea (libet enim præterire communia) sumptus,' etc., misread as 'Præterea (libet præterire), etc., so that now depends on I hold me still' in 334.

340. *under*, 'sub frequentia,' etc.

343. MSS. *and fulfildest*.

thow woordes to Fortune, as I trowe, (that is to seyn, tho feddestow. fortune with glosynge wordes and desceyvedest hir) whan sche accoyede the and noryside the as hir owne delices. Thow bare away of Fortune a yifte (that is to seye swich guerdoun) that sche nevere yaf to prive man. [345] Wiltow therfore leye a reknynge with Fortune? Sche hath now twynkled first upon the with a wikkid eye. If thow considere the nowmbre and the maner of thy blisses and of thy sorwes, thou mayst noght forsaken that thow nart yit blisful. For yif thou therfore wenest thi-self nat weleful, for thynges that tho semeden joyeful ben passed, ther nys nat why thow sholdest wene thi-self a wrecche; for thynges that semen now sory passen also. Artow now comen first, a sodeyn gest, into the schadowe or tabernacle of this lif? Or trowestow that any stedfastnesse be in mannes thynges, whan ofte a swyft hour dissolveth the same man (that is to seyn, whan the soule departeth fro the body). [350] For al though that selde is ther any feith that fortunes thynges wollen dwellen, yet natheles the laste day of a mannes lif is a maner deth to fortune, and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therfore what wenestow thar rekke, yif thow forleete hir in deyinge, or elles that sche (Fortune) forleete the in fleyng away?

*'Cum primo polo.'*—Metrum 3

Whan Phebus (the sonne) bygynneth  
to spreden his clerlesse with rosene  
chariettes, thanne the sterre, y-dymmed,  
xaleth hir white cheeres by the flambes  
if the sonne that overcometh the sterre  
yght. (This to seyn, whan the sonne is

344. *as his owne delices*, 'ut suas delicias' (as her darling).

349. *schadowe or tabernacle*, 'in . . . scenam'; fr. 'en la cortine et en l'ombre.' But 'tabernaculum' and 'umbra' are common mediæval phrases of 'scena'.

350. *thar rekke* (A *thar*, B *ther*, others *dar*. Perhaps read *the before thar*, cp. D 359, Boece 1902). i.e. What do you think you need care, etc.

rysen, the day-sterre waxeth pale, and leeseth hir lyght for the grete bryghtnesse of the sonne.) Whan the woda waxeth rody of rosene floures in the fyrst somer sesoun thutw the breeth of the wynd Zephirus that waxeth warm, yif the cloudy wynd Auster blowe felliche, than goth away the fairnesse of thornes. [355] Ofte the see is cleer and calm without moevynge flodes, and ofte the horrible wynd Aquylon moeveth boylynge tempestes, and overwhelveth the see. Yif the forme of this world is so seeld stable, and yif it torneth by so manye entrechaungynge, wiltow thanne trusten in the tumblynge fortunes of men? Wiltow trowen on flyttinge goodes? It is certeyn and establischid by lawe perdurable, that nothyng that is engendred nys stedfast ne stable.'

*'Tum ego vera inquam.'*—Prosa 4

Thanne seide I thus: 'O norice of alle vertues, thou seist ful sooth; ne I mai noght forsake the ryght swyfte cours of my prosperite (that is to seyn, that prosperite ne be comen to me wonder swyftli and sone); but this is a thyng that greetly smerteth me whan it remembreth me. [360] For in alle adversites of fortune the moost unseely 'kynde of contrarious fortune is to han ben weleful.'

'But that thow,' quod sche, 'abyest thus the torment of thi false opynioun, that maistow nat ryghtfully blamen ne aretten to thynges. (As who seith, for thow hast yit manye habundances of thynges.) Textus. For al be it so that the ydel name of aventurous welefulnesse moeveth the now, it is leweful that thow rekne with me of how many grete thynges thow hast yit plente. And therfore yif that thilke thyng that thow haddest for moost precyous in al thy rychesse of fortune be kept to the yit by the grace of god unweemmed and undefouled, [365] maistow thanne pleyne ryghtfully upon

364. *grace*, found only in C<sub>2</sub> Ha.

the mescheef of fortune, syn thou hast yit thi beste thynges? Certes yit lyveth in good poynt thilke precyous honour of mankynde, Symacus, thi wyves fader, whiche that is a man makel al of sapience and of vertu, the whiche man thou woldest byen redyly with the pris of thyn owene lif. He bywayleth the wronges that men don to the, and nat for hym-self; for he lyveth in sikernes of anye sentences put ayens hym. And yit lyveth thi wyf, that is a temple of wyt and passyng othere women in clenness of chastete; and, for I wol closen shortly hir bountes, sche is lyk to hir fadir. I telle the wel that sche lyveth, loth of this lyf, and kepeth to the oonly hir goost, and is al maat and overcomen by wepyng and sorwe for desir of the; [370] in the whiche thyng oonly I mopt graunten that thi welefulnesse is amenused. What schal I seyn eek of thi two sones coheylours, of whiche, as of children of hir age, ther shyneth the liknesse of the wit of hir fadir or of hir eldefader! And syn the sovereyne cure of al mortel folk is to saven hir owene lyves, O how weleful artow, if thou knowe thi goodes! For yit ben ther thynges dwelled to the ward that no man douteth that they ne be more derworthe to the than thyn owene lif. And for-thy drye thi teeris, for yit nys nat every fortune al hateful to the ward, ne over greet tempest hath nat fallen upon the, [375] whan that thyne ances clyven faste, that neither wolen suffren the counfort of this tyme present ne the hope of tyme comyng to passen ne to faylen.

'And I preie,' quod I, 'that faste mote thei halden; for, whiles that thei halden, how so ever that thynges been, I shal wel fleetyn forth and escapyn; but thou mayst wel seen how grete apparailles and array that me lakketh, that ben passed away fro me.'

'I have somewhat avaunced and for

370. of whiche, i.e. in whom, 'as quier.'  
375. how dwelled, have remained; A<sub>1</sub> ben dwelled.

thred the,' quod sche, 'yif that thou anoye nat, ne forthynke nat of al thy fortune. (As who seith, I have som-what comforted the, so that thou tempeste the nat thus with al thy fortune, syn thou hast yit thi beste thynges.) [380] But I mai nat suffren thi delices, that pleynest so wepyng and angwyschous for that ther lakketh som-what to thy welefulnesse. For what man is so sad or of so parfite welefulnesse, that he ne stryvethe or pleyneth on some halfe ayen the qualite of his estat? For-why ful anguyschous thing is the condicioun of mannes goodes; for eyther it cometh nat altogidre to a wyght, or elles it ne last nat perpetuel. For som man hath gret rychesse, but he is aschamed of his ungentil lynage; and som man is renomyd of noblesse of kynrede, but he is enclosed in so greet angwysche of nede of thynges that hym were levere that he were unknowe; and som man haboundeth bothe in rychesse and noblesse, but yit he bewayleth his chaste lyf, for he ne hath no wyf; [385] and som man is wel and selyly y-married, but he hath no children, and norisabeth his rychesches to the eyres of straunge folk; and som man is gladed with children, but he wepeth ful sory for the trespas of his sone or of his daughter. And for this ther ne accordeth no wyght lyghtly to the condicioun of his fortune; for alwey to every man ther is in som-what that, unassayed, he woot nat, or elles he dredeth that he hath assaied. And adde this also, that every weleful man hath a ful delaicat feelyng; so that, but yif alle thynges byfalle at his owene wil, for he [is] impacient or is nat used to have noon adversite, anon he is throwen adoun for every litil thyng. [390] And ful litel thynges ben tho that withdrawen the somme or the perfeccoun

381. delices, 'delicias tuas,' effeminacy; cp. 344.

384. angwysche of nede, etc., 'angustia rei familiaris'; Fr. 'angoisse de povreté.'

389. ther is in (B ther is in hym, A ther is inness), i.e. something is therein that, etc.

390. is impacient, 'is' is found only in Cx. A<sub>2</sub>



of blisfulnesse fro hem that been most fortunat. How manye men trowestow wolde demen himself to ben almoste in hevене, yif thei myghten atayne to the leste partye of the remenaunt of thi fortune? This same place that thow clepest exil is contre to hem that enhabiten here, and forthi no-thing wrecchide but whan thou wenest it. (As who seith, thow thi-self, ne no wyght ellis, nis a wrecche but whanne he weneth hym self a wrech by reputation of his corage.) And ayenward, alle fortune is blisful to a man by the aggreablete or by the egalyte of hym that suffreth it. [395] What man is that that is so weleful that nolde change his estat whan he hath lost pacience? The swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is spraynd with many bitteresses; the whiche welefulnesse although it seme swete and joieful to hym that useth it, yit mai it nat ben withholden that it ne goth away whan it wole. Thanne is it wele seene how wrecchid is the blisfulnesse of mortel thynges, that neyther it dureth perpetuel with hem that every fortune rescyven agreablye or egaly, ne it deliteth nat in al to hem that ben angwyssous.

O ye mortel folk, what seeke ye thanne blisfulnesse out of your-self whiche that is put in your-self? Error and folie confoundeth yow. I schal schewe the shortly the poynt of soverayn blisfulnesse. Is there any thyng more precyous to the than thi-self? [400] Thow wolt answer, "nay." Thanne, yif it so be that thow art myghty over thyself (that is to seyn, by tranquillite of thi soule), than hastow thyng in thi powere that thow noldest nevere leesen, ne fortune may nat bynynen it the. And that thow mayst knowe that blisfulnesse ne mai nat standen in thynges that ben fortunous and temporel, now undirstond and gadere it togidre thus: yif blisfulnesse be the soverayn

395. and forthi, etc., should be *and forthi nothing is wrecched*, etc. But some Latin texts read 'nihil miserum' for 'nihil est miserum.'

395. *by the aggreablete*, etc., according to the equanimity with which one takes it.

good of nature that lyveth by resoun, ne thilke thyng nys nat soverayn good that may ben taken away in any wise (for more worthy thyng and more dygne is thilke thyng that mai nat ben take away); than scheweth it wel that the unstableness of fortune may nat atayne to receyven verray blisfulnesse. [405] And yit more over, what man that this towmblyng welefulnesse ledeth, eyther he woot that it is chaungeable, or eller he woot it nat. And yif he woot it nat, what blisful fortune may ther ben in the blyndnesse of ignoraunce? And yif he woot that it is chaungeable, he mot alwey ben adrad that he ne lese that thyng that he ne douteth nat but that he may leesen it (as who seith he mot bien alwey agast lest he lese that he woot wel he may lese it); for whiche the contynuel drede that he hath, ne suffreth hym nat to ben weleful, or elles yif he lese it, he weneth to ben despised and foreleten. Certes eek that is a ful litel good that is born with evene herte whan it is lost (that is to seyn that men do no more force of the lost than of the haveyng). [420] And for as moche as thow thi-self art he to whom it hath be schewed and proved by ful many demonstracyons, as I woot wele, that the soules of men ne mowen nat deyen in no wyse; and ek syn it is cleer and certeyne that fortunous welefulnesse endeth by the deth of the body; it mai nat be doutid that, yif that deth may take away blisfulnesse, that al the kynde of mortel thynges ne descendeth into wrecchidnesse by the ende of the deth. And syn we knowe wel that many a man hath sought the fruyt of blysfulnesse, nat oonly with suffryng of deeth, but eek with suffryng of peynes and tormentes, how myghte thanne this present lif make men blisful, syn that whanne thilke selve lif is ended it ne maketh folk no wrecches? [425]

406. *ledeth*, 'vehit.'

410. *lest*, i.e. *loos*.

413. *at the kynde*, etc., mistranslation of 'omnis mortalium genus.'

'*Quisquis volet perhennem cautus.*'—

Metrum 4

What maner man stable and war, that wol fownden hym a perdurable seete, and ne wol noght ben cast doun with the lowde blastes of the wynd Eurus, and wole despice the see manasyng with flodes; lat hym eschuwen to bilde on the cop of the mountaigne, or in the moyste sandes; for the felle wynd Auster tormēteth the cop of the mountaigne with alle his strengthes, and the louse sandes refusen to beren the hevy weyghte. And for-thi, yif thou wolt fleen the perilous aventure (that is to seyn, of the world) have mynde certeynly to fyccen thin hous of a myrie site in a low stoon. For al-though the wynd troublunge the see thondre with overthrownges, thou, that art put in quiete and weleful by strengthe of thi palays, schalt leden a cler age, scornynge the woodnesses and the ires of the eyr. [420]

'*Set cum rationum iam in te.*'—

Prosa 5

But for as mochel as the norisschynges of my resouns descenden now into the, I trowe it were tyme to usen a litel strengere medicynes. Now undirstand heere; al were it so that the yistes of fortune ne were noght brutel ne transitorie, what is theg in hem that mai be thyn in any tyme, or elles that it nys fowl, yif that it be considered and lookyd perfytely? Richesses ben they preciose by the nature of hem-self, or elles by the nature of the? What is most worth of rychesses? Is it nat gold or myght of moneye assembled? Certes thilke gold and thilke moneye schyneth and yeveth bettre renoun to hem that dispenden it than to thilke folk

<sup>419.</sup> *of a myrie site* (C<sub>1</sub> H B cite, A<sub>2</sub> cytes, Hn. Cx. site) should follow *aventure*, 'sortem sedis amonaz'.

<sup>420.</sup> *a cler age*, 'duces serenius ævum,' misread as 'duces serenum ævum.'

<sup>421.</sup> *Now undirstand heere*, mistranslation of 'Or entens lei' (Lat. 'age').

that mokeren it; for avaryce maketh alwey 'mokereres to ben hated, and largesse maketh folk cleer of renoun.

[425] For, syn that swiche thyng as is transferred fro o man to an othir ne may nat duellen with no man, certes thanne is thilke moneye precyous whan it is translated into other folk and styntheth to ben had by usage of large yvyng of hym that hath yeven it. And also yif al the moneye that is over-al in the world were gadryd to-ward o man, it scholde make alle othere men to be nedy as of that. And certes a voys al hool (that is to seyn with-outen amenusynge) fulfilleth to-gyde the herynge of moche folk. But certes your rychesses ne mowen noght passen unto moche folk withouten amenusynge; and whan they ben apassed, nedes they maken hem pore that forgoon the rychesses. O streyte and nedy clepe I this riches, syn that many folk mai nat han it al, ne al mai nat comen to o man without pouert of alle othere folke.

[430] And the schynynge of gemmes, that I clepe precyous stones, draweth it nat the eighen of folk to hem-ward (that is to seyn for the beautes)? But certes, yif ther were beaute or bountee in the schynynge of stones, thilke cler nesse is of the stones hem-selve, and nat of men; for whiche I wondre gretly that men merveylen on swiche thynges. For-whi what thyng is it that, yif it wanteth moevynge and joynture of soule and body, that by right myghte semen a fair creature to hym that hath a soule of resoun? For al be it so that gemmes drawn to hem-self a litel of the laste beaute of the world thurw the entente of hir creatour and thurw the distinccioun of hem-self, yit, for as mochel as thei ben put under your excellence, thei ne han nat deserved by no way that ye schulde merveylen on hem. [435] And the beaute of feeldes, deliteth it nat mochel unto you?

<sup>428.</sup> *a voys*, etc., 'vox quidem tota pariter multorum replet auditum.'

<sup>434.</sup> Chaucer means *moevynge of soule and joynture of body*. 'a fair creature', etc., should be *fair to a creature that hath a soule and reason*.

*Boece.* 'Why schulde it nat deliten us, syn that it is a ryght fayr porcioun of the ryght fair werk (that is to seyn, of this worlde)? And right so ben we gladed som-tyme of the face of the see whan it is cleer; and also merveylen we on the hevene, and on the sterres, and on the sonne, and on the moone.'

*Philosophia.* 'Aperteneth,' quod sche, 'any of thilke thynges to the? Why darstow glorifye the in the shynynge of any swiche thynges? Artow distyngwed and embelysed by the spryngynge floures of the first somer sesoun, or swelleth thi plente in fruites of somer? Why artow ravyssched with idel joies? Why enbracest thou straunge goodes as they weren thyne? [440] Fortune schal nevere maken that swiche thynges ben thyne that nature of thynges hath makid foreyne fro the. Soth is that, withouten doute, the fruites of the erthe owen to be to the norrysynge of beestis; and yif thou wilt fulfille thyn nede after that it suffiseth to nature, thanne is it no nede that thou seke afir the superfluyte of fortune. For with ful fewe thynges and with ful litel thynges nature halt hir apayed; and yif thou wolt a-choken the fulfillynge of nature with superfluytees, certes thilke thynges that thou wolt thresten or powren in-to nature schulle ben unjoyeful to the, or elles anyous. Wenestow eek that it be a fair thyng to achyne with diverse clothynge? [445] Of whiche clothynge yif the beaute be aggregable to loken uppon, I wol merveylen on the nature of the matiere of thilke clothes, or elles on the werkman that wroughte hem. But also a long route of meyne, maketh that a blisful man? The whiche servantes yif thei ben vicious of condycouns, it is a gret charge and a destruccioun to the hous, and a gret enemy to the lord hym-self; and yif

445. a-choken the fulfillynge, 'urgere satisfactionem.'

446. to the should be to her.

447. vicious of condycouns, 'vitioli moribus.'

448. a gret enemy, 'formidat anamie,' 'vehementis inimici'; enemy is here adj.

they ben gode men, how schal straunge or foreyne goodnesse ben put in the nowmbre of thi richesces? So that by alle thise forside<sup>447</sup> thynges it es cleerly schewed, that nevere oon of thilke thynges that thou accountedest for thyne goodes nas nat thi good.

In the whiche thynges yif ther be no beaute to ben desired, why scholdestow ben sory yif thou leese hem, or whi scholdestow reioysen the for to holden hem? [450] For yif thei ben faire of hir owene kynde, what aperteneth that to the? For als so wel scholde they han ben sayre by hem-selve, though thei were departed fro alle thyne rychesses. For-why fair ne precyous were thei nat for that thei comen among thi rychesses; but for they semeden fair and precyous, therefore thou haddest levere rekne hem among thi rychesses. But what desires-tow of fortune with so gret a noyse and with so greet a fare? I trowe thou seeke to dryve a-wey nede with habundance of thynges, but certes it turneth to you al in the contrarie. For-why certes it nedeth of ful manye helpynge to kepyen the diversite of precious ostelementes; and sooth it is that of many thynges han they nede, that many thynges han; and ayenward of litel nedeth hem that mesureth hir fille after the nede of kynde, and nat after the oultrage of covetyse. [455] Is it thanne so, that ye men ne han no propre good I-set in you, for whiche ye mooten seke outward your goodes in foreyne and subgit thynges? So is thanne the condicion of thynges turned up so down, that a man, that is a devyne beest be meryte of his resoun, thynketh that hym-self nys neyther fair ne noble but it be thurw possessioun of ostelementes that ne han no soules. And certes alle othere thynges ben apayed of hir owene beautes, but ye men that ben semblable to god by your reasonable thought, desiren to apparailen your excellent kynde

456. subgit, 'sepositis,' probably missed as 'suppositis.'

458. apayed of, i.e. satisfied with.

of the loweste thynges; ne ye undir-  
standen nat how greet a wrong ye don  
to your creatour. For he wolde that  
mankynde were moost wurthy and noble  
of any othere erthly thynges, and ye  
threaten a-doun yowre dignytes bynethen  
the loweste thynges. [466] For yif that  
al the good of every thyng be more  
precyous than is thilke thyng whos that  
the good is, syn ye demen that the  
fowleste thynges ben your goodes, thanne  
submytten ye and putten your-selven  
undir the fouleste thynges by your estima-  
cioun; and certes this betydeh nat  
withouten your desert. For certes swiche  
is the condicioun of alle mankynde, that  
only when it hath knowynge of it-self,  
thanne passeth it in noblesse alle othere  
thynges; and when it forletith the  
knowynge of it-self thanne it is brought  
by-nethen alle beestes. For-whi alle  
othere lyvynge beestes han of kynde to  
knowe nat hem-self; but when that men  
leeten the knowynge of hem-self, it cometh  
hem of vice. But how broode scheweth  
the errour and the folie of yow men, that  
wenen that anythyng mai ben apparaild  
with straunge apparailementes! But for-  
sothe that mai nat be don. [465] For  
yif a wyght schyneth with thynges that  
ben put to hym (as thus, yif thilke  
thynges schynen with whiche a man is  
sparayled), certes thilke thynges ben  
comended and preysed with whiche he is  
apparayled; but natheles, the thyng that  
is covered and wrapped under that  
duelleth in his felthe.

And I denye that thilke thyng be good  
that anyoeth hym that hath it. Gabbe  
I of this? Thow wolt sey "nay." Certes  
rychesses han anyed ful ofte hem that  
han tho rychesses, syn that every wikkid  
schrewe, and for his wikkidnesse is the

465. *han . . . to knowe*, 'ceteris animantibus natura est ignorare sese,' with 'natura' read as abl. *cometh hem*, 'leur vint'; cp. *Bt. of Dn.*, 776.

470. *and for his wikkidnesse*, etc. (C<sub>1</sub> Hn. A<sub>2</sub> A<sub>3</sub> omit *is*, B of *his wikkidnesse is the more*, etc., C<sub>2</sub> *is for his wikkidnesse the more*, etc.), i.e. even for his wickedness, etc.

more gredy aftir othir folkes rychesses  
wher so evere it be in any place, be it  
gold or precyous stones; and weneth  
hym onoly most worthy that hath hem.  
[470] Thow thanne, that so bysy dredest  
now the swerd and the spere, yif thou  
haddest entred in the path of this lif a  
voyde weyfarynge man, thanne woldestow  
syngen by-for the theef. (As who seith,  
a pore man that bereth no rychease on  
hym by the weie may boldely synge  
byforn theves, for he hath nat where-of  
to be robbed.) O precyous and ryght  
cleer is the blisfulnesse of mortel rychesses,  
that, whan thou hast geten it, thanne  
hastow lorn thi sikernesse!

'*Felix nimium prior etas.*'—Metrum 5

Blisful was the firste age of men.  
They heelden hem apayed with the  
metes that the trewe feeldes broughten  
forth. They ne destroyeden ne des-  
seyvede nat hem-self with outrage. They  
weren wont lyghtly to slaken hir hungir  
at even with accornes of ookes. [475]  
They ne coude nat medle the yift of  
Bachus to the cleer hony (that is to seyn,  
they coude make no pymment or clarree),  
ne they coude nat medle the bryghte  
fleeces of the contre of Seryens with the  
venym of Tyrie (this is to seyn, thei  
coude nat deyen white fleeces of Syrien  
contre with the blood of a maner schelle-  
fysche that men fynden in Tyrie, with  
whiche blood men deyen purple). They  
slepen holsome slepes upon the gras,  
and dronken of the rennyng watre, and  
layen undir the schadwes of the heye  
pyn trees. Ne no gest ne straunger ne  
karf yit the heye see with oores or with  
schipes; ne thei ne hadden seyn yit none  
newe stroondes to leden marchandise into  
diverse contrees. Tho weren the cruels  
clariouns ful hust and ful stille. Ne  
blood I-schad by egre hate ne hadde nat

474-484. Also translated in *The Pomeroy Age*.  
476. *fleeces of the*, etc., 'vellera lorum' (cp. *Verg. Georg.* II. 121), 'les toisons des Syriens', i.e. silks of Syria. *venym of Tyrie*, 'Tyrie veneno' (cp. *Georg.* II. 463).

deyed yit armures. [480] For wher-to or which woodnesse of enemys wolde first moeven armes, whan thei seyen cruele wowndes ne none medes be of blood I-shad. I wolde that our tymes sholde torne ayen to the oolde maneris ! But the anguysschous love of havynge brenneth in folk more cruely than the fyer of the mountaigne of Ethna that ay brenneth. Allas ! what was he that first dalf up the gobbettes or the weyghtes of gold covered undir erthe and the precyous stones that wolden han be hydd ? He dalf up precious periles. (That is to seyn, that he that hem first up dalf, he dalf up a precious peril for-why, for the preciousnesse of swich thyng hath many man ben in peril.)

'*Quid autem de dignitatibus.*'—Prosa 6

But what schal I seye of dignytes and of powers, the whiche ye men, that neither known verray dignyte ne verray powere, areysen hem as heyghe as the hevене ? [485] The whiche dignytes and powyeres yif thei comen to any wikkid man, thei doon as greet damages and destrucciouns as doothe the flaumbe of the mountaigne Ethna whan the flaumbe walweth up, ne no deluge ne doth so cruele harmes. Certes the remembreth wel, as I trowe, that thilke dignyte that men clepyn the Imperie of consulers, the whiche that whilom was begynnynge of fredom, yowr eldren covetyeden to han don away that dignyte for the pride of the consulers. And ryght for the same pride yowr eldres by-forn that tyme hadden doon away out of the cite of Rome the kynges name (that is to seyn, thei nolden han no lengere no kyng).

But now, if it so be that dignytees and poweris ben yiven to gode men, the whiche thyng is ful selde, what agreeable thynges is ther in the dignytees or powyeres but oonly the goodnesse of folk that useñ hem ? And therefore it is thus that honour ne cometh nat to vertu for

cause of dignyte, but, ayenward, honour cometh to dygnite for cause of vertu. [490] But whiche is thilke your derworthe power that is so cleer and so requerable ? O ye erthliche bestes considere ye nat over whiche thyng that it semeth that ye han power ? Now yif thou saye a mows among othere mys that chalanged to hym-self ward ryght and power over alle othere mys, how gret scorn woldestow han of it ! (Glosa. So fareth it by men ; the body hath power over the body.) For yif thou looke wel upon the body of a wyght, what thyng shaltow fynde more freele than is mankynde ; the whiche men ful ofte ben slayn by bytynge of smale flyes, or elles with the entrynge of crepyng worms in-to the pryvetees of mannes body ? [495] But wher schal men fynden any man that mai exerceh or haunten any ryght up-on another man, but oonly on his body, or elles up-on thynges that ben lower than the body, the whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns ? Maystow evere have any comaundement over a free corage ? Maystowe remuwen fro the estat of his propre reste a thought that is clyvyng togidre in hym self by stedfast resoun ? As whilom a tyraunt wende to confownde a fre-man of corage, and wende to constreyn hym by torment to maken hym discoveren and accusen folk that wisten of a coniuracioun (whiche I clepe a confederacye) that was cast ayens this tyraunt ; but this freman boot of his owene tonge, and caste it in the visage of thilk wode tyraunt. So that the tormentes that this tyraunt wende to han maked matere of cruelte, this wise man maked it matere of vertu. [500] But what thing is it that a man may doon to an other man, that he ne may rescyeven the same thyng of other folk in hym-self ?

491. *But whiche is, etc.*, 'mais quel est,' *is* but what is, etc.

492. *over whiche thyng, etc.*, 'consideratis, quibus qui praesidere videamini.'

498. *As wikkidow, 'cum' temporal*; but probably Fr. 'comme' was misunderstood.

500. *tormentes . . . is, 'les' torments . . .* 'sages bons le (L. las) fist estre.'

485. *doon to 547, preyngynge, missing from Ha.*

(Or thus : what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don hym the same?) I have herd told of Busyrides, that was wont to sleen his gastes that herberweden in his hous, and he was slayn hym-self of Hercules that was his gest. Regulus hadde taken in bataile manye men of Affryke and cast hem in-to feteres, but some ther after he most yve hise handes to ben bownde with the cheynes of hem that he hadde whilom overcomen. Wenestow thanne that he be myghty that hath no power to doon a thyng that othere ne mai doon in hym that he doth in othere? [305] And yit moreover, yif it so were that thise dygnytes or poweris hadden any propre or naturel goodnesse in hem-self, nevere nolde they comen to schrewes. For contrarius thynges ne ben nat wont to ben I-felashed togydre. Nature refuseth that contrarius thynges ben I-joygned. And so, as I am in certeyn that ryght wykkyd folk han dignytees ofte tyme, thanne scheweth it wel that dignytees and poweres ne ben nat gode of hir owene kynde, syn that they suffren hem-selve to clevon or joynen hem to schrewes. And certes the same thyng mai I most digneliche juggen and seyn of alle the yiftes of fortune that most plenteuously comen to schrewes. Of the whiche yiftes I trowe that it oughte ben considered, that no man douteth that he ne is strong in whom he seeth strengthe; [310] and in whom that swyftnesse is, sooth it is that he is swyft; also musyke maketh mucisyens, and phisyk maketh phisicyens, and rethoryke, rethoriens. For-why the nature of every thyng maketh his proprete, ne it is nat entremedyd with the effect of contrarius thynges, and of wil it chaseth out thynges that to it ben contrarie. But certes rychesse mai nat restreynce

avarice unstaunched; ne power ne maketh nat a man myghty over hym-selve, whiche that vicyous lustes holden destreyned with cheynes that ne mowen nat ben unbownden. And dignytees that ben yvven to schrewide folk nat oonly ne maketh hem nat digne, but it scheweth rather al opynly that they been unworthy and undigne. And whi is it thus? Certes for ye han joie to clepen thynges with false names, that beren hem al in the contrarie; the whiche names ben ful ofte reproved by the effect of the same thynges; [315] so that thise ilke rychesses ne oughten nat by ryghte to ben cleped rychesses, ne swyche power ne aughte nat ben clepyd power, ne swiche dignyte ne aughte nat ben clepyd dignyte. And at the laste, I may conclude the same thyng of alle the yiftes of fortune, in whiche ther nys no thyng to ben desired, ne that hath in hym-selve naturel bownte, as it is ful wel yscene. For neither thei ne joygnen hem nat alwey to gode men, ne maken hem alwey gode to whom they been I-joyned.

'*Novimus quantas dederit.*'—Metrum 6

We han wel knowen how many grete harmes and destrucciouns weren I-doon by the emperour Nero. He leet brennen the cite of Rome, and made sleen the senatours; and he cruel whilom sloughe his brothir, and he was makid moyst with the blood of his modir (that is to seyn, he leet sleen and slitten the body of his modir to seen where he was conceyved); [320] and he lookede on every halve uppon hir cold deed body, ne no teer ne wette his face, but he was so hardherted that he myghte ben domesman or juge of hir dede beaute. And natheles yit governed this Nero by septe alle the peples that Phebus (the sonne) may seen,

302. *Busyrides*, rather 'Busirus,' as in B. 3293; but Aq. has 'Busirides.'

305. *Wenestow* . . . *othere*, nonsense, due either to mistranslation of 'de faire que' ('efficere ne'), or to text-corruption, a *thyng* belonging after and to *doon*.

312. *of wil*, 'ultra, i.e. sponte'; C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> as of *wil*, *the oft times*, C<sub>2</sub> omits and . . . *contrarie*.

314. *dignytees* . . . *it*, 'digneta (L. dignitas) . . . fait elle (L. fait elle)'; cp. 449.

314. *that beren hem* goes with *thynges*, i.e. which behave in just the opposite way.

319. *We han*, etc., 'novimus.'

319. *made sleen*, 'fuit occis.'

comynge fro his uttreste arysynge til he hidde his bemes undir the wawes. (That is to seyn he governede al the peples by ceptre imperiale that the sonne goth aboute from east to west.) And ek this Nero governyde by ceptre all the peples that ben undir the colde sterres that highten the vij Tryones. (This is to seyn he governede alle the peples that ben under the partye of the north.) And eek Nero governede alle the peples that the vyolent wynd Nothus scorklith, and baketh the brennyng sandes by his drye heete (that is to seyn, al the peple in the south). [333] But yit ne myghte nat al his heile power torne the woodnesse of this wikkid Nero. Allas! it is grevous fortune as ofte as wikkid sweerd is joyned to cruel venym (that is to seyn, venymows cruelte to lordschipe).'

'*Tum ego scis inquam.*'—Prosa 7

Than seyde I thus: 'Thow woost wel thi-selfe that the covetise of mortel thynges ne hadden nevere lordschipe of me, but I have wel desired matere of thynges to done (as who seith, I desirede to have matiere of governaunce over eomunalites), for vertue stille sholde nat elden (that is to seyn that, list that, or he waxe oold, his vertu, that lay now ful stille, ne schulde nat perysshe unexercised in governaunce of comune, for whiche men myghten speken or wryten of his gode government).'

'For sothe,' quod sche, 'and that is a thyng that mai drawn to governaunce swiche hertes as ben worthy and noble of hir nature, [330] but natheles it may nat drawn or tollen swiche hertes as ben I-brought to the ful perfectioun of vertue, that is to seyn, covetise of glorie and renoun to han wel admynstred the comune thynges, or noon gode desertes to profyt of the

sch. for, i.e. that.

sch. i.e. lest his virtue should periah, etc. For  
and that he reads it, Cx. A3 omitt.

comune. For see now and considere how litel and how voyde of alle prys is thyk glorie. Certeyn thyng is, as thou hast learned by the demonstracioun of astronomye, that al the envyrrounyng of the erthe aboute ne halt but the resoun of a prykke at regard of the gretnesse of hevene; that is to seyn that, yif ther were makid comparysoun of the erthe to the gretnesse of hevene, men wolde juggen in al that the erthe heelde no space. Of the whiche litel regioun of this world, the ferthe partye is inhabited with lyvyng beestes that we knowen, as thou hast thy-selfe learned by Tholome that proveth it. [333] And yif thou haddest withdrawen and abated in thy thought fro thilke ferthe partie as moche space as the see and the mareys contene and overgoon, and as moche space as the regioun of drowghte overstreccheth (that is to seyn sandes and desertes), wel unnethe sholde ther duellen a ryght streyte place to the habitacioun of men. And ye thanne, that ben envyrrouned and closed with-yinne the leeste prykke of thilke prykke, thyngen ye to manyfesten or publischen your renoun and doon yowr name for to be born forth? But yowr glorie that is so narwe and so streyt I-thrungen into so litel bowndes, how mochel conteneth it in largesse and in greet doynge? And also set this therto: that manye a nacioun, diverse of tonge and of maneris and ek of resoun of hir lyvyng, ben inhabited in the cloos of thilke lytel habitacle; [340] to the whiche nacyons, what for difficulte of weyes, and what for diversite of langages, and what for defaute of un-usage and entre-comunyng of marchandise, nat oonly the names of synguler men ne may nat strecchen, but eek the fame of citees ne may nat strecchen. At the laste,

333. *half*, etc., i.e. is accounted but a point in comparison with, etc.

335. *Tholome*, i.e. Ptolemy.

341. *defaute of un-usage*, etc., mixture of 'insolentia', i.e. inconsumptus (*un-usage*) 'commercii' (*entrecomunyng*) and 'par suite de' (*defaute of*) *accoustumance de marchandise*.

certes, in the tyme of Marcus Tulyus, as hym-selve writ in his book, that-the renoun of the comune of Rome ne hadde nat nat yit passid ne clomben over the mountaigne that highte Caucasus; and yit was thilke tyme Rome wel waxen and greetly redouted of the Parthes, and eek of the othere folk enhabitynge aboute. Seestow nat thanne how streyte and how compressid is thilke glorie that ye travaillen aboute to schewe and to multeplie? [543] May thanne the glorie of a synguler Romeyn stretchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome may nat clymben ne passen? And ek seestow nat that the maneris of diverse folk and ek hir lawes ben discordaunt among hem-selve, so that thilke thyng that som men juggen worthy of preysynge, other folk juggen that it is worthy of torment? And therof comyth it that, though a man delyte hym in preysynge of his renoun, he ne mai nat in no wyse bryngen forthe ne spreden his name to many manere peples. And therefore every maner man aughte to ben apayed of his glorie, that is publysschid among his owene neyghbours; and thilke noble renoun schal ben restreyned withynne the boundes of o manere folk. But how many a man, that was ful noble in his tyme, hath the wrecchid and nedy foryetyng of writeris put out of mynde and doon away; [550] al be it so that, certes, thilke wrytynges profiten litel, the whiche wrytynges long and dirke elde doth away, both hem and ek hir auctours! But yow men semeth to geten yow a perdurablete, whan ye thynken that in tyme comynge your fame schal lasten. But natheles yif thou wolt maken comparysoun to the endles spaces of eternyte, what thyng hastow by whiche thou mayst reloisen the of long, lastynge of thi name? For yif ther were makyd comparysoun of the abydyng of a moment to ten thousand wynter, for as

543. *that the renoun*, 'that' is often thus used before a direct quotation.  
549. *how men*, etc. (Cz. *ye men omen*), i.e. it seems to you that, etc.

moche as bothe two spaces ben endyd, for yit hath the moment som porcioun of it, although it litel be. But natheles thilke selve nowmbre of yeeris, and eek as many yeris as ther-to mai be multiplid, ne mai nat certes be comparysoun to the perdurablete that is endles; [555] for of thynges that han ende may ben makid comparysoun, but of thynges that ben withouten ende to thynges that han ende may be makid no comparysoun. And for-thi is it that, al-though renome, of as longe tyme as evere the list to thynken, were thought to the regard of eternyte, that is unstaunchable and infynyt, it ne sholde nat only semen litel, but pleyntliche ryght noght. But ye men, certes, ne konne doon no thyng aryght, but yif it be byfore the audience of the peple and for idel rumours; and ye forsaken the grete worthynesse of concience and of vertu, and ye seeken your gerdouns of the smale wordes of straunge folk. Have now (here and undirstand) in the lyghtnesse of swiche pryde and veyne glorie how a man scornede festyval and myriely swich vanyte. [560] Whilom ther was a man that hadde assaiede with stryvyng wordes another man, the whiche, nat for usage of verray vertu but for proud veyn glorie, had taken upon hym falsly the name of a philosopre. This rather man that I spak of thoughte he wolde assaie where he thilke were a philosopre or no; that is to seyn, yif that he wolde han suffride lyghtly in pacience the wronges that weren doon unto hym. This feynede philosopre took pacience a litel while; and whan he hadde receyved wordes of outrage, he, as in stryvyng ayen and reioysynge of hym-self, seide at the laste ryght thus: "undirstondistow nat that I am a philosopre?" The tother man

554. *bothe two*, A<sub>1</sub> Hn. Cz. *bothe the*; C<sub>6</sub> *both the*, for yit, i.e. yet.

560. *Have now*, etc., 'Accipe' and 'Or recede ad entent'.

562. *where*, i.e. whether.

564. *took pacience*, 'il prist va peit en soi (L omits) pacience'.



answerede ayen ful bytyngely and seyde :  
 "I hadde wel undirstonden it yif thou  
 haddest holde thi tonge stille." But  
 what is it to these noble worthy men?  
 —for, certes, of swych folk speke I that  
 seken glorie with vertue—What is it,  
 quod sche; 'what atteyneth fame to  
 swiche folk, whan the body is rescolved by  
 the deeth at the laste? [565] For if it so  
 be that men dyen in all (that is to seyen,  
 body and soule), the whiche thing our  
 reson defendeth us to byleeven, thanne  
 is ther no glorie in no wyse; for what  
 schalde thilke glorie ben, whan he, of  
 whom thilke glorie is seyde to be, nys  
 ryght naught in no wise? And yif the  
 soule, whiche that hath in hym-self  
 sciencie of gode werkes, unbownden fro  
 the prysone of the erthe, weendeth frely  
 to the hevене, despiseth it nat thanne  
 al erthly ocupacioun; and, beyng in  
 hevене, reioyseth that it is exempt fro alle  
 erthly thynges? (As who seith, thanne  
 rekketh the soule of noon othir thyng,  
 ne of renoun of this world.) [570]

'*Quicumque solam mente.*'—Metrum 7

Who so that with overthrowng  
 thought onely seketh glorie of fame,  
 and weneth that it be sovereyn good,  
 lat hym looke upon the brode schewyng  
 contrees of the hevене, and upon the streyte  
 sete of this erthe; and he shal be asschamed  
 of the encres of his name, that mai nat  
 fulfille the litel compas of the erthe. O!  
 what coveyten proude folk to lysten up  
 hir nekkes on idel in the dedly yok  
 of this world? For al though that renoun  
 y-sprad, passyng to ferne peples, goth  
 by diverse tonges; and al-though that  
 greet houses or kynredes shynen with  
 cleer titles of honours; yit natheles deth  
 despiseth al heyne glorie of fame,  
 and deth wrappeth to gidre the heyghe  
 heved and the lowe, and maketh egal  
 and eveneth the heygheste to the loweste.  
 [575] Where women now the bones of trewe  
 Fabricius? What is now Brutus or

stierne Caton? The thynne fame yit  
 lastyng of here idel names is marked  
 with a fewe lettres. But al-though that  
 we han knowen the fayre wordes of the  
 fames of hem, it is nat yvven to knowen  
 hem that ben dede and consumpt.  
 Liggeth thanne stille, al outrely unknow-  
 able, ne fame maketh yow nat, knowe.  
 And yif ye wene to lyve the longere  
 for wynd of yowr mortel name whan o  
 cruel day schal ravyssche yow, than is  
 the seconde deth duellyng unto yow.  
 (Glose. The first deth he clepeth here  
 departyng of the body and the soule,  
 and the seconde deth he clepeth as  
 here the styntyng of the renoun of  
 fame.) [580]

'*Set ne me inexorabile.*'—Prosa 8

'But for as mochel as thou schalt  
 nat wenen,' quod sche, 'that I bere an  
 untretable batayle ayens fortune, yit som-  
 tyme it by-falleth that sche desceyv-  
 able desserveth to han ryght good thank of men.  
 And that is whan sche hir-self opneth,  
 and whan sche discovereth hir frownt  
 and scheweth hir maneris. Peraventure  
 yit undirstandestow nat that I schal seie.  
 It is a wonder that I desire to telle, and  
 for-thi unneth may I unplyten my  
 sentence with wordes. For I deme that  
 contrarious Fortune profiteth more to  
 men than Fortune debonayre. For  
 alwey, whan Fortune semeth debonayre,  
 thanne sche lieth, falsly byhetynge the  
 hope of welefulnesse; but forsothe con-  
 trarious Fortune is alwey sothfast, whan  
 sche scheweth hir-self unstable thurw  
 hir chaungynge. [585] The amyable Fortune  
 desceyveth folk; the contrarie Fortune  
 techeth. The amyable Fortune byndeth  
 with the beaute of false goodes the hertes  
 of folk that usen hem; the contrarie  
 Fortune unbyndeth hem by the knowynge  
 of freel welefulnesse. The amyable

578. *Liggeth thanne*, etc., 'jacetis,' read as imperative on account of Fr. 'Donques gaez vous.'

581-612. A1 omits, beginning again at II, met. 1  
 581. *bere . . . batayle*, 'gerere bellum.'

580. Ca Ho. Ca. *rekketh the soule of no glorye renoun.* A1 omits from *As who to this world.*

Fortune maystow seen al-wey wyndy and flowynge, and evere mysknowynge of hirself; the contrarie Fortune is atempre and restreyned and wys thurw exercise of hir adversite. At the laste, amyable Fortune with hir flaterynges draweth myswandrynge men fro the sovereyne good; the contrarious Fortune ledeth ofte folk ayen to sothfast goodes, and haleth hem ayen as with an hook. Wenestow than that thou aughtest to leeten this a litel thyng, that this aspre and horrible Fortune hath discovered to the the thoughtes of thi trewe freendes. [590] For why this ilke Fortune hath departed and uncovered to the bothe the certain visages and eek the doutes visages of thi felawes. When she departed away fro the, she took away hir freendes and lefte the thyne freendes. Now whanne thou were ryche and weleful, as the semede, with how mochel woldestow han bought the fulle knowynge of thys (that is to seyn, the knowynge of thyne verray freendes)? Now pleyn the nat thanne of rycheas y-lorn, syn thou hast fownden the moste precyous kynde of rycheses, that is to seyn, thi verray freendes.

'*Quod mundus stabili fide.*'—Metrum 8

That the world with stable feyth varieth accordable chaungynge; that the contrarious qualites of elementes holden among hemself allyaunce perdurable; [595] that Phebus, the sonne, with his goldene chariet bryngeth forth the rosene day; that the moone hath comaundement over the nyghtes, whiche nyghtes Esperus, the eve sterre, hath brought; that the see, gredy to flowen, constreyneth with a certaen eende his floodes, so that it is nat lefevel to streche his brode termes or bowndes uppon the erthes (that is to seyn, to coveren al the erthe)—al this accordaunce of thynges is bounde with love, that governeth erthe and see, and

hath also comandement to the hevene. And yif this love slakede the bridelis, alle thynges that now loven hem to-gidres wolden make batayle contynuely, and stryven to sordo the fassoun of this world, the which they now leden in accordable feith by sayre moevynges. This love halt togidres peples joyned with an holy boond, and knytteth sacrament of mariages of chaste loves; and love enditeth lawes to trewe felawes. [600] O weleful were mankynde, yif thilke love that governeth hevene governede yowr corages.'

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS

INCIPIT LIBER TERTIUS

'*Iam cantum illa.*'—Prosa 1

By this sche hadde ended hir song, whan the swetnesse of here dite hadde thurw perced me, that was deasyrous of herknyng, and I a-stoned halde yit streyghte myn eres (that is to seyn, to herkne the bet what sche wolde seye). So that a litel hereafter I seide thus: 'O thou that art sovereyne confort of angwyssous corages, so thou hast remounted and norysshed me with the weyghte of thi sentences and with delyt of thy syngynge; so that I trowe nat now that I be unparygal to the strokes of Fortune (as who seith, I dar wel now suffren alle the assautes of Fortune and wel defende me fro hir). And tho remedies whiche that thou seydest her byforn that weren ryght scharpe, nat only that I ne am agrisen of hem now; but I, desiros of herynge, axe gretly to heren tho remedies.' [605]

Thanne seyde sche thus: 'That seeled

598. *hath comandement to*, 'imperitans celo,' 'commandant au ciel.'

598. *loven hem to-gidres*, 's'entrelaiment,' i.e. love one another. *contynuely*, 'continuo'; rather, 'straightway.'

600. *B A<sub>2</sub> the sacr.*, *Cx. mariages.*

605. *that weren* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> om. *that*), omitted subject as in 609.

588. *exercies*, 'exercitatione,' i.e. experience.

595. *varieth*, etc., 'concordes variat vices.'

597. *B gredy constrayneth to flowen.*

I ful wel,' quod sche, 'whan thou ententyf and stille ravyschedest my wordes, and I abood til that thou haddest swich habite of thi thought as thou hast now, or elles til that I myself hadde makid to the the same habite, whiche that is a more verray thyng. And certes the remenant of thynges that ben yet to seie ben swiche, that first whan men tasten hem, they ben bytynge; but whan they ben resceyved with-ynne a wyght, thanne ben thei swete. But for thou seyst that thou art so desyrous to herke hem, with how greet brennyng woldestow glowen, yif thou wistest whider I wol leden the!'

'Whider is that?' quod I.

'To thilke verraye welefulnesse,' quod sche, 'of whiche thyn herte dremeth; [610] but forasmoche as thi syghte is occupied and destourbed by imagynacoun of erthly thynges, thou mayst nat yit seen thilke selve welefulnesse.'

'Do,' quod I, 'and schewe me what is thilke verray welefulnesse, I preie the, withoute taryng.'

'That wol I gladly do,' quod sche, 'for the cause of the. But I wol first marken the by wordes, and I wol enforcen me to enforme the thilke false cause of blisfulnesse that thou more knowest; so that whanne thou hast fully byhoolden thilke false goodes and torned thin eighen to the tother syde, thou mowe knowe the cleernesse of verray blisfulnesse.'

'*Qui serens ingensum.*'—Metrum 1

'Who-so wole sowe a feld plenteuous, let hym first delyvren it of thornes, and kerue asondir with his hook the bussches and the feern, so that the corn may comen hevvy of crys and of greynes.

606. *whiche that*, etc., 'quod est verius.'

610. *Do and schewe*, 'Fac . . . et demonstra.'

611. . . . et demonstra.

612. *for the cause of the*, i.e. for thy sake.

613. *marken the*, 'je te conseillerai'; the dative.

615. *that thou more*, etc., i.e. which thou art more familiar with.

[615] Hony is the more swete, if mouthes han first tasted savours that ben wykke. The sterres schynen more aggreably whan the wynd Nothus leteth his plowngy blastes; and afir that Lucifer, the day-sterre, hath chased away the dirke nyght, the day the fairere ledeth the rosene hors of the sonne. And ryght so thou, byhooldyng first the false goodes, bygyn to withdrawe thy nekke fro the yok of erthely affecciouns; and afterward the verray goodes schullen entren into thy corage.'

'*Cum defixo paululum.*'—Prosa 2

Tho fastenede sche a litel the syghte of hir eyen, and withdrowghe hir ryght as it were into the streyte seete of here thought, and bigan to speke ryght thus: 'Alle the cures,' quod sche, 'of mortel folk, whiche that travailen hem in many manere studies, gon certes by diverse weyes; but natheles thei enforcen hem alle to comyn oonly to oon ende of blisfulnesse. [620] And blisfulnesse is swiche a good, that who-so that hath geten it, he ne may over that nothing more desire. And this thyng forsothe is the soverayn good that conteneth in hym-self alle maner goodes; to the whiche goode if ther fayled any thyng, it myghte nat ben sovereyn good, for thanne wer ther som good out of thilke sovereyn good; that myghte ben desired. Now is it cleer and certeyne thanne, that blisfulnesse is a parfyt estat by the congregacioun of alle goodes; the whiche blisfulnesse, as I have seyd, alle mortel folk enforcen hem to geten by diverse weyes. For why the covetise of verray good' is naturally I-plauntyd in the hertes of men, but the myswandryng error myaledeth hem into false goodes. [625] Of the whiche men, some of hem wenen that sovereyn good be to lyven with-oute nede of any thyng, and travaylen hem to ben

626. *mouthes han*, etc., 'si malus ora (mis- construed as nom.) prius sapor edat.'

627. *horr*, *homo*.

handaunt of rychesse. And some othere men demen that sovereyn good be for to be ryght digne of reverence, and enforcen hem to ben reverenced among hir byghbours by the honours that thei han I-geten. And some folk ther ben that holden that ryght heye power be sovereyn good, and enforcen hem for to reiguen or elles to joyngen hem to hem that reiguen. And it semeth to some other folk, that noblesse of renoun be the sovereyn good, and hasten hem to geten hem gloryouse name by the artes of werre or of pees. And many folk mesuren and gessen that the sovereyne good be joye and gladnesse, and wenen that it be ryght blisful thyng to plowngen hem in voluptuous delyt. [630] And ther ben folk that entrechaungen the causes and the endes of thise forseyde goodes, as they that desiren rychesse to han power and delites, or elles they desiren power for to have moneye or for cause of renoun. In thise thynges and in swiche other thynges is torned al the entencioun of desyrynges and werkes of men; as thus: noblesse and favour of peple whiche that yveth to men, as it semeth hem, a maner cleernesse of renoun; and wyf and children, that men desiren for cause of delyt and myrnesse. But for-sothe freendes schulde nat ben rekned among the goodes of fortune, but of vertu, for it is a ful hooly maner thyng; alle thise othere thynges for-sothe ben taken for cause of power or elles for cause of delyt. [635] Certes now am I redy to referren the goodes of the body to thise forseyde thynges aboven; for it semeth that strengthe and gretnesse of body yyven power and worthynesse, and that beaute and swyftnesse yyven noblesse and glorie of renoun; and heele of body semeth yyven delyt. In alle thise thynges it semeth oonly that blisfulnesse is desired; for-why thilk thing that every man desireth moost over allethynges

630. *is termed*, mistranslation of 'versatur'; also in Fr. 'out tournee'.  
635. *Freundes* (genus) amicorum, hence the *it below*.

he demeth that it be the sovereyn good; but I have diffyned that blisfulnesse is the sovereyn good; for whiche every wyght demeth that thilke estat that he desireth over alle thynges, that it be blisfulnesse. Now hastow thanne byforn thyne eien almost al the purposede forme of the welefulnesse of mankynde; that is to seyn rychesse, honours, power, glorie, and delites. [640] The whiche delit oonly considered Epicurus, and juggid and establisseyd that delyt is the soverayn good, for as moche as alle othere thynges, as hym thoughte, byrefte away joye and myrthe from the herte. But I retorne ayen to the studies of men, of whiche men the corage alwey reherveth and seketh the sovereyne good, al be it so that it be with a dyrkyd memorie; but he not by whiche path, ryght as a dronke man not nat by whiche path he may retourne hom to his hous. Semeth it thanne that folk foleyen and erren, that enforcen hem to have nede of no thyng? Certes ther nys noon other thyng that mai so wel performe blisfulnesse, as an estat plenteuous of alle godes, that ne hath nede of noon other thyng, but that it is suffisant of hym-self un-to hym-self. [645] And foleyen swiche folk, thanne, that wenen that thilke thyng that is ryght good, that it be eek ryght worthy of honour and of reverence? Certes, nay. For that thyng nys neither foul ne worthy to ben despyed that wel neyghe al the entencioun of mortel folk travaylen for to geten it. And power, aughte nat that ek to ben rekned amonge goodes? What elles? For it nys nat to wene that thilke thyng that is most worthy of alle thynges be feble and withoute strengthe. And cleernesse of renoun, aughte that to ben despyed? Certes ther may no man for-

640. *purposede* (i.e. proposed) should precede *byforn thyne eien*: misreading of Aq. 'habes ante oculos propositam formam humane', etc.

641. *byrefte away*, etc., should be *byrought to the herte*; 'afferte' misread as 'auferre'.

642. *reherveth and seketh*, 'regretti'; *reherveth* is probably due to *studia*, 'studia' (which here means 'efforts').

sake, that alle thyng that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth to ben ryght cleer and renomd. For certes it nedeth nat to saie that blisfulnesse [ne] be angwyssous ne drery, ne subgit to grevances ne to sorwes; syn that in ryght lilele thynges folk seken to haven and to usen that may delyten hem. [650] Certes thise ben thise thynges that men wolen and desiren to geten, and for this cause desiren they rychesse, dignytes, reignes, glorie, and delices; for ther-by wenen they to han suffysaunce, honour, power, renoun, and gladnesse. Thanne is it good that men seken thus, hy so manye diverse studies. In whiche desir it mai lyghtly be schewyd how greet is the strengthe of nature. For how so that men han diverse sentences and discordyng, algates men accorden alle in lovyng the eende of good.

*'Quantas rerum flectat.'*—Metrum 2

It likethe me to schewe by subtil soong, with slakke and delytable sown of strenges, how that Nature, myghty, enclyneth and flytteth the governementes of thynges; and by whiche lawes sche, purveyable, kepith the grete world; and how sche, byndyng, restreyneth alle thynges by a boond that may nat be unbownde. [653] Al be it so that the lyouns of the contre of Pene beren the sayre chaynes, and taken metes of the handes of folk that yeven it hem, and dreden hir stourdy maistres of whiche thei ben wont to suffre betynges; yif that hir horrible mowthes ben by-bled (that is to seyn, of beastes devoured), hir corage of tyme passed, that hath ben idel and rested, repaireth ayen, and thei roren grevously, and remembren on hir nature, and slaken hir nekkes from hir cheynes unbownde; and hir mayster fyrst, to-torn with bloody

654. *slakke and delytable*, etc., 'lensis fidibus' and 'par sons delitables.' *slakke* is probably Adria's mistake for *wakke* or *wake* (i.e. soft), the usual gloss for *lensus*.  
656. *Pene*, 'Ponil leones.'

tooth, assaileth the wode wratthes of hem (this to seyn thei freten hir maister). And the janglyng brid that syngeth on the heighe braunches (that is to seyn, in the wode), and after is enclosed in a streyte cage, al thoughe that the pleyng bysynes of men yeveth him honyed drynkes and large metes with swete studyes, yit natheles yif thilke bryd skippyng out of hir streyte cage seith the agreable schadwes of the wodes, sche defouleth with hir feet hir metes I-schad, and seketh mornynge oonly the wode, and twytereth desyryng the wode with hir swete voys. [660] The yerde of a tree, that is haled a-doun by myghty strengthe, boweth redily the crop adown; but yif the hand of hym that it bente leet it goon ageyn, anon the crop loketh upryght to hevene. The sonne, Phebus, that falleth at even in the westrene wawes, retorneth ayen eft sones his cart, by a pryve path, there as it is wont aryse. Alle thynges seken ayen to hir propre cours, and alle thynges reioysen hem of hir retornynge ayen to hir nature. Ne noon ordenaunce is by-taken to thynges, but that that hath joynd the endynge to the bygynnyng, and hath makid the cours of it-self stable (that it chaunge nat from his propre kynde).

*'Vos quoque terrena animalia.'*—

Prosa 3

Certes also ye men, that ben erthliche beastes, dremen alwey your bygynnyng, al thoughe it be with a thynne ymaginacioun; and by a maner thought, al be it nat clerly ne parfityle, ye loken from afer to thilke verray fyn of blisfulnesse. [665] And therfore naturel entencioun ledeth yow to thilke verray good, but many maner errours mystorneth yow ther fro. Considere now yif that by thilke thynges by whiche a man weneth

658. *assaileth*, 'imbuat.' Perhaps we should read *apaileth*.

659. *hem*. Cp. the similar transition to *plu*, in *Tales*, F 610 ff., where this passage is quoted.

659. *out of hir*, etc., to end of prose, missing in Hn. C<sub>3</sub> A<sub>1</sub> H Cx. *studye*.

to, geten hym blisfulnesse, yif that he  
mal comen to thilk ende that he weneth  
to come by nature. For yif that moneye,  
or, honour, or thise othere forseide  
thynges, brynge to men swiche a thyng  
that no good ne fayle hem ne semeth  
fale, certes thanne wol I graunte that  
they ben maked blisful by thilke thynges  
that thei han geten. But yif it so be  
that thilke thynges mowen nat performen  
that they byheten, and that there be  
defaute of manye goodis, scheweth it  
nat thanne clerly that false beaute of  
blysfulnesse is known and ataynt in  
thilke thynges. First and forward thow  
thi-self, that haddest haboundances of  
rychesses nat longe agoon, I aske yif  
that, in the haboundance of alle swiche  
rychesses, thow were nevere angwyssous  
ne sory in thy corage of any wrong  
or grevance that by-tydde the on any  
side?' [670]

'Certes,' quod I, 'it ne remembreth  
me nat that evere I was so fre of my  
thought that I ne was alwey in angwyse  
of som-what.'

'And was nat that,' quod sche, 'for  
that the lakkide somewhat that thow  
woldest nat han lakkid, or elles thou  
haddest that thow noldest nat han had?'

'Ryght so is it,' quod I.

'Than desiredest thow the presence of  
the toon and the absence of the tothir?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I.

'For-sothe,' quod sche, 'thanne nedeth  
ther som-what that every man desireth?'

'Yee, ther nedeth,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'and he that  
hath lak or nede of aught nys nat in  
every wey suffisant to hym-self?'

'No,' quod I. [673]

'And thow,' quod sche, 'in al the  
plente of thy richesses haddest thilke  
lakke of suffisaunce?'

'What elles?' quod I.

'Thanne mai nat richesses maken  
thot a man nys nedy, ne that he be  
puffisaunt to hym-self; and yit that was

670. C inserts *that*, Cx. H *like* after *aske*.

673. C<sub>1</sub> B H Cx. *desireth*.

it that thei byhighten, as it semeth.  
And eek certes I trow that this be  
gretly to considere, that moneye ne hath  
nat in his owene kynde that it ne mal  
ben bynomen of hem that han it, maugre  
hem.'

'I byknowe it wel,' quod I.

'Whi sholdestow nat byknownen it,'  
quod sche, 'whan every day the streng-  
ere folk bynymen it fro the feblere,  
maugre hem? For whennes comen elles  
thise foreyne compleyntes or quereles of  
pledynges but for that men axen hir  
moneye that hath ben bynomen hem  
by force or by gyle, and alwey maugre  
hem?' [680]

'Right so is it,' quod I.

'Than,' quod sche, 'hath a man  
nede to seken hym foreyne help by  
whiche he may defenden his moneye?'

'Who mai seie nay?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'and hym nedide  
noon help yif he ne hadde no moneye  
that he myghte leese.'

'That is douteles,' quod I.

'Than is this thyng torned into the  
contrarie,' quod sche; 'for rychesses,  
that men wenen scholde maken suffi-  
saunce, they maken a man rather have  
nede of foreyne help. Whiche is the  
maner or the gyse,' quod sche, 'that  
rychesse mai dryve away nede? Riche  
folk, mai they neyther han hungir ne  
thurst? Thise riche men, may they  
fele no cold on hir lymes in wynter?  
But thow wolt answeren that ryche men  
han Inoghe wher-with thei mai staunchen  
hir hungir, and slaken hir thirst, and  
don away cold. [683] In this wise mai  
nede be confortid by richesses, but certes  
nede mai nat al outrely be doon away;  
for thoughte this nede that is, alwey  
gapynge and gredy, be fulfid with  
richesses and axe any thyng, yit duelleth

677. *byhighten*, i.e. promised.

680. *foreyne compleyntes*, etc., 'forences  
querimonies' (i.e. public appeals) and 'com-  
plaintes de plaiz.'

686. *and axe any thyng* (Cx. H omit *axe*)  
should follow *gredy*; i.e. is always asking for  
something. *yit duelleth*, etc., i.e. the need of  
food, drink, etc., always remains to be filled.

thanne a nede that myghte be fulfid. I holde me stille and telle nat how that litel thyng suffiseth to nature; but certes to avarice Inowghe suffiseth nothyng. For syn that rychesse ne mai nat al doon away nede, but richesses maken nede, what mai it thanne be that ye wenen that richesses mowen yyven yow suffisaunce?

'*Quamvis fluente dives.*'—Metrum 3

Al weete it so that a riche coveytous man hadde a ryver or a goter fletynge al of gold, yit sholde it nevere staunchen his covetise; and thoughe he hadde his nekke charged with precyous stones of the rede see, and thoughe he do ere his feeldes plentevous with an hundred oxen, nevere ne schal his bytynge bysynesse forleeten hym while he lyveth, ne the lyghte richesses ne schal nat beren hym companye whan he is deed. [690]

'*Set dignitatibus.*'—Prosa 4

But dignytees, to whom thei ben comen, make they hym honourable and reverent? Han thei nat so gret strengthe that thei may putten vertus in the hertes of folk that usen the lordschipes of hem, or elles may they don away the vices? Certes thei ben nat wont to don away wikkidnesse, but thei ben wont rather to schewen wykkydnesse. And ther-of cometh it that y have right gret disdayn that dignytes ben yyven ofte to wikkide men. For which thyng Catullus clepid a consul of Rome that hyghte Nomyus "postum" or "boch" (as who seith, he clepid hym a congregacioun of vices in his brest, as a postum is ful of cor-

688. *what, i.e. why, 'quid.'*

689. *C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn.* omit *or a goter*. The word *classe* is inaccurately translated and should be, following Fr.: *and hoped richestes that yit sholde nevere, etc.*

690. *do ere, i.e. have his fields plowed.*

691. *Han thei nat, etc.* 'Num vis ea est magistratibus' should be *Han lordschipes nat, etc.* . . . of folk that usen hem. For *nat*, cp. 103.

692. *Nomyus (A<sub>1</sub> woman), Catullus (Carm. 55) alludes to Nodius Struma. Some Boethius MSS. read *Nomyus*.*

rupcioun), al were this Nomyus set in chayere of dygnite. Seaw nat thanne how grette vylentye dignytes don to wikkide men? Certes unworthynesse of wikkide men schulde ben the *lesse* I-sene if thei neere renommed of none honours. [693] Certes thou thi-self ne myghtest nat ben broght, with as many perils as thou myghtest suffren, that thou woldest beren the magistrat with Decorat (that is to seyn, that for no peril that myghte byfallen the by offence of the kyng Theodorik, thou noldest nat be felawe in governance with Decorat), whan thou seye that he hadde wikkide corage of a likerous schrewe and of an accusour. Ne I ne mai nat for swiche honours juggen hem worthy of reverence that I deme and holde unworthy to han thilke same honours. Now yif thou seie a man that were fulfid of wysdom, certes thou ne myghtest nat deme that he were unworthy to the honour or elles to the wisdom of whiche he is fulfid?

'No,' quod I.

'Certes dignytees,' quod sche, 'aperteignen properly to vertu, and vertu transporteth dignyte anon to thilke man to whiche sche hir-self is conioigned. [700] And for as moche as honours of peple ne mai nat maken folk digne of honour, it is wel seyn cleerly that thei ne han no propre beaute of dignyte. And yet men aughten taken more heed in this. For yif a wykkyd wyght be in so mochel the fowlere and the more out-cast that he is dyspysed of moost folk, so as dignyte ne mai nat maken schrewes worthy of no reverence, than maketh dignyte schrewes rather so much more despised than preysed, the whiche schrewes dignyte scheweth to moche folk;' and forsothe nat unpunyssched (that is for to

696. *beren, 'gerere' (cp. 581); magistrat (O.F. magistrat), 'magistratum'; i.e. h.-l.d. office.*

700. *C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx.* B omit *wykkyd and the fowlers and so much more*; *C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn.* omit *in before so mochel*; *C<sub>2</sub> Hn.* A<sub>2</sub> B place *the which* . . . folk after *reverence*; A<sub>1</sub> alters the passage. 700. *do as, i.e. since.*

seyñ that schrewes revengen hem ayenward uppon dignytes), for thei yelden ayen to dignytees as greet gerdoun, whan they by-spotten and defoulen dignytes with hir vylenye. And for as mochel as thou mow knowe that thilke verray reverence ne mai nat comen by thise schadwy transitorie dignytes, undirstond now thus: [705] yif that a man hadde used and had manye maner dignytees of consules, and weere comen peraventure among straunge nacion, scholde thilke honour maken hym worshipful and redouted of straunge folk? Certes yif that honour of peple were a natureel yifte to dignytes, it ne myghte nevere cesen no where amonges no maner folk to don his office; right as fyre in every contre ne stynteth nat to eschaufen and to ben hoot. But for as mochel as for to be holden honourable or reverent ne cometh nat to folk of hir propre strengthe of nature, but only of the false opynyoun of folk (that is to seyn, that weenen that dignytees maken folk digne of honour), anoon therfore, whan that thei comen there as folk ne knowen nat thilke dignytees, hir honours vanysschen a-way, and that anoon. But that is amonges straunge folk, maystow seyn. Ne amonges hem ther thei weren born, ne duren nat thilke dignytes alwey? [720] Certes the dignyte of the provostrye of Rome was whilom a greet power; now nys it no thyng but an idel name, and the rente of the senatorie a greet charge. And yif a wyght whilom hadde the office to taken heede to the vitayles of the peple, as of corn and othere thynges, he was holden amonges grete; but what thyng is now more out cast than thilke provostrye? And, as I have seyð a litel here byforn, that thilke thyng that hath no propre beute of hym-self receyveth somtyme prys and

schynynge, and som-tyme leaseth it, by the opynyoun of ussances. Now yif that dignytes thanne ne mowen nat make folk digne of reverence, and if that dignytees waxen foule of hir wil by the filthe of schrewes, and yif dignytees leesen hir schynynge by chaungynge of tymes, and yif thei waxen fowle by estimacioun of peple, what is it that they han in hemself of beaute that oughte ben desired? [725] (As who seith noon.) Thanne ne mowen they yeven no beaute of dignyte to noone othere.

*'Quamvis se Tirio.'*—Metrum 4

Al be it so that the proude Nero, with al his wode luxure, kembde hym and apparayled hym with faire purples of Tyrie and with white peerles, algates yit throf he haatful to alle folk (this is to seyn that, al was he byhated of alle folk, yit this wikkide Nero hadde gret lord-schipe), and yaf whilom to the reverentes senatours the unworschipful acetis of dignytees. (Unworschipful seetes he clepeth here, for that Nero, that was so wikkide, yaf tho dignytees.) Who wolde thanne resonably wenen that blisfulnesse were in swiche honours as ben yvven by vicious schrewes? [730]

*'An vero regna.'*—Prosa 5

But regnes and familiarites of kynges, mai thei maken a man to ben myghtil? How elles, whan hir blisfulnesse dureth perpetuely? But certes the olde age of tyme passed, and ek of present tyme now, is ful of ensamples how that kynges han chaungyd into wrecchidnesse out of hir welefulnesse. O, a noble thyng and a cleer thyng is power that is nat fownden myghty to kepe it-self! And yif that power of remes be auctour and makere of blisfulnesse, yif thilke power lakketh

720. *durum born*, i.e. spring. *ne duren nat*, 'Num', etc.

721. *peuple*, tax.

722. *grete*, great people.

723. *that* formally introduces the quoted statement as in 143.

723. *of ussances*, 'utentium' is possibly 'des usans' mistaken for 'des usances'; it should be 'of hem that use hem.'

730. C. Hn. H is for by.

731. *How elles*, etc., glossed *provisio* in C.



on any syde, amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse and bryngeth in wrecchidnesse? But yit, al be it so that the remedies of mankynde strecken brode, yit moot ther nede ben moche folk over whiche that every kyng ne hath no lordschipe ne comaundement. [743] And certes uppon thilke syde that power fayleth, whiche that maketh folk blisful, ryght on the same syde noun-power entreth undir-nethe, that maketh hem wrecches. In this manere thanne moten kynges han more porcioun of wrecchidnesse than of welefulnesse. A tyraunt, that was kyng of Sysile, that hadde assayed the peril of his estat, schewed by similitude the dredes of remedies by gastnesse of a swerd that heng over the heved of his famylier. What thyng is thanne this power, that mai nat doun away the bytynges of bysynesse, ne eschewe the prykkes of drede? And certes yit wolde thei lyven in sykernesse, but thei may nat, and yit thei glorifyn hem in hir power. [730] Holdestow thanne that thilke man be myghty, that thou seest that he wolde doon that he may nat doon? And holdestow thanne hym a myghty man, that hath envyrwound his sydes with men of armes or sergeantes, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast thanne thei dredden hym, and that is put in the handes of hise servauntes for he scholde seme myghty? But of familiers or servantes of kynges, what scholde I telle the any thyng, syn that I my-self have schewyd the that rewmes hem-self ben ful of greet feblesse? The whiche famylieres certes the real power of kynges, in hool estat and in estaat abated, ful ofte throweth adoun. Nero constrayned Senek, his famylier and his mayster; to chesen on what deeth he wolde deye. [735] Antonyus comaundede that knyghtes slown with here swerdes Papyrian, his famylier, whiche Papyrian

746. noun-power, impotence.

739. familiers or servantes, Fr. 'familieres,' and Lat. 'familiaribus' read as 'famularibus.'

745. Antonyus, mistake of some Latin texts for Andronicus, i.e. Caracalla.

that had ben long tyme ful myghty amonges hem of the court. And yet certes thei wolden bothe han renounced hir power; of whiche two Senek enforced hym to yeven to Nero his riches, and also to han gon into solitarie exil. But whan the grete weyghte (that is to seyn of lordes power or of fortune) draweth hem that schullen falle, neither of hem ne myghte don that he wolde. What thyng is thanne thilke powere, that though men han it, yit thei ben agast; and whanne thou woldest han it, thou nart nat siker; and yif thou woldest forleeten it, thou mayst nat eschuen it? But whethir swiche men ben freendes at nede, as ben conseyled by fortune and nat be vertu? [740] Certes swiche folk as weleful fortune maketh frendes, contraryous fortune maketh hem enemys. And what pestilence is more myghty for to anoye a wyght than a famylier enemy?

'*Qui se vult esse potentem.*'—Metrum 5

Who so wol ben myghty he moot daunten his cruel corages, ne putte nat his nekke, overcomen, undir the foule reynes of leccherie. For al be it so that thi lordschipe streche so fer that the contref of Ynde quaketh at thy comaundementes or at thi lawes, and that the last ile in the see that highte Tyle be thral to the, yit yif thou maist nat putten away thi foule dirke desires, and dryven out fro the wrecchide compleyntes, certes it nys no power that thou hast. [745]

'*Gloria vero quam fallax.*'—Prosa 6

But glorie, how deceyvable and how foul is it ofte! For which thyng nat unskillfully a tragedien (that is to seyn a makere of dyctes that highten tragedies) cride and seide: "O glorie, glorie,"

738. hem that schullen, etc., 'ipse casuros.'

739. Should be, *But whether* (introducing simple direct question) *swiche frendes as ben conciled* ('conciliat' by fortune, and not by vertu, ben a help ('auxilio' dat. not abl.)?

745. Tyle, Ultima Thule.

746. Cp. Euripides, *Androm.* 329.

quod he, "thow nart nothyng elles to thousandes of folk but a greet sweller of eres!" For manye han had ful greet renoun by the false opinyoun of the peple, and what thyng mai ben thought foulere than swiche preysynge? For thilke folk that ben preysed falsly, they mote nedes han schame of hire preysynges. And yif that folk han gotten hem thonk or preysynge by here dissertes, what thyng hath thilke pris echid or encreded to the conscience of wise folk, that mesuren hir good, nat by the rumour of the peple, but by sothfastnesse of conscience? And yif it seme a fair thyng a man to han encreded and sprad his name, thanne folweth it that it is demed to ben a foul thyng yif it ne be yspradde and encreded. [750] But, as I seide a litel here byforn, that syn ther moot nedes ben many folk to whiche folk the renoun of a man ne mai nat comen, it byfalleth that he that thow wenest be glorious and renommed semeth in the nexte partie of the erthes to ben withouten glorie and withouten renoun. And certes amonges thise thynges I ne trowe nat that the pris and the grace of the peple nys neyther worthi to ben remembered, ne cometh of wys judgement, ne is ferme perdurably.

But now of this name of gentillesse, what man is it that ne may wele seen how veyn and how flyttinge a thyng it is? For yif the name of gentillesse be referred to renoun and cleernesse of lynage, thanne is gentil name but a foreyne thyng (that is to scyn to hem that gloryfien hem of hir lynage). [755] For it semeth that gentillesse be a maner preisyng that cometh of the dessertes of auncestres; and yif preisyng make gentillesse, thanne mote they nedes ben gentil that been preysed. For whiche thing it folweth that yif thou ne have no gentillesse of thi-self (that is to seyn prys that cometh of thy deserte), foreyne gentillesse ne maketh the nat gentil. But

753. as I seide . . . that, cp. 713.

755. *I ne trowe nat*, etc., due to 'ne . . . quidem' in 'popularum gratiam ne commemoratione quidem dignum putat.'

certes yif ther be ony good in gentillesse, I trowe it be al only this, that it semeth as that a maner necessite be imposed to gentil men for that thei ne schulde nat owtrayen or forlyven fro the vertus of hir noble kynrede.

'Omne hominum genus in terris.'—

Metrum 6

Alle the lynage of men that ben in erthe ben of semblable byrthe; on allone is fadir of thynges, on allone mynystreth alle thynges. He yaf to the sonne his bemes, he yaf to the moone hir hornes, he yaf the men to the erthe, he yaf the sterres to the hevене. [760] He encloseth with membres the soules that comen from his heye sete. Thanne comen alle mortel folk of noble seed. Why noysen ye or bosten of your eldres? For yif thow loke youre bygynnyng, and god your auctour and your makere, thanne nis ther none for-lyved wyght or on-gentil but if he norysche his corage un-to vices and forleten his propre byrthe.

'Quid autem de corporibus.'—Prosa 7

But what schal I seye of delycles of body, of which delices the desirynges ben ful of anguyssch, and the fulfillynges of hem ben ful of penance? How grete seknesses and how grete sorwes unsuffrable, ryght as a maner fryute of wykkidnesse, ben thilke delices wont to bryngen to the bodies of folk that usen hem! Of whiche delices I not what joie mai ben had of here moevynge, [765] but this woot I wel, that who-so-ever wol remembre hym of hise luxures, he schal wel undirstonden that the issues of delices ben sorweful and sorye. And yif thilke delices mowen maken folk blisful, thanne by the same cause moten thise beestis ben clepid blisful, of whiche beestes al the entencioun hasteth to ful-

758. *owtrayen* or *forlyven*, 'degenerate'; *owtrayen*, 'go to excess', does not seem happy.

765. *Hu. Cx. H B yf ye like.*

file here bodily jolyte. And the glad-  
ness of wyf and children were an honest  
thyng, but it hath ben seyd that it is over-  
mochel ayens kynde that children han  
ben fownden tormentours to here fadris I  
not how manye; of whiche children how  
bytynge is every condicioun, it nedeth  
nat to tellen if the that hast or this tyme  
assayed it, and art yit now angwysshous.  
In this approve I the sentence of my  
disciple Euridippis, that seide that he  
that hath no children is weleful by in-  
fortune. [770]

*'Habet hoc voluptas.'*—Metrum 7

Every delit hath this, that it angwisch-  
eth hem with prykkes that usen it. It  
resembleth to thise flyenge flyes that we  
clepen ben; that, afir that the be hath  
ached hise agreable honyes, he fleeth  
away, and styngeth the hertes of hem  
that ben y-smyte, with bytynge over-  
longe haldyng.

*'Nichil igitur dubium.'*—Prosa 8

Now is it no doute thanne that thise  
weyes ne ben a maner mysledynges to  
blisfulnesse, ne that they ne mowen nat  
leden folk thider as thei byheten to  
leden hem. But with how grete harmes  
thise forseide weyes ben enlaced, I schal  
achewe the shortly. For-why yif thou  
enforcest the to assemble moneye, thou  
must byreven hym his moneye that hath  
it; [775] and yif thou wolt schynen with  
digaytees, thou must bysechen and  
supplyen hem that yyven tho dignytees;  
and yif thou covetest be honour to gon  
before other folk, thou schalt defoule  
thi-self thurw humblesse of axyng.

775. *jolyte*, 'lascivium,' variant for 'lacunam.'  
776. *but it hath*, etc., 'sed nimis o (Aq. extra)  
nature dictum est, atque quem filios invenisse  
torores,' mistranslated. By omitting *that it is*  
we get a possible version.

777. *H. Euripides*, cp. *Androm.* 304.

778. *bytynge*, etc., 'tenacitudo.'

779. *to alleghen* should follow *weyes*.

780. *shortly*, briefly.

Yif thou desirest power, thou schalt, be  
awaytes of thy subgetis, anously ben  
cast undir by manye periles. Axestow  
glorye? Thou shalt so bien distract by  
aspere thynges that thou schalt forgon  
sykernesce. And yif thou wolt leden  
thi lif in delyces, every wyght schal  
despysen the and for-leeten the, as thou  
that art thral to thyng that is right foul  
and brutyl (that is to seyn, servaunt to  
thi body). [780] Now is it thanne wel  
yseyn how litil and how brotel possessioun  
thei coveyten that putten the goodes of  
the body aboven hir owene resoun. For  
maystow surmounten thise olifauntes in  
gretnesse or weighte of body? Or  
maistow ben strengere than the bole?  
Maystow ben swyftere than the tigre?  
Byhoold the spaces and the stablenesse  
and the swyft cours of the hevne, and  
stynt som-tyme to wondren on foule  
thynges. The whiche hevne certes nys  
nat rather for thise thynges to ben won-  
dryd upon, than for the resoun by whiche  
it is governed. [785] But the schynyng  
of thi forme (that is to seyn, the beaute  
of thi body), how swyfly passyng is it,  
and how transitorie!

Certes it is more flyttinge than the  
mutabilite of floures of the somer sesoun.  
For so as Aristotle telleth, that if that  
men hadden eyghen of a beeste that  
highte lynx, so that the lokinge of folk  
myghte percen thurw the thynges that  
withstonden it, who-so lokide thanne in  
the entayles of the body of Alcibiades,  
that was ful fair in the superficie withoute,  
it schulde seme ryght foul. And for-thi  
yif thou semest fair, thy nature ne maketh  
nat that, but the deceyvaunce or the  
feblesse of the eighen that loken. [790]  
But preise the goodes of the body as  
mochil as evere the lyst, so that thou  
knowe algatis that, what-so it be (that is  
to seyn, of the godes of the body) whiche  
that thou wondrist uppon, mai ben

778. *awaytes*, 'insidie.'

779. *anously ben cast undir by*, 'obnoxius  
subiacibile' mistranslated.

787. *lynx*, Lynceus oculis; but Fr. 'yeux de  
lins.' Aq. quotes Isidor, *de Hir.*

destroied or dissolvid by the heete of a fevere of thre dayes. Of alle whiche forseide thynges y mai reducen this shortly in a somme: that thise worldly goodes, whiche that ne mowen nat yeven that they by-heeten, ne ben nat parfite by the congregacioun of alle goodis; that they ne ben nat weyes ne pathes that bryngen men to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to ben blisful.

'*Hec quo miseris tramite.*'—Metrum 8

Allas! whiche folie and whiche ignorance mysledeth wandrynge wrecchis fro the path of verray good! Certes ye ne seke no gold in grene trees, ne ye gadere nat precyous stones in the vynes, ne ye ne hidden nat yowr gynnes in heye mountaignes to kacchen fyssche of whiche ye mai maken riche festes. [795] And if yow liketh to hunt to roos, ye ne gon nat to the foordes of the watir that highte Tyrene. And over this, men knowen wel the krikes and the cavernes of the see yhidde in the flodes, and knowen ek whiche watir is moost plentevous of white peerlis, and knowen whiche watir haboundeth moost of reed purple (that is to seyn, of a maner schelle fyssche with whiche men deien purple), and knowen whiche strondes habounden most of tendre fysches, or of sharpe fyssches that hyghten echynnys. But folk suffren hem-selve to ben so blynde, that hem ne reccheth nat to knowe where thilke goodes ben yhidde whiche that thei coveyten, but ploungen hem in erthe, and seken there thilke good that surmounteth the hevne that bereth the sterria. What preyere mai I make, that be digne to the nyce thoughtes of men? [800] But I preie that thei coveyten rychesses and honours. So that, whanne thei han geten tho false goodes with

greet travaille, that ther-by they mowen knowen the verray goodes.

'*Hactenus mendacis formam.*'—Prosa 9

It suffiseth that I have schewyd hiderto the forme of fals welefulnesse, so that yif thou loke now cleerly, the ordre of myn entencioun requireth from hennas forth to schewe the verray welefulnesse.

'For sothe,' quod I, 'I se wel now that suffisaunce may nat comen by rychesses, ne power by remes, ne reverence by dignites, ne gentilese by glorie, ne joie be delices.'

'And hastow wel knowen the causes,' quod sche, 'whi it is?'

'Certes me semeth,' quod I, 'that y see hem ryght as thoughe it were thurw a litil clyfte, but me were levere to knowen hem more opynly of the.' [805]

'Certes,' quod sche, 'the resoun is al redy. For thilke thyng that symply is o thyng with outen ony devysiou, the error and folie of mankynde departeth and divideth it, and mysledeth it and transporteth from verray and parfit good to godes that ben false and imparfit. But seye me this. Wenestow that he that hath nede of power, that hym ne lakketh nothyng?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'thou seyst aryght; for if it so be that ther is a thyng that in any partie be feblere of power, certes, as in that, it moot needes be nedy of foreyne help.'

'Ryght so is it,' quod I.

'Suffisaunce and power ben thanne of o kynde?' [810]

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And demestow,' quod sche, 'that a thyng that is of this manere, that is to seyn suffisaunt and mighty, oughte ben despised, or ellis that it be right digne of reverence aboven alle thynges?'

795. *foordes*, 'Tyrrhena vada.'

796. *Arithes*, inlets.

800. *What preyere*, etc., 'Quid imprecor,' but 'Quella priere puis je faire,' etc.

801. *spes*, foolish.

802. *ther-by*, not in original.

802. *the verray welefulnesse*, the is the article.

805. *al redy*, 'promptissima.'

808. *Wenestow*, etc., rather *Wenestow that he that ne lakketh nothyng hath nede of power!*

'Certes,' quod I, 'it nys no doute that it nys right worthy to ben reverenced.'

'Lat us,' quod sche, 'adden thanne reverence to suffisaunce and to power, so that we demen that thise thre thynges be al o thyng?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'lat us adden it, yif we wiln graunten the sothe.' [813]

'What demestow thanne,' quod sche, 'is that a dirk thyng and nat foble that is suffisaunt, reverent, and myghty; or elles that it is ryght noble and ryght cleer by celebrete or renoun? Considere thanne,' quod sche, 'as we han graunteid her-by-fore, that he that ne hath nede of no thyng and is moost myghty and moost digne of honour, if hym nedeth any cleernesse of renoun, whiche cleernesse he myght nat graunten of hym-self; so that for lak of thilke cleernesse he myghte seme the feblere on any side, or the more out-cast.' (Glose. This to seyn, nay; for who-so that is suffisaunt, myghty, and reverent, clernesse of renoun folweth of the forseide thynges, so that there ne be amonges hem no difference; he hath it al redy of his suffisaunce.)

'I mai nat,' quod I, 'denye it, but I moot granten, as it is, that this thyng be ryght celebrable by clernesse of renoun and noblesse.' [820]

'Thanne folweth it,' quod sche, 'that we adden clernesse of renoun to the thre forseide thynges, so that there ne be amonges hem no difference.'

'This is a consequence,' quod I.

'This thyng thanne,' quod sche, 'that ne hath nede of no foreyne thyng, and that may don alle thynges by hise strengthis, and that is noble and honourable, nys nat that a myry thyng and a joyful?'

'But whennes,' quod I, 'that any

817. *i.e.* Consider whether he who nedes nothing and is myghty and honoured, needs none. The *that* seems to be used as in 713.

820. *that we adden*, etc., 'ut claritudinem superioribus tribus nihil differre fateamur.' Cassiodorus' incorrect version is due to Fr.

821. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit *is* after *this*.

sorwe myghte comen to this thyng that is swiche, certes I mai nat thynke.'

'Thanne mote we graunten,' quod sche, 'that this thing be ful of gladnesse, if the forseide thynges ben sothe; [825] and certes also mote we graunten that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse be oonly diverse by names, but hir substaunce hath no diversite.'

'It moot nedly ben so,' quod I.

'Thilke thyng thanne,' quod sche, 'that is oon and symple in his nature, the wikkidnesse of men departeth it and divideth it; and whanne thei enforcen hem to gete partie of a thyng that ne hath no part, thei ne geten hem neyther thilke partie that is noon, ne the thyng al hool that thei ne desire nat.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Thilke man,' quod sche, 'that seketh riches to fleen poverté, he ne travailleth hym nat for to geten power, for he hath lever to ben dirk and vyl; [830] and eek withdraweth from hym-self manye naturel delites, for he nolde leese the moneie that he hath assembled. But certes in this manere he ne geteth hym nat suffisaunce, that power forleteth, and that moleste prikketh, and that filthe maketh out-caste, and that dirknesse hideth. And certes he that desireth oonly power, he wasteth and scatereth rychesse, and despyseth delices and eek honour that is withoute power, ne he ne preiset glorie no thyng. Certes thus seestow wel that manye thynges failen to hym, for he hath som tyme defeaute of manye necessites, and manye anguysshes byten hym; and whan he ne mai nat do the defeautes away, he for-letith to ben myghty, and that is the thyng that he moost desireth. [835] And ryght thus mai I make semblable resouns of honour, and of glorie, and of delyces; for so as every of thise forseide thynges is the same that thise othere thynges ben (that is to seyn, al oon thyng), who-so that

830. *dirk and vyl*, 'vilis obscurusque.'

832. *maketh out-caste*, 'abicit.'

835. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> H *the defeautes*.

evere seketh to geten that oon of thise, and nat that othir, he ne geteth nat that he desireth.'

'What seystow thanne, yif that a man coveyte to geten alle thise thynges togidre?'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'I wolde seye, that he wolde geten hym sovereyn blisfulnesse; but that schal he nat fynde in tho thynges that I have schewed that ne mowen nat yeven that thei byheeten?'

'Certes no,' quod I. [840]

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'ne scholde men nat by no weye seken blisfulnesse in siche thynges as men wenen that they ne mowen yeven but o thyng sengly of al that men seken?'

'I graunte wel,' quod I, 'ne no sothere thyng ne may be seyd.'

'Now hastow thanne,' quod sche, 'the forme and the causes of false wefulnesse. Now torne and flytte the eighen of thi thought, for ther shaltow seen anon thilke verray blisfulnesse that I have be-hyght the.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it is cler and openc, though it were to a blynd man; [845] and that schewedestow me ful wel a litel her byforn, whan thou enforcestest the to schewe me the causes of the fals blisfulnesse. For, but if I be begiled, thanne is thilke the verray perfit blisfulnesse that perfily maketh a man suffisaunt, myghty, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnesse. And for thou schalt wel knowe that I have wel undirstonden thise thynges withynne myn herte, I knowe wel that thilke blisfulnesse that may verrayly yeven on of the forseide thynges, syn thei ben alle oon—I knowe dowteles that thilke thyng is the ful blisfulnesse.'

839. *What seystow?* 'Quid igitur? inquam.' So also Fr. *yif that*, etc., is assigned to Philosophy in Obbarius' text, but early MSS. and translations take it as Chaucer does.

840. *but that schal he nat*, etc., 'num . . . reperiet,' etc., cp. 691, 710. The subject of *ne mowen* is omitted. B.'s reading, *they for us*, is probably a scribe's correction.

845. Some phrase like *to the others part*, 'in adversum,' has probably dropped out after thought.

'O my nory,' quod sche, 'by this opynyoun I seie thou art blisful, yif thou putte this therto that I schal seyn.'

'What is that?' quod I. [850]

*Philosophie.* 'Trowestow that ther be any thyng in this erthly, mortal, toublynge thynges that may brynge this estat?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y trowe it nought; and thou hast schewyd me wel that over thilke good ther nys no thyng more to ben desired.'

'Thise thynges thanne,' quod sche, (that is to seyn, erthly suffysaunce, and powere, and swiche thynges) outhir thei semen lyknesse of verray good, or elles it semeth that thei yeve to mortal folk a maner of goodes that ne be nat perfyte. But thilke good that is verray and perfyte that mai thei nat yeven.' [855]

'I accorde me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'for as moche as thou hast knowen whiche is thilke verray blisfulnesse, and eek whiche thilke thynges ben that lyen falsly blisfulnesse (that is to seyn, that be deceyte semen verray goodes), now byhoveth the to knowe whennes and where thou mowe seke thilke verray blisfulnesse.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'that desire I gretly and have abyden longe tyme to herkne it.'

'But for as moche,' quod sche, 'as it liketh to my disciple Plato, in his book of *In Thymeo*, that in ryght litel thynges men schulde byseeche the help of god, [860] what juggestow that be now to done, so that we may desserve to fynde the seete of thilk sovereyn good?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y deme that we schul clepe to the fadir of alle goodes, for withouten hym is ther no thyng founded aryght.'

'Thow seyst aryght,' quod sche, and bygan anon to syngen right thus:

851. *this, these. toublynges, 'caducia,' as in 357, 406.*

856. *lyen, counterfeit.*

860. *In Thymeo*, rather in the *Timaeus* (cp. *Tim. 27 c.*)

## 'O quam perpetua.'—Metrum 9

'O thou fadir, soowere and creatour of hevene and of erthes, that governest this world by perdurable resoun, that comaundest the tymes to gon from syn that age hadde bygynnyng; thou that duellest thi-selfe ay stedefast and stable, and yevest alle othere thynges to ben meved, [865] ne foreyne causes necesseden the nevere to compounde werk of floterynge matere, but oonly the forme of sovereyn good I-set with-in the withoute envye, that moevede the frely. Thou, that art althir-fayrest, berynge the faire world in thyn thought, formedest this world to the lyknesse semblable of that faire world in thy thought. Thou drawest alle thyng of thy sovereyn ensampler and comaundest that this world, parfytely ymakid, have frely and absolut hise parfyte parties. Thou byndest the clementis by nombres proporcionables, that the coolde thinges mowen accorde with the hote thinges, and the drye thinges with the moyete; that the fuyr, that is purest, sleigh nat over-heye, ne that the hevynesse drawe nat adoun over-lowhe theerthes that ben ploungid in the watris. [870] Thou knytttest togidere the mene soule of treble kynde moevynge alle thingis, and divydest it by membrys accordynge; and when it is thus divyded [and] it hath assembled a moevynge in-to two rowndes, it gooth to torne ayen to hym-self, and envyrooneth a ful deep thought and turneth the hevene by semblable ymage. Thou by evene lyke causes enhauncest the soules and the lasse lyves; and, ablynge

hem heye by lyghte waynes or cartes, thou sowest hem in-to hevене and in-to erthe. [875] And when thei ben convertyd to the by thi benygne lawe, thou makest hem retourne ayen to the by ayenledynge fyer. O fadir, yve thou to the thought to steyen up in-to thi streyte seete; and graunte hym to enviroune the welle of good; and, the lyght I-founde, graunte hym to fycchen the clere syghtes of his corage in the; and skatere thou and to-breke the weyghtes and the cloudes of erthly hevynesse; and schyn thou by thi bryghtnesse, for thou art cleernesse, thou art pesible reste to debonayre folk; thou thi-self art bygynnyng, berere, ledere, path and terme; to looke on the, that is our ende. [880]

## 'Quoniam igitur que sit.'—Prosa 10

For as moche thanne as thou hast seyn which is the fourme of good that nys nat parfit, and whiche is the forme of good that is parfit, now trowe I that it were good to schewe in what this perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. And in this thing I trowe that we schulde first enquire for to witen, yf that any swich maner good as thilke good that thou hast dyffynysshed a litel here-byforn (that is to seyn sovereyn good) may be founde in the nature of thinges, for that veyn ymagynacioun of thought desceyve us nat, and put us out of the sothfastnesse of thilke thinge that is summytted to us. But it may nat be denyed that thilke good ne is, and that it nys ryght as a welle of alle goodes. For alle thing that is cleped inparfyt is proevyd inparfit be the amenusynge of perfeccioun or of thing that is parfit. [885] And herof cometh it that in every thing general, yf that men seen any thing that is inparfit, certes in thilke general ther moot bensom thing that is parfit. For yf so be that perfeccioun is don away, men may nat thinke ne say

864. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> Hn. omit *soowere and*; H Cx. *overriding end*.

866. *frily*. Not in Latin or French.

868. *Thou drawest*. . . *ensampler*, precedes *Thou that art*, etc., in Latin and French. Perhaps displaced by an early scribe; if so, the reading of A<sub>1</sub>, and *comaundest*, is correct.

869. *nombres proporcionables*, numerical proportions.

873. 'Qua cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbem, in semet reditura ment mentemque in seipsum circuit, et simili convertit imagine . . .'

875. *heye*, to rise.

877. *enviroune*, 'lustrare' (to look upon), Fr. 'environner'.

to whennes thilke thing is that is cleped  
parfyt. For the nature of thinges ne  
ook nat hir begynnynge of thinges  
menused and inparfit, but it procedith  
of thinges that ben alle hole and ab-  
solut, and descendith so down into  
ittereste thinges and in-to thinges empty  
and withouten fruyt. But, as I have  
schewid a litel here byform that yif ther  
is a blisfulnesse that be freel and veyn  
and inparfyt, ther may no man doute that  
her nys som blisfulnesse. that is sad, stede-  
fast, and parfyt.'

'This is concluded,' quod I, 'fermely  
and soothfastly.' [89c]

'But considere also,' quod sche, 'in  
whom this blisfulnesse enhabiteth. The  
commune accordaunce and conceyt of the  
counsailes of men proveth and graunteth  
that god, prince of alle thinges, is good.  
For, so as no thyng mai ben thought  
betere than god, it mai nat ben doutid  
hanne that he that no thinge nys betere,  
that he nys good. Certes resoun scheweth  
that god is so good that it proeveth by  
verray force that parfyt good is in hym.  
For yif god nys swyche, he ne mai nat  
be prince of alle thinges; [89s] for  
certes som-thing possessyng in it-self  
parfyt good schulde be more worthy than  
god, and it scholde semen that thilke  
were first and eldere than god. For  
we han schewyd apertely that alle thinges  
that ben parfyt ben first er thynges that  
ben inparfit; and for-thy, for as moche  
as that my resoun or my proces ne go  
nat away withouten an ende, we owe to  
graunte that the sovereyn god is right  
ful of sovereyn parfyt good. And we  
han establischid that the sovereyne good  
is verray blisfulnesse. Thanne moot it  
nedis be that verray blisfulnesse is set in  
sovereyn god.' [90a]

'This take I wel,' quod I, 'ne this  
ne mai nat be withscid in no manere.'

'But I preye the,' quod sche, 'see  
now how thou mayst proeven holly and

withouten corrupcioun this that I have seid,  
that the sovereyn god is ryght ful of  
sovereyne good.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Wenestow aught,' quod sche, 'that  
the prince of alle thynges have I-take  
thilke sovereyne good any-wher out of  
hym-self, of whiche sovereyne good men  
proeveth that he is ful; ryght as thou  
myghtest thynken that god, that hath  
blisfulnesse in hym-self, and thilke blisful-  
nesse that is in hym, were divers in  
substaunce? [90s] For yif thou wene  
that god have resseyved thilke good out  
of hym-self, thou mayst wene that he  
that yaf thilke good to god be more worth  
than is god. But I am beknowe and  
confesse, and that ryght dignely, that god  
is ryght worthy aboven alle thinges. And  
yif it so be that this good be in hym by  
nature, but that it is dyvers from him by  
wenynge resoun, syn we speke of god  
prynce of alle thynges,—seyne who so  
seyne mai—who was he that hath con-  
ioyned these divers thynges togidre? And  
eek at the laste se wel that a thing that is  
divers from any thing, that thilke thing  
nys nat that same thing fro whiche it is  
undirstonden to be diverse. Thanne  
folweth it that thilke thing that by his  
nature is divers from sovereyn good, that  
that thyng nys nat sovereyn good. [91a]  
But certes it were a felenous cursydnesse  
to thinken that of hym that no thing nys  
more worth. For alwey, of alle thinges,  
the nature of hem may nat ben betere  
thanne his begynnynge. For whiche I  
mai concluden by ryght verray resoun  
that thilke that is begynnynge of alle  
thinges, thilke same thing is sovereyn good  
in his substaunce.'

'Thow hast seyde ryghtfully,' quod I.

'But we han graunted,' quod sche,  
'that the sovereyn good is blisfulnesse.'

'That is sooth,' quod I. [91s]

90a. Chaucer and one of French MSS. omit  
'vel ita naturaliter habere.' Add, therefore, after  
ful; or wenestow that he hath it naturally in  
himself.

91a. C<sub>1</sub> H C<sub>2</sub>. A<sub>2</sub> his begynnynge, and rightly,  
but probably a correction.

89a. *that no things*, etc., i.e. to whom nothing  
is superior.

90a. *take*, 'accipio'; Fr. 'recoit'.



'Thanne,' quod sche, 'moten we nedes granten and confessen that thilke same sovereyn good be god?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'y ne may nat denyen, ne withstonde the resouns purposed; and I se wel that it folweth by strengthe of the premisses.'

'Loke now,' quod sche, 'yif this be proevyd yet more fermely thus that there ne mowen not ben two sovereyn goodis that ben divers among hem-self. For certes the goodis that ben divers among hem-self, that oon is nat that that that othir is; thanne mowen neither of hem ben parfit, so as eyther of hem lakketh to othir. But that that nys nat parfit, men mai seen apertely that it nys not sovereyn. [920] The thinges thanne that ben sovereynly gode ne mowe by no weie be divers. But I have wel concluded that blisfulnesse and god ben the sovereyn good; for whiche it mote nedes be that sovereyne blisfulnesse is sovereyn devynite.'

'No thing,' quod I, 'nys more soth-faste than this, ne more ferme by resoun, ne a more worthy thing than god mai not ben concluded.'

'Upon this thynges thanne,' quod sche, 'ryght as this geometriens whan thei han schewed her proposicions ben wont to bryngen yn thinges that thei clepen porismes or declaracions of forseide thinges, right so wol I yeve the here as a corolarie or a meede of coroune. For-why for as moche as by the getyng of blisfulnesse men ben makid blisful, and blisfulnesse is dyvinite, than is it manifest and opene that by the getyng of dyvinite men ben makid blisful. [925] Right as by the getyng of justice [men ben makid just], and be the getyng of sapience thei ben makid wise, ryght so nedes by the semblable resoun, whan they han geten dyvinite thei ben makid goddes. Thanne is every blisful man

922. *thus that*, i.e. from the fact that.

929. *neither*, often plural in Middle-English.

924. *as*, as it were.

924. *meede of coroune*, 'loier de coroune.'

926. *men* . . . *just*, MSS. omit; supplied from French.

god. But certes by nature ther nys but o god; but by the participacioun of dyvinite ther ne let ne distourbeth no thyng that ther ne ben many goddia.'

'This ys,' quod I, 'a fair thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt, be it corolerie, or porisme, or meede of coroune, or declarynges.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'no thing nys fairere than is the thing that by resoun schulde ben addide to thise forseide thinges.' [930]

'What thing?' quod I.

'So,' quod sche, 'as it semeth that blisfulnesse conteneth many thinges, it weere for to witen whether that alle these thinges maken or conioynen as a maner body of blisfulnesse by diversite of parties or membres, or elles yif any of alle thilke thinges ben swich that it acomplise by hymself the substaunce of blisfulnesse, so that alle these othere thynges ben referrid and brought to blisfulnesse (that is to seyn, as to the cheef of hem).'

'I wolde,' quod I, 'that thou madest me clerly to undirstonde what thou seist, and that thou recordidest me the forseide thinges.'

'Have I not jugged,' quod sche, 'that blisfulnesse is good?' [935]

'Yys for sothe,' quod I, 'and that sovereyn good.'

'Adde thanne,' quod sche, 'thilke good that is makid [of] blisfulnesse to alle these forseide thinges. For thilke same blisfulnesse that is demed to ben sovereyn suffisaunce, thilke selve is sovereyn power, sovereyn reverence, sovereyn clemesse or noblesse, and sovereyn delyt. What seistow thanne of all these thinges, that is to seyn, suffisaunce, power, and alle these othere thinges,—ben thei thanne as membris of blisfulnesse, or ben they referred and brought to sovereyne good ryght as alle thinges that ben brought to the cheef of hem?'

'I undirstonde wel,' quod I, 'what

928. *let*, hindereth.

937. *of*, MSS. omit; supplied from French.

thou purposest to seke, but I desire for to herke that thow schewe it me.' [940]

'Tak now thus the discrecioun of this question,' quod sche; 'yif alle these thinges,' quod sche, 'weren membris to felicitye, thanne weren thei dyverse that on fro that othir. And swich is the nature of parties or of membres, that diverse membris compounen a body.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'it hath wel ben schewyd here byform that alle these thinges ben al o thyng.'

'Thanne ben thei none membres,' quod sche, 'for elles it schulde seme that blisfulnesse were conioyned al of o membre allone; but that is a thing that mai not ben don.'

'This thing,' quod I, 'nys not doutous; but I abide to herken the remenaunt of the question.' [945]

'This is opene and cler,' quod sche, 'that alle othere thinges ben referrid and brought to good. For therefore is suffisaunce requirid, for it is demyd to ben good; and for-thy is power requirid, for men trowen also that it be good; and this same thing mowen we thinken and coniecten of reverence, and of noblesse, and of delyt. Thanne is sovereyn good the somme and the cause of al that oughte ben desired; for-why thilke thing that with-holdeth no good in it selve, ne semblance of good, it mai not wel in no manere be desired ne requirid. [950] And the contrarie; for thoughte that thinges by here nature ne ben not gode, algates yif men wene that ben gode, yet ben thei desired as though that thei were verrayliche gode; and therfore is it that men oughte to wene by ryghte that bounte be the sovereyn fyn and the cause of alle the thinges that ben to requiren. But certes thilke that is cause for which men requiren any thing, it semeth that thilke same thing be moost desired. As thus: yf that a wyght wolde ryden for cause of hele, he ne desireth not so mochel the

moevyng to ryden, as the effect of his hele. Now thanne, syn that alle thynges ben required for the grace of good, thei ne ben not desired of alle folk more than the same good. [955] But we han grauntide that blisfulnesse is that thing, for whiche that alle these othere thinges ben desired; thanne is it thus that certes oonly blisfulnesse is requered and desired. By whiche thing it scheweth cleerly that of good and of blisfulnesse is al on and the same substaunce.'

'I se nat,' quod I, 'wherfore that men myghten discorden in this.'

'And we han schewed that god and verray blisfulnesse is al o thing.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne mcwen we concluden sykerly, that the substaunce of god is set in thilke same good, and in noon other place. [960]

*'Nunc omnes pariter venite capti.'*—

Metrum 10

Cometh alle to gidre now, ye that ben ykought and ybounde with wiklide cheynes by the desceyvable delyt of erthly thynges enhabitynge in yowr thought! I her schal ben the reste of your labours, her is the havene stable in pesible quiete; this allone is the open refut to wrechis. (Glose. This to seyn, that ye that ben combyrd and disseyvid with worldly affections, cometh now to this sovereyn good, that is god, that is refut to hem that wolen come to hym.) Textus. Alle the thinges that the ryver Tagus yyveth yow with his goldene gravelis, or elles alle the thinges that the ryver Herinus yeveth with his rede brinke, [965] or that Indus yyveth, that is next the hote partis of the world, that medleth the grene stoncs with the white, ne scholden not

954. *moevyng to ryden*, movement of riding.

955. *for the grace, etc.*, 'gratia boni.'

961. *C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> O cometh*.

965. *Herinus*, Heremus.

966. *grene stoncs . . . white, glomed smaragdus* (emeralds) and *margaritus* (pearls) in *C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub>*.

940. *that*, Fr. 'que' (how).

941. *Tak now*, 'accipe.'

942. *a body*, one body.

951. Hn. ends with 'yif ben they.'

cleren the lookynge of your thought, but hidden rather your blynde corages withynne here derknesse. Al that liketh yow here, and exciteth and moeveth your thoughtes, the erthe hath noryschid it in his lowe caves. But the schynynge by whiche the hevene is governed and whennes that it hath his strengthe, that eschueth the derke overthrowng of the soule; and who so evere may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, he schal wel seyn that the white beemes of the sonne ne ben nat cleer.' [970]

*'Assencior inquam cuncta.'*—Prosa II

'I assente me,' quod I, 'for alle thise thinges ben strongly bounden with ryght ferme resouns.'

'How mychel wiltow preysen it,' quod sche, 'yif that thow knowe what thilke good is?'

'I wol preyse it,' quod I, 'be pris withouten ende, yif it schal betyde me to knowe also to gedre god that is good.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'that schal I do the be verray resoun, yif that tho thinges that I have concluded a litel here byform duellen only in hir first grauntynge.'

'Thei dwellen graunted to the,' quod I. (This to seyn as who seith, 'I graunte thi forseide conclusyouns.') [975]

'Have I nat schewed the,' quod sche, 'that the thinges that ben required of many folk ne ben not verray goodis ne parfite; for thei ben divers that on fro that othir. And so as iche of hem is lakkyng to othir, thei han no power to bryngen a good that is ful and absolut. But thanne at erste ben thei verraye good, whan thei ben gadred togidere alle in-to o forme and in-to oon werkynge. So that thilke thing that is suffisaunce, thilke same be power, and reverence, and noblesse, and myrthe. And for sothe, but yif alle thise thinges ben alle o same

thing, thei ne han not wherby that the mowen be put in the nombre of thinges that oughten ben required or desired.' [980]

'It is schewyd,' quod I, 'ne herof mai ther no man douten.'

'The thinges thanne,' quod sche, 'that ne ben none goodis whan thei ben diverse, and whanne thei bygynnen to ben al o thing, thanne ben thei goodes,—ne cometh it hem nat thanne by the getynge of unyte that thei ben maked goodes?'

'So it semeth,' quod I.

'But alle thing that is good,' quod sche, 'grauntestow that it be good by the participacioun of good, or no?'

'I graunte it,' quod I.

'Thanne mustow graunte,' quod sche, 'by semblable resoun that oon and good be o same thing; [985] for of thinges of whiche that the effect nys nat naturely divers, nedes the substaunce moot be oo same thing.'

'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I.

'Hastow nat knowen wel,' quod sche, 'that alle thing that is hath so longe his duellynge and his substaunce as longe as it is oon? But whanne it foretith to be oon, it moot nedys deien and corumpen to gidres?'

'In whiche manere?' quod I.

'Ryght as in beestis,' quod sche, 'whanne the body and the soule ben conioyned in oon and dwellen to gidre, it is cleped a beeste; and whanne her unyte is destroyed be the disseverance the toon fro the tothir, thanne scheweth it wel that it is a deed thing, and that it nys no lengere no beeste. [990] And the body of a wyght, while it duelleth in oo fourme be coniunction of membris, it is wel seyn that it is a figure of mankynde; and yif the parties of the body ben so devyded and disseverid the ton fro the tother that thei destroyen unite, the body foretith to ben that it was beform. And who so wolde renne in the same

970. overthrowngs, 'ruinas.'

971. preysen, praise.

973. also to gedre, 'aquis ensemble,' at the same time.

983. cometh it hem, 'leur avient'; cp. 463.

988. to gidres, at once.

990. no beeste, a beast.

991. figure of mankynde, 'humaine figure.'

manere be alle thinges, he scholde seen that withouten doute every thing is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon; and whanne it forletith to ben oon, it dyeth and peryssheth.'

'Whanne I considere,' quod I, 'manye thinges, I se noon other.'

'Is ther any thing thanne,' quod sche, 'that, in as moche as it lyveth naturely, that forletith the talent or the appetyt of his beyng and desirith to come to deth and to corrupcioun?' [995]

'Yif I considere,' quod I, 'the beestes that han any maner nature of wyllynge and of nyllynge, I ne fynde no beeste, but if it be constreynd fro withoute-forth that forletith or despiseth the entencion to lyven and to duren; or that wole, his thankes, hasten hym to dyen. For every beest travaileth hym to defende and kepe the savacion of his lif, and eschue the deeth and destruccioun. But certes I doute me of herbes and of trees (that is to seyn, that I am in a doute of swiche thinges as herbes or trees), that ne han no felyng soules (ne no naturel werkynges servinge to appetites as beestes han), whether thei han appetyt to duellen and to duren.' [1000]

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ne therof thar the nat doute. Now looke upon thise herbes and thise trees. They wexen first in suche places as ben covenable to hem, in which places thei mowen nat sone deye ne dryen, as longe as hir nature mai defenden hem. For some of hem waxen in feeldis, and some in mountaynes, and othere waxen in mareys, and othere cleven on roches, and some wexen plentifulous in soondes; and yif any wyght enforce hym to bere hem in-to other places, thei wexen drye. [1005] For nature yeveth to every thing that that is convenient to hym, and travaileth that they be dele nat, as longe as thei han power to duellen and to lyven. What wiltow seyn of this, that thei drawn alle here botynychinges by here rootes, ryght as thei hadden here monthes y-plounged withynne

997. *his thanke*, voluntarily.

the erthes, and sheden be hir maryes hir wode and hir bark? And what wiltow seyn of this, that thilke thing that is ryght softe, as the marie is, that it is alwey hyd in the seete al with-inne, and that it is defended fro withoute by the stedfastnesse of wode; and that the outreste bark is put ayens the distemperaunce of the hevenc as a defendour myghty to suffren harm? And thus certes maistow wel seen how greet is the diligence of nature; [1010] for alle thinges renovenen and publysschen hem with seed y-multiplied, ne ther nys no man that ne woot wel that they ne ben ryght as a foundement and edifice for to duren, noght oonly for a tyme, but ryght as for to dure perdurably by generacion. And the thinges cek that men wenen ne haven none soules, ne desire thei nat iche of hem by semblable resoun to kepyn that that is his (that is to seyn, that is accordyng to hir nature in conservacioun of hir beyng and enduryng)? For wherfore ellis bereth lightnesse the flaumes up, and the weyghte presseth the erthe adoun, but for as moche as thilke places and thilke moevynges ben covenable to everyche of hem? And for-sothe every thing kepeth thilke that is accordyng and propre to hym, ryght as thinges that ben contrarious and enemys corruppen hem. [1015] And yet the harde thinges, as stones, clyven and holden here parties togidre ryght faste and harde, and defenden hem in withstondyng that thei ne departe nat lyghtly atwynne. And the thinges that ben softe and fetyng, as is watir and eyr, thei departen lyghtly and yeven place to hem that broken or divyden hem; but natheles they retorne sone ageyn into the same thinges fro whennes thei ben arraced; but fyer fleeth and

1007. *sheden*; perhaps *sheden* should be *spenden*, *expandit*.

1008. *C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H C<sub>2</sub>*, that is *alwey*.

1010. *myghty*, etc., *A<sub>2</sub>*, 'patens malis, i.e. potens mala sustinere.'

1011. *renovenen* and *publysschen*, 'renouvelent' and 'propagantur.'

1012. *C<sub>2</sub> is *hiz**, possibly right; cp. Fr. 'less' and pronouns of following gloss.

refuseth alle dyvisioun. I trete not now here of willeful moevynges of the soule that is knowyng, but of the naturel entencioun of thinges, as thus: [1020] ryght as we swolven the mete that that we remeyven and ne thinke nat on it, and as we drawn our breeth in slepyng that we witen it nat while we slepyng. For certes in the beestis the love of hire lyvynges ne of hire beynges ne cometh not of the wilnynges of the soule, but of the bygyynynges of nature. For certes, thurw constreynynge causes, wil desireth and embraceth ful ofte tyme the deeth that nature dredeth. (That is to seyn as thus: that a man may be constreyned so, by som cause, that his wille desireth and taketh the deeth whiche that nature hateth and dredeth ful sore.) And somtyme we seen the contrarye, as thus: that the wil of a wyght distourbeth and constreyneth that that nature desireth and requirith alwey, that is to seyn the werk of generacioun, by whiche generacioun only duelleth and is susteyned the longe durable of mortal thinges. [1025] And thus this charite and this love, that every thing hath to hym-self, ne cometh not of the moevynge of the soule, but of the entencioun of nature. For the purveaunce of god hath yeven to thinges that ben creat of hym this, that is a ful grete cause to lyven and to duren, for whiche they desiren naturely here lif as longe as evere thei mowen. For which thou mayst not drede be no manere that alle the thinges that ben any where, that thei ne requiren naturely the ferme stablesse of perdurable duellynge, and eek the eschynge of destruccioun.'

'Now confesse I wel,' quod I, 'that y see wel now certeynly withouten doutes the thinges that whilom semeden uncerteyn to me.'

'But,' quod sche, 'thilke thing that desireth to be and to duelle perdurably, he desireth to ben oon. [1030] For yif

1020. C<sub>2</sub> H A<sub>2</sub> B here now.

1025. by whiche, etc., i.e. by which the permanency of mortal things is maintained.

that oon were destroyed certes beyng schulde ther noon duellen to no wyght.'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'desiren alle thinges oon.'

'I assente,' quod I.

'And I have schewed,' quod sche, 'that thilke same oon is thilke that is good.'

'Ye forsothe,' quod I.

'Alle thinges thanne,' quod sche, 'requiren good; and thilke good thow mayst descryven ryght thus: good is thilk thing that every wyght desireth.' [1035]

'Ther ne may be thought,' quod I, 'no more verraye thing. For eyther alle thinges ben referrid and brought to noght, and floteren withouten governour, despoyled of oon as of hire propre heued; or elles, yif ther be any thing to whiche that alle thinges tenden and hyen to, that thing muste ben the sovereyn good of alle goodes.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'O my nory,' quod sche, 'I have greet gladnesse of the, for thow hast fyched in thyn herte the myddel sothfastnesse, that is to seyn, the prykke. But this thing hath ben discoveryd to the in that thow seydest that thow wisteth not a litel her byforn.'

'What was that?' quod I.

'That thou ne wistest noght,' quod sche, 'whiche was the ende of thinges. [1040] And certes that is the thyng that every wyght desireth; and for as mochel as we han gadrid and comprehendid that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle, thanne mote we nedys confessen that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

'*Quisquis profunda.*'—Metrum 11

Whoso that seketh sooth by a deep thought, and coveyteth not to ben disseyvid by no mys-weyes, lat hym rollen

1036. oon, unity.

1037. the myddel sothfastnesse, 'medias veritatis notam.' The gloss is due to note in A<sub>2</sub>.

1039. But this thing should be *But in this thing*, and *in that* should be *that* that to give sense of Latin and French.

1042. mis-weyes, bypaths.

and trenden withynne hymself the lyght of his ynwarde sighte; and let hym gaderyn ayein, enclynynge in-to a compas, the longe moevynges of his thoughtes; and let hym techyn his corage that he hath enclosid and hid in his tresors, al that he compasseth or secheth fro withoute. And thanne thilke thing, that the blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-covered, schal lighte more clerly than Phebus hymself ne schyneth. [1045] (Gloss. Who so wol seke the depe ground of soth in his thought, and wil nat ben disseyvid by false proposicions that goon amys fro the trouthe, lat hym wel examine and rolle withynne hym-self the nature and the propertes of the thing; and let him yet eft sones examine and rollen his thoughtes by good deliberacion or that he deme, and lat hym techyn his soule that it hath, by naturel principles kyndeliche yhyd with-ynne it-self, al the trouthe the whiche ymagineth to ben in thinges withoute. And thanne al the derkenesse of his mysknowynge shall seen more evydently to the sighte of his undirstondynge than the sonne ne semeth to the sighte withoute-forth.) [1050] For certes the body, bryngynge the weighte of foryetynge, ne hath nat chased out of your thought al the cleernesce of your knowynge; for certeynly the seed of soth baldeth and clyveth within yowr corage, and it is a-waked and excited by the wynde and by the blastes of doctrine. For wherfore elles demen ye of your owene wil the rygthes, whan ye ben axid, but if so were that the norysschynges of resoun ne lyvede y-plounged in the depe of your herte? (This to seyn, how schulde men deme the sothe of any thing that wer axid, yif ther nere a rote of sothfastnesse that were y-plounged and hyd in the naturel principles, the whiche sothfastnesse lyvede within the depnesse of the thought?) And if it so be that the Muse and the

doctrine of Plato syngeth soth, al that every wyght leerneth, he ne doth no thing elles thanne but recordeth, as men recorden thinges that ben foryeten.' [1055]

'*Tunc ego Platoni inquam.*'—Prosa 12

Thanne seide I thus: 'I accorde me gretly to Plato, for thou recordist and remembrest me thise thinges yet the seconde tyme; that is to seye, first whan I loste my memorie be the contagious coniunccion of the body with the soule, and eftsones aftirward, whan y lost it confounded by the charge and be the burdene of my sorwe.'

And thanne seide sche thus: 'Yif thou loke,' quod sche, 'first the thynges that thou hast graunted, it ne schal nat ben ryght fer that thou ne schalt remembren thilke thinges that thou seidest that thou nystist nat.'

'What thing?' quod I.

'By whiche governement,' quod sche, 'that this world is governed.'

'Me remembreth it wel,' quod I; 'and I confesse wel that I ne wyste it nat. [1060] But al be it so that I see now from afer what thou purposist, aligates I desyre yit to herknen it of the more pleylny.'

'Thou ne wendest nat,' quod sche, 'a litel here byforn, that men schulde doute that this world nys governed by god.'

'Certes,' quod I, 'ne yet ne doute I it naught, ne I nyl nevere wene that it were to doute' (as who seith, 'but I woot wel that god gouverneth this world'); 'and I schal shortly answeren the be what resouns I am brought to this. This world,' quod I, 'of so manye and diverse and contraryous parties, ne myghte nevere han ben assembled in o forme; but yif ther ne were on that conioyned so manye diverse thinges; [1065] and the same diversite of here

1058. *it ne schal nat*, etc., i.e. thou shalt not be far from remembering.

1064. *answeren*, 'exponam'; Fr. 'espondrai' read as *respondrai*.

1050. *seen* (B has *be*) seems to mean 'appear'; cf. *Legend of G. W.* 156, *Gen. and Ex.* 1923 (Morris).

natures, that so discorden the ton fro that other, most departen and unioynen the thinges that ben conioynid, yif ther we were oon that contenyde that he hath conioynid and ybounden. Ne the certain ordre of nature schulde not brynge forth so ordene moevynges by places, by tymes, by doynges, by spaces, by qualites, yif ther ne were on, that were ay stedfaste tuellynge, that ordeynide and disponyde thise diversites of moevynges. And thilke thing, what-so-ever it be, by whiche that alle thinges ben y-maked and I-lad, y clepe hym "god," that is a word that is used to alle folk.' [1070]

Thanne seide sche: 'Syn thou feelist thus thise thinges,' quod sche, 'I trowe that I have litel more to done that thou, myghty of welefulnesse, hool and sound, ne see eftsones thi contre.

'But let us loken the thinges that we han purposed here-byforn. 'Have I nat nombrid and seid,' quod sche, 'that suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse? and we han accorded that god is thilke same blisfulnesse?'

'Yis forsothe,' quod I.

'And that to governen this world,' quod sche, 'ne schal he nevere han nede of noon help fro with-oute? For elles, yif he hadde nede of any help, he ne schulde nat have no ful suffisaunce?' [1075]

'Yys thus it moot nedes be,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeyneth he be hym-self alone alle thinges?' quod sche.

'That may nocht ben denied,' quod I.

'And I have schewyd that god is the same good?'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I.

'Thanne ordeigneth he alle thinges by thilke good,' quod sche, 'syn he, whiche that we han accordid to ben good, governeth alle thinges by hym-self; and he is as a keye and a styere, by whiche

1067. *Ne the certain, etc.*, should be 'The ordre of nature ne schoulde not procede certainly and unfolded so ordene,' etc.

1077. *the same good*, 'ipsum bonum,' 'biens communes.'

1079. *heys* 'clavus' read as 'clavis,' or 'clos' as 'clad.'

that the edifice of this world is kept stable and withouten corruppyng?'

'I accorde me greetly,' quod I. 'And I aperceyvede a litil here byforn that thou woldest seyn thus, al be it so that it were by a thyne suspeioun.' [1080]

'I trowe it wel,' quod sche; 'for, as I trowe, thou ledist now more ententyfliche thyn eyen to loken the verray goodes. But natheles the thing that I schal telle the yet ne scheweth not lesse to loken.'

'What is that?' quod I.

'So as men trowen,' quod sche, 'and that ryghtfully, that god governeth alle thinges by the keye of his goodnesse, and alle thise same thinges, as I have taught the, hasten hem by naturel entencioun to come to good, ther ne may no man douten that thei ne ben governed voluntarily, and that they ne converten hem of here owene wil to the wil of here ordeynour, as thei that ben accordyng and enclynynge to here governour and here kyng.'

'It moot nedes be so,' quod I, 'for the reame ne schulde nat seme blisful yif ther were a yok of mysdrawynges in diverse parties, ne the savyng of obedient thynges ne scholde nat be.' [1085]

'Thanne is ther no thyng,' quod sche, 'that kepith his nature, that enforceth hym to gon ayen god.'

'No,' quod I.

'And yif that any thing enforcede hym to withstonde god, myghte it avayle at the laste ayens hym that we han graunted to ben almyghty be the ryght of blisfulnesse?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'al outrely it ne myghte nat avaylen hym.'

'Thanne is ther no thing,' quod she, 'that either wole or mai with-stonden to this sovereyn good.'

'I trow nat,' quod I.

'Thanne is thilke the sovereyn good,'

1082. *scheweth, etc.*, is no less evident.

1085. *yif ther were, etc.*, i.e. if it were a restraining of the refractory elements and not a unreserving of the harmonious ones.

god sche, 'that alle thinges governeth  
rongly and ordeyneth hem softly?' [1090]  
Thanne seide I thus: 'I delite me,'  
god I, 'nat oonly in the eendes or  
the somme of resouns that thou  
st concluded and proved, but thilke  
oordes that thou usest deliten me moche  
ore. So that, at the laste, foolis that  
mtyne reenden grete thinges oughen  
in asschamid of hem-self.' (That is to  
yn, that we foolis that reprehenden  
iklidly the thinges that touchin godis  
vernaunce, we aughten ben asschamid  
our-self; as I, that seide that god  
fuseth oonly the werkis of men and ne  
stremittith nat of it.)

'Thow hast wel herd,' quod sche, 'the  
bles of the poetis, how the geanttis  
saleden hevене with the goddis, but  
x-sothe the debonayre force of god  
isposide hem as it was worthy (that is to  
y, destroyden the geantes, as it was  
orthy.) [1095] But wiltow that we  
synen to-gidres thilke same resouns,  
x paraventure of swiche coniunccioun  
may sterten up som fair sparcle of soth?'

'Do,' quod I, 'as the list.'

'Wenestow,' quod sche, 'that god ne  
e almyghty?—No man is in doute of  
'

'Certes,' quod I, 'no wyght ne douteth  
, yif he be in his mynde.'

'But he,' quod sche, 'that is almyghti  
—ther nys no thyng that he ne may?'

'That is sooth,' quod I.

'May god don evel?' quod sche.

'Nay for-sothe,' quod I.

'Thanne is evel no thing,' quod sche,  
syn that he ne may not don evel, that mai  
loon alle thinges.' [1100]

'Scornestow me,' quod I,—(or elles,  
Pleyestow or disceyvistow me,)—'that  
ast so wovven me with thi resouns the  
ious of Didalus, so entrelaced that it is  
nable to ben unlaced—thow that other-

while entrist ther thow issist, and other  
while issest ther thow entrest? Ne  
fooldist thou nat to-gidre (by replicacioun  
of wordes) a manere wondirful cercle or  
enviourynge of the simplicite devyne?  
For certes a litel here byforme, whanne  
thou bygunne at blisfulnesse, thou seidest  
that it is sovereyn good, and seidest that  
it is set in sovereyn god; and seidest  
that god hym-self is sovereyn good, and  
that good is the ful blisfulnesse; [1105]  
for whiche thou yave me as a covenable  
yifte, that is to seyn, that no wyght is  
blisful, but yif he be god also ther-with.  
And seidest eke that the forme of good is  
the substance of god and of blisfulnesse;  
and seidest that thilke same oon is thilke  
same good that is required and desired  
of al the kynde of thinges. And thou  
provedest in disputyng that god govern-  
eth alle the thinges of the world by the  
governementis of bounte; and seidest  
that alle thinges wolen obeyen to hym;  
and seidest that the nature of yvel nys  
no thing. And thise thinges schewedest  
thou, naught with noone resouns y-taken  
fro withouten, [1110] but by proeves  
in cercles and homliche knowen, the  
whiche proeves drawn to hem-self heer  
feyth and here accord everiche of hem of  
othir.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'I ne scorne  
the nat, ne pleie, ne disceyve the; but I  
have schewed the the thing that is grettest  
over alle thinges, by the yifte of god that  
we whilome prayeden. For this is the  
forme of the devyne substance, that is  
swiche that it ne slideth nat in-to uttreste  
foreyne thinges, ne ne resceyveth noone  
straunge thinges in hym; but ryght as  
Parmanydes seide in Greec of thilke  
devyne substance—he seide thus: that  
thilke devyne substance tornith the

1106. *as*, as it were.

1106. *covenable yifte*, probably misreading of  
'coronable don' (correlarium).

1111. *proeves in cercles*, etc., 'institis et domes-  
ticis probationibus'; *in cercles* is due to gloss on  
*institis* in Aq., and known to Fr. 'conneus'  
(? consens) translating 'domesticis.'

1115. *Parmanydes*, Parmenides.

1095. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> the reasons; C<sub>1</sub> the inserted  
star (?).

1099. *with the goddis*, against the gods. Prob-  
ably due to misreading 'ou les dieux' as 'aux  
liens.'

1101. *Didalus*, Dedalus



world and the moevable cercle of thinges, while thilke devyne substaunce kepith itself withouten moevynge. [1115] (That is to seyn that it ne moeveth nevere mo, and yet it moeveth alle othere thinges.) But natheles, yif I have styred resouns that ben nat taken from withouten the compas of the thing of whiche we treten, but resouns that ben bystowyd withinne that compas, ther nys nat why that thou schuldest merveillen, sith thou hast lernyd by the sentence of Plato that nedes the wordis moot nedes be cosynes to the thinges of whiche thei speken.

'*Felix qui potuit.*'—Metrum 12

Blisful is that man that may seen the clere welle of good ! Blisful is he that mai unbynden hym fro the boondes of the hevvy erthe ! The poete of Trace (Orpheus), that whilome hadde ryght greet sorwe for the deth of his wyf, aftr that he hadde makid by his weeply songes the wodes moevable to renne, [1120] and hadde makid the ryveris to stonden stille, and hadde makid the hertes and the hyndes to joynen dreedles bere sydes to cruel lyouns (for to herknen his song), and hadde makid that the hare was nat agast of the hound, whiche was plesed by his song ; so, whanne the moste ardaunt love of his wif brende the entayles of his breest, ne the songes that hadden overcomen alle thinges ne mighten nat asswagen hir lord (Orpheus). He pleynd hym of the hevne goddis that weren cruel to hym. He wente hym to the houses of helle, and ther he tempride his blaundysschinge songes by resounynge strenges, [1125] and spak and song in wepyng al that evere he hadde rescyeved and lavyd out of the noble welles of his modir (Callyope), the goddesse. And he song, with as mochel as he myghte of wepyng, and with as moche as love, that dothblide his sorwe, myghte yeve hym and

teche hym, and he commoevde the helle, and requyred and bysoughte by swete preyere the lordes of soules in helle of relessynge (that is to seyn, to yelden hym his wyf). Cerberus, the porter of helle, with hise thre hevedes was caught and al abasschid for the newe song. And the thre goddesses, furis and vengeresses of felonyes, that tormenten and agasten the soules by anoy, woxen sorweful and sory, and wepyng teeris for pite. Tho was nat the heved of Ixion y-tormented by the overthrowynge wheel. [1130] And Tantalus, that was destroyed by the woodnesse of long thurst, despyseth the floodes to drynken. The foul that highte voltor, that etith the stomak or the gyser of Tycius, is so fulfid of his song that it nil eten ne tiren no more. At the laste the lord and juge of soules was moevid to misericordes, and cryede : "We ben overcomen," quod he ; "yeve we to Orpheus his wif to beren hym compaignye ; he hath wel y-bought hire by his faire song and his ditee. [1135] But we wolen putten a lawe in this and covenaut in the yifte ; that is to seyn that, til he be out of helle, yif he loke byhynde hym, that his wyf schal comen ageyn unto us." But what is he that may yeven a lawe to loverys ? Love is a getterre lawe and a strengere to hymself (thanne any lawe that men mai yvven). Allas ! whanne Orpheus and his wyf weren almost at the termes of the nyght (that is to seyn, at the laste boundes of helle), Orpheus lokede abakward on Erudyce his wif, and lost hire, and was deed. This fable apertenith to yow alle, who so evere desireth or seketh to lede his thought in-to the sovereyn day (that is to seyn, in-to cleernesse of sovereyn good). [1140] For who so that evere be so overcomen that he ficche his cien in-to the put of helle (that is to seyn, who so sette his thoughtes in ertly thinges), al that evere he hath drawn of the noble good celestial he

1117. *styred*, 'agitavimus.'

1123. *no the songes*, not even the songs.

1125. *lavyd*, 'psalia.'

1129. *by anoy*, rather *anoyous* *soules*, 'sontes.'

1136. *covenaut*, 'covenances.'

1137. *men mai yvven*, one may give,

1139. *and was deed*, and she was dead.

th it, whanne he looketh the helles  
it is to seyn, in-to lowe thinges of the  
1).'

## EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS

## INCIPIIT LIBER QUARTUS

*et cum philosophia dignitate vultus.*—  
Prosa I

Whanne Philosophie hadde songen  
ly and delibately the forseide thinges  
yngne the dignyte of hir cheere and  
weyghte of hir wordes, I, thanne,  
t ne hadde nat al outrely foryeten the  
pyngne and the moornyngne that was  
in myn herte, for-brak the entencioun  
hir that entendede yit to seyn some  
ere thinges. 'O,' quod I, 'thou that  
gyderesse of verray light, the thinges  
t thou hast seid me hidir-to ben to  
so cleer and so schewyngne by the  
ryne lookyngne of hem, and by thy  
ouns, that they ne mowen nat ben  
wromen. [1145] And thilke thinges that  
u toldest me, al be it so that I hadde  
ilom foryeten hem for the sorwe of the  
ong that hath ben don to me, yet  
heles thei ne weren not al outrely un-  
owen to me. But this same is namely  
yght grete cause of my sorwe: that  
as the gouverour of thinges is good,  
that the evels mowen ben by any  
yes, or elles yif that evels passen with-  
ten punysshynge. The whiche thing  
aly how worthy it is to ben wondrid  
pon, thou considerest it wel thi-selve  
teynly. But yit to this thing ther is  
another thing I-ioyned more to ben  
ndrid uppon: [1150] for felonye is  
perisse, and floureth ful of riches,es,  
i vertu is nat al oonly withouten  
edes, but it is cast undir and fortroden  
dir the feet of felonous folk, and it

abyeth the tormentes in stede of wikkide  
felouns. Of alle whiche thinges ther nys  
no wyght that may merveillen y-nowghe,  
ne compleyne that swiche thinges ben  
don in the reigne of god, that alle thinges  
woot and alle thinges may and ne wole  
nat but oonly gode thinges.'

Thanne seide sche thus: 'Certes,'  
quod sche, 'that were a greet merveille  
and abaysschinge withouten ende, and  
wel more horrible than alle monstres, yif  
it were as thou wenest; that is to seyn,  
that in the ryght ordene hous of so  
mochel a fadir and an ordeynour of  
meyne, that the vesselis that ben foule  
and vyl schulden ben honoured and  
heryed, and the precious vesselis schulden  
ben defouled and vyl. [1155] But it nys  
nat so. For yif the thinges that I have  
concludid a litel here byforn ben kept  
hoole and unaraced, thou schalt wel  
knowe by the auctorite of god, of the  
whos regne I speke, that certes the gode  
folk ben alwey myghty and schrewes ben  
alwey outcast and feble; ne the vices  
ben nevere mo with-outen payne, ne the  
vertus ben nat withouten mede; and  
that blisfulneses comen alwey to good  
folk, and infortune comith alwey to  
wykkide folk. [1160] And thou schalt  
wel knowe manye thinges of this kynde,  
that schullen cesen thi pleyntis and  
strengthen the with stedfaste sadnesse.  
And for thou hast seyn the forme of the  
verray blisfulnesse by me that have  
whilom y-schewid it the, and thou hast  
knownen in whom blisfulnesse is y-set,  
alle thingis y-treted that I trowe ben  
necessarie to putten forth, I schal schewe  
the the weye that schal bryngen the  
ayen unto thyn hous; and I schal fycchen  
fetheris in thi thought, by whiche it mai  
areisen in heighte; so that, alle tribu-  
lacioun I-don away, thou, by my gyding  
and by my path and by my sledys, shalt  
mowen retourne hool and sownd in-to  
thi contree. [1165]

1142. *hellis*, 'inferos.'

1143. *Cx Cx.* *As the reasons.*

1144. *yif* that . . . or *yif* that, i.e. how that  
or how that.

1151. *abyeth the tormentes*, 'supplicis luit.'

1161. *sadnesse*, firmness.

1164. *fetheris*, wings.

1165. *sledys*, 'vehiculis,' 'volitures.'

'*Sunt etenim penne volucres michi.*'—

Metrum I

'I have, for-thi, swifte fetheris that surmounten the heighte of the hevene. Whanne the swifte thoght hath clothid it-self in tho fetheris, it despiseth the hateful erthes, and surmounteth the rowndenesse of the gret ayr; and it seth the clowdes byhynde his bak, and passeth the heighte of the regioun of the fir, that eschaufeth by the swifte moevynge of the firmament, til that he aryseth hym in-to the houses that beren the sterres, and ioyneth his weies with the sonne, Phebus, and felawshipeth the weie of the olde colde Saturnus; and he, I-maked a knyght of the clere sterre (that is to seyn, whan the thought is makid godis knyght by the sekyng of cleer trouthe to comen to the verray knowleche of god) [1170]—and thilke soule renneth by cercle of the sterres in alle the places there as the schynnyng nyght is y-painted (that is to sey, the nyght that is cloudeles; for on nyghtes that ben cloudeles it semeth as the hevene were peynted with diverse ymages of sterres). And whan the thought hath don there I-noghe, he schal forleten the laste hevene, and he schal pressen and wenden on the bak of the swifte firmament, and he schal be makid parfit of the worschipful lyght of god. There halt the lord of kynges the sepre of his myght and a-temprith the governementes of the world, [1175] and the schynnyng juge of thinges, stable in hym-self, governeth the swifte wayn (that is to seyn, the circular moevynge of the sonne). And yif thi wey ledeth the ayein so that thou be brought thider, thanne wiltow seye that that is the contre that thou request, of

whiche thou ne haddest no mynde—"but now it remembreth me wel, here was I born, her wol I fastne my degree (here wol I duelle)." But yif the liketh thanne to looken on the derkenesse of the erthe that thou hast forleten, thanne schaltow seen that these felouns tirantes, that the wrecchide peple dredeth now, schullen ben exiled fro thilke faire contre.'

'*Tum ego pape ut magna.*'—Prosa 2

Thanne seide I thus: 'Owh! I wondre me that thou byhetist me so grete thinges. [1180] Ne I ne doute nat that thou ne maist wel performe that thou behetist; but I preie the oonly this, that thou ne tarie nat to telle me thilke thinges that thou hast moevid.'

'First,' quod sche, 'thow most nedes knowen that good folk ben alway strong and myghti, and the schrewes ben feble, and desert and naked of alle strengthes. And of these thinges certes everiche of hem is declared and schewed by othere. For so as good and yvel ben two contraries, yif so be that good be stedfast, thanne scheweth the feblesse of yvel al opynly; and if thow knowe clerly the freelnesse of yvel, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. [1185] But for as moche as the fey of my sentence schal ben the more ferme and haboundant, I wil gon by the to weye and by the tothir, and I wil conferme the thinges that ben purposed, now on this side and now on that side. Two thinges ther ben in which the effect of alle the dedes of mankynde standeth, that is to seyn, wil and power; and yif that oon of these two failleth, ther nys nothing that may be doon. For yif that wille lakketh, ther nys no wyght that undirtaketh to done that he wol nat doon; and yif power failleth, the wil nys but in idel and stant for naught. [1190] And therof cometh it that yif thou see a

1166. *for-thi*, C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *forsothe*.

1168. Ptolemy's system of the universe is here referred to.

1169. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> Cx. B H omit *hym*; A<sub>1</sub> *hir* (*soule* is represented by the feminine pronoun after 1168 in A<sub>1</sub>).

1170. C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> read *that for whom* and omit *cleer*.

1174. *worschipful lyght*, A<sub>1</sub> *dreadful clerenesse*.

1177. *fastne my degree*, 'sistam gradum.'

1181. *that thou*, etc.; *me* is the antecedent of *that*.

1182. *naked*, 'despuzed,' misread as 'detrued.'

ght that wolde geten that he mai not en, thow maist nat douten that power faileth hym to have that he wolde.'

'This is open and cler,' quod I, 'ne he mai nat be denyed in no manere.'

'And yif thou se a wyght,' quod sche, 'nat hath doon that he wolde doon, ow ne wil nat douten that he ne hath power to doon it?'

'No,' quod I.

'And in that that every wyght may, that men may holden hym myghti?' 'who seith, in so moche as man is ghty to doon a thing, in so moche he halt hym myghti; and in that he mai, in that men demen hym to ben able.) [1195]

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Remembreth the,' quod sche, 'that I ve gaderid and I-schewid by forseide ouns that al the entencioun of wil of unkynde, whiche that is lad by diverse dies, hasteth to comen to blisfulnes.'

'It remembreth me wel,' quod I, 'that hath ben schewed.'

'And recordeth the nat thanne,' quod I, 'that blisfulnesse is thilke same od that men requiren? so that whanne at blisfulnesse is required of alle, that od also is required and desired of e?' [1200]

'It ne recordeth me noght,' quod I, 'or I have it gretly alwey ficched in my morie.'

'Alle folk thanne,' quod sche, 'good d eek badde, enforcen hem withoute fference of entencioun to comen to od.'

'This is a verray consequence,' quod I.

'And certain is,' quod sche, 'that by e getynge of good men ben y-makid de.'

'This is certain,' quod I.

'Thanne geten gode men that thei siren?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'But wikkide folk,' quod sche, 'yif

thei geten the good that thei desiren, thei ne mowe nat ben wikkid.' [1205]

'So is it,' quod I.

'Than so as the ton and the tothir,' quod sche, 'desiren good, and the gode folk geten good and not the wikkide folk, than is it no doute that the gode folk ne ben myghty and wikked folk ben feble.'

'Who so that evere,' quod I, 'douteth of this, he ne mai nat considere the nature of thinges ne the consequence of resouns.'

'And over this,' quod sche, 'if that ther ben two thinges that han o same purpos by kynde, and that oon of hem pursuweth and performeth thilke same thing by naturel office, and that oother mai nat doon thilke naturel office, but folweth, by other manere than is covenable to nature, hym that accomplissheth his purpos kyndely, [1210] and yit he ne accomplissheth nat his owene purpos—whether of these two demestow for more myghti?'

'Yif that I coniecte,' quod I, 'that thou wilt scie, algates yit I desire to herkne it more pleynly of the.'

'Thou nilt nat thanne denye,' quod sche, 'that the moevement of goynge nys in men by kynde?'

'No for sothe,' quod I.

'Ne thou doutest nat,' quod sche, 'that thilke naturel office of goynge ne be the office of feet?'

'I ne doute it nat,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'yif that a wight be myghti to moeve, and goth uppon hise feet, and another, to whom thilke naturel office of feet lakketh, enforceth hym to gone crepinge uppon his handes, whiche of these two oughte to ben holden the more myghty by right?' [1215]

'Knyt forth the remenaunt,' quod I, 'for no wight ne douteth that he that mai gon by naturel office of feet ne be more myghti than he that ne may nat.'

'But the sovereign good,' quod sche,

1206. *the ton, etc., 'utrique,' 'li un et li autre.'*

1207. *mai nat, is not able.*

1208. *han o same purpos, have the same function to perform.*

1212. *yif that, although.*

1207. H. Cx. omit *gretly* (not found in Latin & French).

'that is eveneliche purposed to the good folk and to badde, the gode folk seken it by naturel office of vertus, and the schrewes enforcen hem to getin it by diverse covetise of erthly thinges, whiche that nys noon naturel office to gete thilke same sovereign good. Trowestow that it be any other wise?'

'Nai,' quod I, 'for the consequence is opene and schewynge of thinges that I have graunted, that nedes good folk moten be myghty, and schrewes feble and unmyghti.' [1220]

'Thou rennist aryght byforn me,' quod sche, 'and this is the jugement (that is to sein, I juge of the), ryght as thise leches ben wont to hopin of sike folk, whan thei aperceyven that nature is redressed and with-stondeth to the maladye. But for I se the now al redy to the undirstondynge, I schal schewe the more thikke and contynuel resouns. For loke now, how greetly scheweth the feblesse and infirmite of wikkid folk, that ne mowen nat comen to that hir naturel entencioun ledeth hem; and yit almost thilke naturel entencioun constreyneth hem. And what were to demen thanne of schrewes, yif thilk naturel help hadde forleten hem, the whiche naturel help of entencioun goth alwey byforn hem and is so gret that unneth it mai ben overcome. [1225] Considere thanne how gret defaute of power and how gret feblesse ther is in wikkide felonous folke. (As who seith the grettere thing that is covetied and the desir nat accomplisshed, of the lasse myght is he that coveteth it and mai nat accomlishe; and for-thi philosophie seith thus be sovereyn good.) Ne schrewes requeren not lighte meedes ne veyne games, whiche thei ne mai nat

folwen ne holden; but thei failen of thilke somme and of the heighte of thinges (that is to seyn sovereyn good). Ne these wrecches ne comen nat to the effect of sovereyn good, the whiche thei enforcen hem only to geten by nyghtes and dayes. [1230] In the getyng of whiche good the strength of good folk is ful wel yseene. For ryght so as thou myghtest demen hym myghty of goinge that goth on his feet til he myghte comen to thilke place fro the whiche place ther laye no weie forthere to be gon, ryght so mostow nedes demen hym for ryght myghty, that geteth and atteyneth to the ende of alle thinges that ben to desire, by-yonde the whiche ende ther nys no thing to desire. Of the whiche power of good folk men mai conclude that the wikkide men semen to be bareyne and naked of alle strengthe. For whi forleten thei vertus and folwen vices? Nys it nat for that thei ne knowen nat the godes? But what thing is more feble and more caytif than is the blyndnesse of ignorance? [1235] Or elles thei knowen ful wel whiche thinges that thei oughten folwe, but lecherie and covetise overthrowth hem mys-torned. And certes so doth distemprounce to feble men, that ne mowen nat wrastlen ayeen the vices. Ne knowen thei nat thanne wel that thei forleten the good wilfully, and turnen hem wilfully to vices? And in this wise thei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myghti, but thei forleten al outely in any wise for to been. For thei that forleten the comune fyn of alle thinges that ben, thei forleten also therwith-al for to been. [1240] And peraventure it scholde seme to som folk that this were a mervelle to seien, that schrewes, whiche that contenen the more partie of men, ne ben nat ne han no beyng; but yit natheles it is so, and thus stant this thing. For thei that ben schrewes I denye nat that they ben schrewes, but I denye, and seie simply and pleynty, that thei ne ben nat, ne han no beyng. For

1220. *schewynge*, perhaps error for 'sewing'.  
1221. *jugement*, 'jugemens'; 'indicium' read as 'iudicium'.

1222. *redressed*, rather *addressed*, 'erectus'.

1224. *to that*, to that to which.

1225. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H B omit *alwey*; C<sub>2</sub> *away*.

1227. *be sovereyn good*, in respect to the chief good.

1228. *games*, A<sub>1</sub> H *gambes*, 'praemia lvia et ludia', L. e. *jocosa*.

1236. *mys-torned*, 'transversos', 'in an distortura'.

ght als thou myghtest seyn of the careyne  
a man, that it were a deed man, but  
ou ne myghtest nat symply callen it  
man; so graunte I wel for-sothe that  
cyous folk ben wikkid, but I ne may nat  
aunten absolutely and symply that thei  
n. For thilke thing that with-holdeth  
dre and kepeth nature, thilke thing is,  
nd hath beinge; [1245] but what thing  
at failleth of that (that is to seyn, he  
at forleteth naturel ordre), he forleteth  
ilke beinge that is set in his nature.  
ut thou wolt seyn that schrewes mowen.  
ertes, that ne denye I nat; but certes  
r power ne descendeth nat of strengthe,  
it of feblesse. For thei mowen don  
ikkydnesses, the whiche thei ne myghten  
t don yif thei myghten duellen in the  
rme and in the doynge of good folk.  
nd thilke power scheweth ful evidently  
at they ne mowen ryght nat. For so  
I have gadrid and proeid a litil byforn  
at evel is nawght, and so as schrewes  
owen oonly but schrewednesses, this  
nclusion is al cler, that schrewes ne  
owen ryght nat, ne han no power.  
[1250] And for as moche as thou undir-  
onde which is the strengthe of this  
ower of schrewes, I have diffynsched a  
il her-byforn that no thing is so myghti  
sovereyn good?

'That is soth,' quod I.

'And thilke same sovereyn good may  
on noon yuel?'

'Certes no,' quod I.

'Is ther any wyght thanne,' quod sche,  
hat weneth that men mowen don alle  
inges?'

'No man,' quod I, 'but yif he be out  
his wyt.'

'But certes schrewes mowen don evel?'

'Ye; wolde god,' quod I, 'that thei  
myghten don noon!'

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'so as he that is  
myghty to doon oonly but goode thinges

mai doon alle thinges, and thei that ben  
myghti to doon yuele thinges ne mowen  
nat alle thinges, [1255] thanne is it open  
thing and manyfest that thei that mowen  
doon yuele ben of lasse power. And yit  
to provee this conclusion ther helpeth  
me this, that I have schewed here-byforn,  
that alle power is to be noumbred among  
thinges that men oughten requere; and  
I have schewed that alle thinges that  
oughten ben desired ben referted to  
good, ryght as to a maner heighte of hir  
nature. But for to mowen don yuel and  
felononye ne mai nat ben referrid to  
good. Thanne nys nat yuel of the nombre  
of thinges that oughten ben desired.  
But alle power aughte ben desired and  
required. [1260] Thanne is it open and  
cler that the power ne the mowyng of  
schrewes nis no power. And of alle  
these thinges it scheweth wel that the  
gode folk ben certeinli myghty, and the  
schrewes douteles ben unmyghty. And  
it is cler and opene that thilke sentence  
of Plato is verray and soth, that seith  
that oonly wise men may doon that thei  
desiren, and schrewes mowen haunten  
that hem liketh, but that thei desiren (that  
is to seyn, to come to sovereyn good), thei  
ne han no power to acomplissen that.  
For schrewes don that hem lyst whan,  
by tho thinges in whiche thei deliten, thei  
wenen to ateynen to thilke good that thei  
desiren; but thei ne geten nat þe ateyne  
nat therto, for vices ne comen nat to  
blisfulnesse. [1265]

'Quos vides sedere celsor.'—Metrum 2.

'Who so that the coverturis of hir  
veyn apparailles myghte strepen of thise  
proude kynges, that thou seest sitten  
an hye in here chayeres, gliterynge  
in schynynge purple, envyrowned with  
sorrowful armures manasyng with cruel  
mowth, blowynge by woodnesse of herte,

1256. *yit*, moreover.

1261. *mowynges*, H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *mowynge*.

1267. *sorrowful armures*, 'tristis armia.

1267. *blowynge*, panting.

1245. *with-holdeth*, retains.

1248. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *wickidnes*.

1249. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B A<sub>1</sub> *schrewedness*.

1251. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *understandis*.

he schulde seen thanne that thilke lordis berin withynne hir corages full streyte cheynes. For lecherye tormenteth hem on that o side with gredy venymes; and trowlable ire, that areyseth in hem the floodes of trowblynges, tormenteth upon that othir side hir thought; or sorwe halt hem wery and I-cawght, or slidyng and desceyvynge hope turmenteth hem. And therefore, syn thow seest on heved (that is to seyn, o tiraunt) beren so manye tyranyes, than doth thilke tyrant nat that he desireth, [1270] syn he is cast down with so manye wikkide lordes (that is to seyn, with so manye vices that han so wikkidly lordschipes over hym).

*'Videsne igitur quanto.'*—Prosa 3

Seestow nat thanne in how greet filthe thise schrewes been I-wrapped, and with which clerlesse thise gode folk schynen? In this scheweth it wel that to good folk ne lakketh nevere mo hir meedes, ne schrewes ne lakken nevere mo turmentes, for of alle thinges that ben I-doon, thilke thing for which any thing is doon, it semeth as by ryght that thilke thing be the mede of that; as thus: yif a man renneth in the stadye (or in the forlonge) for the corone, thanne lith the mede in the corone for which he renneth. [1275] And I have schewed that blisfulnesse is thilke same good for which that alle thinges ben doon; thanne is thilke same good purposed to the werkes of mankynde right as a comune mede, which mede ne may nat ben disseveryd fro good folk. For no wight as by ryght, fro thennes-forth that hym lakketh goodnesse, ne schal ben cleped good. For whiche thing folk of gode maneres, hir medes ne forsaken hem never mo. For al be it so that schrewes waxen as wode as hem lyst ayein good folk, yit natheles the corone of wise men ne schal nat fallen ne faden; [1280] for foreyne schrewed-

nesse ne bynymeth nat for the corages of good folk hir propre honour. But yif that any wyght reioysede hym of goodnesse that he hadde taken fro withoute (as who seith, yif any man hadde his goodnesse of any other man than of hymself), certes he that yaf hym thilke goodnesse, or elles som other wyght, myghte benymen it hym. But for as moche as to every wyght his owene propre bounte yeveth hym his mede, thanne at erste schal he failen of mede whan he foreteth to ben good. And at the laste, so as alle medes ben requirid for men wenen that thei ben gode, who is he that nolde deme that he that is ryght myghti of good were partles of the mede? And of what mede schal he ben gerdoned? Certes of ryght fair mede and ryght greet aboven alle medes. [1285] Remembre the of thilke noble corolarie that I yaf the a litel here-byforn, and gadre it togidre in this manere: so as god hymself is blisfulnesse, thanne is it cler and certain that alle gode folk ben I-made blisful for thei ben gode; and thilke folk that ben blisful it accordeth and is covenable to ben goddes. Thanne is the mede of good folk swych that no day ne schal empeiren it, ne no wikkidnesse schal derkne it, ne power of no wyght ne schal nat amenusen it, that is to seyn, to ben made goddes. And syn it is thus (that gode men ne failen nevere mo of hir mede), certes no wise man ne may doute of the undepartable peyne of schrewes (that is to seyn, that the peyne of schrewes ne departeth nat from hemself nevere mo). For so as good and yvel, and peyne and mede ben contrarie, it moot nedes ben that, ryght as we seen betyden in guerdoun of gode, that al so moot the peyne of yvel answer by the contrarie partie to schrewes. [1290] Now thanne so as bounte and pruesse ben the mede to good folk, also is schrewidnesse it-self

1268. *gredy venymes*, 'avidis venenis.'

1269. *C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cx. B food.*

1277. *warher, actions.*

1281. *C<sub>2</sub> reioyes, A<sub>1</sub> reioyeth.*

1284. *A<sub>1</sub> wolds deme; cp. 336.*

1288. *that is to seyn, etc., appositional phrase.*

1291. *also, et.*

ment to schrewes. Thanne who so  
t evere is entecchid or defowled with  
ne, he ne douteth nat that he nys  
ecchid and defowled with yvel. Yif  
ureswre thanne wol preysen hem-self,  
y it semen to hem that thei ben with-  
en parti of torment, syn thei ben  
iche that the uttrete wikkidnesse  
at is to seyn wiklide thewes, which  
it is the uttereste and the worst kynde  
schrewednesse) ne defouleth ne en-  
cheth nat hem oonly, but enfeteth and  
venymeth hem greetly? And also loke  
schrewes, that ben the contrarie partie  
gode men, how gret peyne felaw-  
upith and folweth hem! [1295] For  
u hast lerned a litil here-byforn that  
e thing that is and hath beyng is oon,  
d thilke same oon is good: than is this  
e consequence, that it semeth that al  
at is and hath beyng, is good. (This  
to seyn as who seith that beinge and  
ite and goodnesse is al oon.) And in  
is manere it folweth thanne that alle  
ing that fayleth to ben good, it stynteth  
to be and for to han any beyng.  
herfore it is that schrewes stynten for  
ben that thei weeren. But thilke  
hir forme of mankynde (that is to seyn  
e forme of the body withowte) scheweth  
t that thise schrewes weren whilom men.  
[1300] Wherefor whan thei ben perverted  
d turned in-to malice certes thanne  
ve thei for-lorn the nature of mankynde.  
it wo as oonly bownte and prowessse  
ay enhawnsen every man over other  
en, than moot it nedes be that schrewes,  
hiche that schrewednesse hath cast out  
the condicion of mankynde, ben put  
idre the merit and the dissert of men.  
han betidith it that, yif thou seest a  
yght that be transformed in-to vices,  
ow ne mayst nat wene that he be a  
an. For if he be ardaunt in avaryce,  
id that he be a ravynour by violence of

foreyne richesse, thou schalt seyn that he  
is lik to the wolf; and if he be felonows  
and withoute reste, and exercise his tonge  
to chidynges, thou schalt likne hym to  
the hownd; [1305] and if he be a pryve  
awaytour y-hid, and reioiseth hym to  
ravysche be wiles, thou schalt seyn hym  
lik to the fox whelpes; and yif he be  
distempre, and quakith for ire, men schal  
wene that he bereth the corage of a lyoun;  
and yif he be dredful and fleyng, and  
dredith thinges that ne aughte nat to ben  
dredd, men schal holden hym lik to the  
hert; and yf he be slow, and astonyd,  
and lache, he lyveth as an asse; yif he  
be lyght and unstedfast of corage, and  
chaungith ay his studies, he is likned to  
briddes; and if he be ploungid in fowle  
and unclene luxuris, he is withholden  
in the foule delices of the fowle sowe.  
[1310] Than folweth it that he that for-  
leteth bounte and prowessse, he forletith  
to ben a man; syn he ne may nat passe  
in-to the condicion of god, he is torned  
in-to a beeste.

'Vela Naricii ducis.'—Metrum 3

Eurus, the wynd, aryved the sayles of  
Ulixes, duc of the cuntre of Narice, and  
his wandryng shippes by the see, into  
the ile ther-as Cerces, the faire goddesse,  
dowhter of the sonne, duelleth, that  
medleth to hir newe gestes drynkes that  
ben touchid and makid with enchaunte-  
mentes. And aftir that hir hand, myght  
over the erbes, hadde chaunged hir gestes  
into diverse maneres, that oon of hem is  
coverid his face with forme of a boor;  
the tother is chaungid in-to a lyoun of  
the contre Marmoryke, and his nayles  
and his teth waxen, [1315] that oother of  
hem is newliche chaunged in-to a wolf,  
and howleth whan he wolde wepe; that

1292. *entecchid or defowled*, 'afficitur.'  
1294. *en defowled*, etc., 'non afficit modo  
sunt sedem vehementer inficit.' Chaucer has  
*maner afficit and inficit*.  
1300. *schrew*, 'ralliqua,' i.e. the human form left  
there.

1304. *foreyne richesse*, another's goods.  
1306. *wiles*, C<sub>2</sub> H *whiles*.  
1306. *seyn hym lik*, pronounces him like.  
1309. *astonyd*, 'stupidos.'  
1309. *studies*, purposes.  
1313. *drynkes*, etc., 'pocula tacta carmina,  
and 'beverages for (lecta?) per enchantementa.'



other goth debonayrely in the hows as a tigre of Inde. But al be it so that the godhede of Mercurie, that is cleped the bridde of Arcadye, hath had merci of the duc Ulixes, bysegid with diverse yveles, and hath unbownden hym fro the pestilence of his oostes, algates the rowerys and the maryneres hadden by this I-drawn in-to hir mouthes and dronken the wikkide drynkes. Thei that weren woxen swyn, hadden by this I-chaunged hir mete of breed for to eten akkornes of ookes. Noon of hir lymes duelleth with hem hool, but thei han lost the voys and the body; [1330] oonly hir thought duelleth with hem stable, that wepeth and by-wayleth the monstruous chaungynge that thei suffren. O over lyght hand! (As who seith: 'O feble and light is the hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaungh the bodies of folk in-to beestes, to regard and to comparysoun of mutacioun that is makid by vices!') 'Ne the herbes of Circes ne ben nat myghty. For al be it so that thei mai chaungen the lymes of the body, algates yit thei may nat chaungen the hertes. For withinne is I-hidd the strengthe and the vygour of men, in the secre tour of hir hertes, (that is to seyn the strengthe of resoun); but thilke venym of vices to-drawn a man to hem more myghtely than the venym of Circes. For vices ben so cruel that they percen and thurw passen the corage withinne; [1335] and, though thei ne anoye nat the body, yit vices wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.'

*'Tum ago fateor inquam.'*—Prosa 4

Thanne seide I thus: 'I confesse and I am a-knowe it,' quod I, 'ne I ne se nat that men may seyn as by ryght that schrewes ne ben chaunged in-to beestes by the qualite of hir soules, al be it so

1337. *Mercurie*, etc., Aq. 'sed licet nomen, i.e. *divus arcadia*, i.e. *mercurii* . . . qui dicitur ales quod' etc. (*ales* read as *bridae*).

1337. *are a-knowe it*, acknowledge it.

1337. *as by ryght*, justly.

that thei kepin yit the forme of the body of mankynde; but I nolde nat of schrewes, of whiche the thought crwel woodeth alwey into destruccoon of gode men, that it were leweful to hem to don that.'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ne it is nat leweful to hem, as I schal wel schewen the in covenable place. But natheles, yif so were that thilke that men wenen ben leweful to schrewes were by-nomyn hem, so that they ne myghte nat anoyen or doon harm to gode men, certes a gret partie of the peyne to schrewes scholde ben alleged and releved. [1330] For al be it so that this ne seme nat credible thing peraventure to some folk, yit moot it nedes be that schrewes ben more wrecches and unsely, when thei mai doon and performe that thei coveyten, than yif that thei ne myghte nat acomplissen that thei coveiten. For yif it so be that it be wrecchidnesse to wilne to doon yvel, thanne is more wrecchidnesse to mowe don yvel, withoute whiche mowynge the wrecchid wil scholde langwise withouten effect. Thanne syn that everiche of these things hath his wrecchidnesse (that is to seyn, wil to don yvel and power to don yvel), it moot nedes be that thei (schrewes) ben constreyned by thre unselynesses, that wolen, and mowen, and performen felonyes and schrewednesses.' [1335]

'I acorde me,' quod I; 'but I desire gretly that schrewes losten sone thilke unselynesses, that is to seyn, that schrewes weren despoyled of mowynge to don yvel.'

'So schollen thei,' quod sche, 'sonnere peraventure than thou woldest, or sonnere than they hem-selve wene. For thei nis no thing so late, in so schorte powndes of this lif, that is long to abyde, nameliche

1335. *thre*, C<sub>2</sub> H Cx. *the*, A<sub>2</sub> *theyr*.

1335. *unselynesses*, B H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> *unselyness*.

1335. B H Cx. *unselyness*; *thilke* is Fr. 'ceste' ('hoc'), which refers to the last-named of the three misfortunes.

1337. *weene*, A<sub>2</sub> adds to *lakken mowynge to don yvel*, which is in Latin but not in French.

1338. *late*, slow moving.

1338. *to abyde*, gerundive, i.e. *that one has long to wait for it*.

orage immortal. Of whiche schrewes rete hope and the heye compassynges shrewednesses is ofte destroyed by a yn ende, or thei ben war; and that ; establiseth to schrewes the ende of schrewednesses. [1340] For yf that wrednesse makith wrecchis, than mot ades ben moost wrecchide that lengest schrewe. The whiche wikkide eswes wolde I demen althermost ly and kaytifs, yif that 'hir schrewed- ne were fynissched at the leste by the owtraste deth; for yif I have luded soth of the unselynesse of wrednesse, thanne schewith it clerly thilke wrecchidnesse is withouten the whiche is certain to ben perdur-

Certes,' quod I, 'this conclusion is and wondirful to graunte; but I ve wel that it accordeth moche to thinges that I have grauntid heren.

Thou hast,' quod sche, 'the ryght racion of this. [1345] But who so e wene that it be an hard thing to rde hym to a conclusioun, it is ryght he schewe that some of the premysses false, or elles he mot schewe that the cioun of proposicions is nat sped-ful necessarie conclusioun; and yif it ne nat so, but that the premisses ben aunted, ther nys nat why he scholde ve the argument. For this thing that nat telle the now ne schal nat seme wondirful, but of the thingis that taking also it is necessarie.' (As who it, it is woth of that which is purposed

What is that?' quod I.

Certes,' quod sche, 'that is that : wikkid schrewes ben more blisful, elles lasse wrecches, that abyen the tentes that thei han desservid, than o payne of justice chastisede hem. Ne this ne seie I nat now for that man myghte thinke that the maneris shewen ben coriged and chastised by reame and thei ben brought to the

reame, 'sumpt.'

ryghte weye by the drede of the torment, ne for that they yeven to other folk ensample to fien fro vices; but I undirstonde yit in another manere that schrewes ben more unsely whan thei ne ben nat punysshed, al be it so that ther ne be hadde no resoun or lawe of correccioun, ne noon ensample of lokynge.'

'And what manere schal that be,' quod I, 'other than hath ben told herbyforn?'

'Have we nat thanne graunted,' quod sche, 'that good folk ben blisful and schrewes ben wrecches?'

'Vis,' quod I. [1355]

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'yif that any good were added to the wrecchidnesse of any wyght, nis he nat more blisful than he that ne hath no medlynge of good in his solitarie wrecchidnesse?'

'So semeth it,' quod I.

'And what scistow thanne,' quod sche, 'of thilke wrecche that lakketh alle goodes, (so that no good nys medlyd in his wrecchidnesse,) and yit over al his wikkidnesse, for which he is a wrecche, that ther be yit another yvel anexed and knyt to hym—schal nat men demen hym more unsely thanne thilke wrecche of whiche the unselynesse is relevid by the participacioun of som good?'

'Why sholde he nat?' quod I.

'Thanne certes,' quod sche, 'han schrewes, whan thei ben punyschid, somewhat of good anexid to hir wrecchidnesse, [1360] that is to seyn, the same payne that thei suffren, which that is good by the resoun of justice; and whanne thilke same schrewes ascapen withouten torment, than han they somewhat more of yvel yit over the wikkidnesse that thei han don, that is to seyn, defaute of payne, whiche defaute of payne thou hast grauntid is yvel for the diserte of felonye?'

'I ne may nat denye it,' quod I.

'Moche more thanne,' quod sche, 'ben

\* 1354. *ensample of lokynge*, 'example for consideration. But perhaps read *lokynge of ensample* as in Latin and French.

schrewes unsely whan thei ben wrongfully deliuerd fro peyne, thanne whan thei ben punyschid by ryghtful vengeaunce. But this is opene thing and cleer, that it is ryght that schrewes ben punyschid, and it is wikkidnesse and wrong that thei escapen unpunyschid.' [1365]

'Who myghte denye that?' quod I.

'But,' quod sche, 'may any man denye that al that is ryght nis good, and also the contrarie, that al that is wrong is wikke?'

'Certes,' quod I, 'thise thinges ben clere ynowe, and that we han concluded a lytel here-byforn. But I preye the that thou telle me, yif thou accordest to leten no torment to the soules afir that the body is ended by the deeth?' (This is to seyn, 'Undirstondestow aught that soules han any torment afir the deeth of the body?')

'Certes,' quod sche, 'ye, and that ryght greet. Of whiche soules,' quod sche, 'I trowe that some ben tormented by asprenesse of peyne, [1370] and some soules, I trowe, ben exercised by a purgynge mekenesse; but my conseil nys nat to determyne of thise peyns. But I have travailed and told yit hider-to for thou scholdest knowe the mowynge of schrewes, whiche mowynge the semeth to ben unworthy, nis no mowynge; and ek of schrewes, of whiche thou pleynedest that they ne were nat punyschid, that thou woldest seen that thei ne were nevere mo withouten the tormentes of hir wikkidnesse; and of the licence of mowynge to don yvel that thou preyedest that it myghte sone ben ended, and that thou woldest fayn lerne that it ne sholde nat longe endure; and that schrewes ben more unsely yif thei were of lengere durynge, and most unsely yif thei weren perdurable. [1375] And afir this I have

schewyd the that more unsely ben schrewes whan thei escapen withouten hir ryghtful peyne, thanne whan thei ben punyschid by ryghtful veniaunce; and of this sentence folweth it that thanne ben schrewes constrained to the laste with most grevous torment, whan men wene that thei ne ben nat punysched.'

'Whan I considere thi resouns,' quod I, 'I ne trowe nat that men seyn any thing more verrayly. And yif I turne ayen to the studies of men, who is he to whom it sholde seme, that he ne schold nat only leuen thise thinges, but gladly herkne hem?'

'Certes,' quod sche, 'so it is. [1380] But men may nat, for they have hir eyes so wont to the derknesse of erthly thinges that they ne may nat lyften hem up to the light of cler sothfastnesse, but the ben lyk to briddes of whiche the nyght lightneth hir lokynge and the day blendith hem. For whan men loke nat the ordre of thinges, but hir lustes and talentes, they wene that either the leve or the mowynge to don wikkidnesse, or elles the scapyng withouten peyne be welful. But considere the jugement of the perdurable lawe. For yif thou conferme thi corage to the beste thinges, thou hast noon nede of no juge to yeven the prys or mede; for thou hast joyned thyself to the most excellent thing. And yif thou have enclynd thy studies to the wikkide thinges, ne seek no foreyn wrekere out of thyself; for thou thyself hast thrist thyself in-to wikkide thinges. [1385] ryght as thou myghtest loken by diverse tymes the fowle *artia* and the hevене, and that alle othere thinges stynten fro withoute (so that thou wert nyether in hevене ne in erthe, ne saye no thyng more); -thanne scholde it semen to the, as by only resoun of lokynge, that thou

1367. C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. omit a *lytel*.

1369. *This is*, C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *This*, Cx. *That is*.

1371. *purgynge mekenesse*, 'purgatoria ele-  
mentia'.

1371. and that thou woldest, etc. should be  
that thou woldest lerne, etc. One of the French  
MSS. has the same mistake.

1382. C<sub>1</sub> H *hir talentes*.

1384. H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B A<sub>1</sub> *wikkid thinges*.

1386. *ryght as*, just as if.

1386. and that, that serves to repeat the  
preceding particle.

1386. *stynten*, proterita.

1386. C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit *the*.

were now in the sterres, and now in the  
erthe. But the peple ne lokith nat on  
howe thinges. What thanne? Schal we  
harme approuchen us to hem that I have  
chewed that thei ben lyke to beestes?  
And what wyltow seyn of this: yif that  
a man hadde al forlorn his syghte, and  
 hadde forgeten that he evere sawhe, and  
wende that no thing ne faylede hym of  
perfection of mankynde; now we that  
lyghten sen the same thinges—wolde  
we nat wene that he were blynd? [1390]  
It is also ne accordith nat the peple to  
that I schal seyn, the whiche thing is  
atenyd by as stronge foundementes of  
resouns, that is to seyn, that more unsele  
sen they that doon wrong to othere folk,  
than they that the wrong suffren.'

'I wolde here thilke same resouns,'  
quod I.

'Denyestow,' quod sche, 'that all  
schrewes ne ben worthy to han torment?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'But,' quod sche, 'I am certein by  
many resouns that schrewes ben unsele.'

'It accordeth,' quod I.

'Thanne ne dowtestow nat,' quod sche,  
'that thilke folk that ben worthy of  
torment, that they ne ben wrecches?' [1395]

'It accordeth wel,' quod I.

'Yif thou were thanne I-set a juge or  
knowere of thinges, whethir trowestow  
that men scholden tormenten, hym that  
doth don the wrong or elles hym that  
hath suffred the wrong?'

'I ne doute nat,' quod I, 'that I nolde  
been sufficient satisfaccoun to hym that  
 hadde doon the wrong, by the sorwe of  
yow that hadde doon the wrong.'

'Thanne someth it,' quod sche, 'that  
be doers of wrong is more wrecche than  
e that hath suffrid the wrong?'

'That folweth it wel,' quod I.

'Thanne,' quod sche, 'by thise causes  
and by othere causes that ben enforced by  
the same roote, that filthe or synne be

the propre nature of it maketh men  
wrecches; and it scheweth wel that the  
wrong that men doon nis nat the wrecchid-  
nesse of hym that receyveth the wrong,  
but wrecchidnesse of hym that dooth the  
wrong. [1400] But certes,' quod sche,  
'thise oratours or advocattes don al the  
contrarie; for thei enforcen hem to com-  
moeve the juges to han pite of hem that  
han suffrid and receyved the thinges that  
ben grevous and aspre, and yit men  
scholden more ryghtfully han pite of hem  
that doon the grevances and the wronges;  
the whiche schrewes it were a more  
covenable thing that the accusours or  
advocattes, nat wrooth but pytous and  
debonayre, ledde the schrewes that han  
don wrong to the judgement, ryght as  
men leden syke folk to the leche, for that  
thei sholden seken out the maladyes of  
synne by torment. And by this covenant,  
eyther the entent of the defendours or  
advocates sholde fayle and cesen in al, or  
elles, yif the office of advocates wolde  
betre profiten to men, it scholde be torned  
into the habyte of accusacioun. [1405]  
(That is to seyn that thei scholden accuse  
schrewes, and nat excusen hem.) And  
eek the schrewes hem-self, yif it were  
leveful to hem to seen at any clifte the  
vertu that thei han forleten, and sawen  
that they scholden putten adoun the  
filthes of hir vices by the tormentes  
of peynes, they ne aughten nat, ryght  
for the recompensacioun for to geten  
hem bounte and prowess whiche that  
thei han lost, demen ne holden that  
thilke peynes weren tormentes to hem;  
and eek thei wolden refuse the attend-  
aunce of hir advocattes, and taken hem-  
self to hir juges and to hir accusours.  
For whiche it betyde that, as to the  
wise folk, ther nis no place y-leten to hate  
(that is to seyn that hate ne hath no place  
among wise men); for no wyght nil haten  
gode men, but yif he were over mochel a

1390. *num videntes eadem*  
Chaucer follows the French  
shaking *putaremus* with  
1398. *ce s'ensuit bien*, 'ce s'ensuit bien'  
1399. *etc.*, in Latin and French

depends on *roots* ('radice').\* Omitting *and before*  
*it scheweth* the sense becomes clear.

1405. C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H Cn. B omits *defendours* or *and*  
*sholde judge and*.

fool, and for to haten schrewes it nis no resoun. [1410] For ryght so as langwissynge is maladye of body, ryght so ben vices and synne maladye of corage; and so as we ne deme nat that they that ben sike of hir body ben worthy to ben hated, but rather worthy of pite; wel more worthy nat to ben hated, but for to ben had in pite, ben thei of whiche the thoughtes ben constreyned by felonous wikkidnesse, that is more crwel than any langwissynge of body.

'*Quid tantos Iuvat.*'—Metrum 4

What deliteth yow to exciten so grete moevynges of hatredes, and to hasten and bysien the fatal disposicioun of your deth with your propre handes (that is to seyn, by batayles or kontek)? For yif ye axen the deth, it hasteth hym of his owene wil, ne deth ne taryeth nat his swifte hors. [1415] And the men that the serpentis, and the lyoun, and the tigre, and the bere, and the boor, seken to sleen with hir teeth, yit thilke same men seken to sleen everiche of hem oothir with swerd. Lo, for hir maneres ben diverse and discordaunt, thei moeven unryghtful oostes and cruel batayles, and wilnen to perise by entrechaungynge of dartes! But the resoun of cruelte nis nat i-nowhe ryghtful. Wiltow thanne yelden a covenable gerdoun to the dissertes of men? Love ryghtfully good folk, and have pite on schrewes.

'*Hic ago video inquam.*'—Prosa 5

'Thus se I wel,' quod I, 'eyther what blisfulnesse or elles what unselynesse is establisshid in the dissertes of gode men and of schrewes. [1420] But in this ilke fortune of peple I se somewhat of good and somewhat of yvel. For no wise man hath nat levere ben exiled, pore and nedy

1414. *What, why.*

1414. *hasten and bysien*, 'haster' and 'sollicitare.'

1415. *hors*, horses.

1416. *serpentes*, rather '*serpent.*'

1421. *fortune of peple*, 'fortuna populari.'

and nameles, thanne for to duellen in hicyte, and flouren of rychesses, and be redowtable by honour and strong of wylle. For in this wise more clerly and more witesfully is the office of wise men treated, whanne the blisfulnesse and the pouste of governours is, as it were, leschadde among peples that ben nayghbours and subgites; syn that namely prisoun, lawe, and thise othere tormentes of laweful peynes ben rather owed to felonous citezeins, for the whiche felones citezeins the peynes ben establisshid than for good folk.' [1425]

'Thanne I merveile me gretely,' quod I, 'why that the thinges ben so mysentrechaunged that tormentes of felonyes pressen and confounden good folk, and schrewes ravyschen medes of vertu (and ben in honours and in gret estates). And I desire eek for to witen of the what semeth the to be the resoun of this so wrongful a confusioun; for I wolde wondre wel the lasse, yif I trowede that alle these thinges weren medlede by fortynows hap. But now hepieth and encreseth myn astonyenge god governour of thinges, that, so as god yeveth ofte tymes to gode men godes and myrthes, and to schrewes yvelis and aspre thinges, and yeveth ayeinward to good folk hardenesses, and to schrewes he graunteth hem hir wil and that they desiren—[1430] what difference thanne may ther be bytwixen that that god doth and the hap of fortune, yf men ne knowe nat the cause why that it is?'

'Ne it nis no merveile,' quod sche, 'thowh that men wenen that ther be somewhat foolishe and confus, what the resoun of the ordre is unknowe. But although that thou ne knowe nat the cause of so gret a disposicioun, natheles for as moche as god the gode governour atempreth and gouverneth the world, ne doute the nat that alle thinges ne ben don ariht.'

1424. *wise men*, rather *wisdom*, 'sapientia.'

1424. *subgites* not in Latin or French.

1429. *that, so as god*, etc., 'what, since he etc.'

*Arcturi sidera.*—Metrum 5  
 So that ne knowe nat the sterres  
 y-torned neyge to the sovereyne  
 centre of poynt (that is to seyn y-  
 maneighe to the sovereyne pool of  
 the firmament), and wot nat why the  
 sterre Boetes passeth or gadreth his waynes,  
 and dreggeth his late flaumes in the see,  
 [1438] And whi that Boetes, the sterre, un-  
 holdeth hise overswifte arysynges, thanne  
 shal he wondryn of the lawe of the heye  
 er; and eek yif that he knowe nat why  
 at the hornes of the fulle mone waxen  
 ale and infect by bowndes of the derk  
 lyght, and how the mone derk and confus  
 discovereth the sterres that sche hadde  
 covered by hir clere vysage. The comune  
 error moeveth folk, and maketh weery  
 hir basyns of bras by thikke strokes.  
 (That is to seyn, that ther is a maner  
 peple that highte Coribandes, that wenen  
 that when the mone is in the eclips that it  
 be enchanted, and therefore for-to rescowe  
 the mone thei betyn hir basyns with  
 thikke strokes.) Ne no man ne wondreth  
 whanne the blastes of the wynd Chorus  
 beten the strondes of the see by quakyng  
 floodes; [1440] ne no man ne wondreth whan  
 the weighte of the snowh, I-hardid by the  
 cold, is resolvyd by the brennyng hete  
 of Phebus, the sonne; for her seen men  
 redily the causes. But the causes y-hidd  
 (that is to seyn, in hevене) trowblen the  
 breyst of men. The moevable peple is  
 astoned of alle thinges that comen seelde  
 and seldynly in our age; but yif the  
 truly knowe of our ignoraunce departed  
 so as that we wisten the causes why  
 that thinges bytyden, certes thei  
 schalde seem to seme wondres.

*Ita est inquam.*—Prosa 6

'Thus it is,' quod I. 'But so as thou  
 hast yeven or byhyght me to unwrappen

1434. *sternis of Arctour*, 'Arcturi sidera,' i.e. Urna Major.

1438. *passeth or gadreth*, 'legat'; *gadreth* is  
 a corruption of *passeth* apparently pass: Urna Major.

1440. *quakyng* they make (*folk* is singular).

1439. *bytyden*, not in Latin; Fr. 'li cori-

the hidde causes of thinges, and to dis-  
 covere me the resouns covered with derk-  
 nes, I preie the that thou devyse and  
 juge me of this matere, and that thou do  
 me to undirstonden it. For this miracle  
 or this wonder trowbleth me ryght gretly.'

And thanne sche, a litel what smylinge,  
 seide: [1445] 'Thou clepist me,' quod  
 sche, 'to telle thing that is gretteste of  
 alle thingis that mowen ben axed, and to  
 the whiche questioun unnethes is ther  
 aught I-nowgh to laven it. (As who  
 seith, unnethes is ther suffisauntly any  
 thing to answeren parfitly to thy ques-  
 tioun.) For the matere of it is swich, that  
 whan o doute is determined and kut away,  
 ther waxen othere doutes withoute nombre,  
 ryght as the hevedes wexen of Idre (the  
 serpent that Hercules slowh). Ne ther  
 ne were no manere ne noon ende, but if  
 that a wyght constreynede tho doutes by  
 a ryght lifly and quyk fir of thought (that  
 is to seyn, by vigour and strengthe of  
 wit). For in this matere men weren  
 wont to maken questiouns of the sym-  
 plicite of the purveaunce of god, and of  
 the ordre of destyne, and of sodeyn hap,  
 and of the knowynge and predestinacioun  
 devyne, and of the liberte of fre wil;  
 [1450] the whiche thinges thou thi-self  
 aperceyvest wel of what weighte thei ben.  
 But for as moche as the knowynge  
 of these thinges is a maner porcioun of  
 the medecyne to the, al be it so that I have  
 litil tyme to doon it, yit natheles y wol  
 enforcen me to schewe somewhat of it.  
 But although the norryssynges of dite of  
 musyk deliteth the, thou most suffren and  
 forberen a litel of thiike delit, whil that  
 I weve to the resouns y-knyt by ordre.'

'As it liketh to the,' quod I, 'so do.'

Tho spak sche ryght as by an other  
 bygynnyng, and seide thus: 'The en-  
 gendryng of alle thinges,' quod sche,  
 'and alle the progressiouns of muable  
 nature, and al that moeveth in any manere,  
 taketh hise causes, his ordre, and his  
 formes, of the stableness of the devyne  
 thought. [1455] And thiike devyne thought

1453. *dite of musyk*, 'musici carminis.'

that is I-set and put in the tour (that is to seyn, in the height) of the simplicité of god, stablissith many maner gises to thinges that ben to done; the whiche manere whan that men looken it in thilke pure clenness of the devyne intelligence, it is y-cleped purveaunce; but whanne thilke manere is referred by men to thinges that it moeveth and disponyth, than of olde men it was clepyd destyne. The whiche thinges yif that any wyght loketh wel in his thought the strengthe of that oon and of that oother, he schal lyghtly mowen seen that thise two thinges ben dyvera. For purveaunce is thilke devyne reson that is establissid in the sovereyn prince of thinges, the whiche purveaunce disponith alle thinges; but destyne is the disposicion and ordonance clyvyng to moevable thinges, by the whiche disposicion the purveaunce knytteth alle thingis in hir ordres; [1460] for purveaunce enbraceth alle thinges to hepe, al-thoghe that thei ben diverse and although thei ben infinit. But destyne certes departeth and ordeyneth alle thinges singularly and devyded in moevynges, in places, in formes, in tymes. As thus: lat the unfoldyng of temporel ordonance, assembled and oonyd in the lokyng of the devyne thought, be cleped purveaunce; and thilke same assemblyng and oonyng, devyded and unfolden by tymes, lat that ben called destyne. And al be it so that thise thinges ben diverse, yit natheles hangeth that oon of that oother; for-whi the ordre destynal procedith of the simplicité of purveaunce. [1465] For ryght as a werkman that aperceyveth in his thought the forme of the thing that he wol make, and moeveth the effect of the work, and ledith that he hadde lookid byform in his thought simplye and presently, by temporel ordonance; certes ryght so god disponith in his purveaunce singularly and stablye the thinges that ben to doone; but he amyni-

streth in many maneris and in diverse tymes by destyne thilke same thinges that he hath disponyd. Thanne, whether that destyne be exercised outhit by some devyne spirites, servantes to the devyne purveaunce, or elles by some soule, or elles by alle nature servyng to god, or elles by the celestial moevynges of sterres, or elles by vertu of aungelis, or elles by divers subtilite of develis, or elles by any of hem, or elles by hem alle; the destynal ordonance is y-woven and accomplissid. Certes it is openething that the purveaunce is an unmoevable and symple forme of thinges to doone; [1470] and the moevable bond and the temporel ordonance of thinges whiche that the devyne symplite of purveaunce hath ordeyned to doone, that is destyne. For whiche it is that alle thinges that ben put undir destyne ben certes subgites to purveaunce, to whiche purveaunce destyne itself is subgit and under. But some thinges ben put undir purveaunce, that sourmounten the ordonance of destyne; and tho ben thilke that stablye ben I-fychid neyghe to the first godhede. They surmounten the ordre of destynal moevablete. For ryght as cerklis that tornen aboute a same centre or aboute a poynt, thilke cerkle that is innerest or most withinne ioyne to the symplesse of the myddle, [1475] and is, as it were, a centre or a poynt to that othere cerklis that tornen abouten hym; and thilke that is utterest, compassed by a largere envyrownyng, is unfasten by largere spaces, in so moche as it is farther fro the myddel symplite of the poynt; and yif ther be any thing that knytteth and felawshipeth hym with the thilke myddel poynt, it is constreynd to the symplite (that is to seyn, into unmoevablete), and it ceseth to ben schad and to fieten diversely. Ryght so, by semblable reson, thilke thing that departeth ferrest fro the first thought of god, it is unfolden and summittid to grettere bondes of destyne; and in so moche is the thing that is laus for destyne, as it excedeth the first hym neer to thilke centre of god.

1458. of olde men, i.e. by the ancients.

1460. C<sub>1</sub> B A<sub>2</sub> H C<sub>2</sub> add *certes* before *destyne*.

1464. be cleped, C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> to.

1467. ledith . . . by temporel ordonance, through processes in time.

is to seyn, god); [1480] and yif the thing clyveth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of god and be withoute moevynge, certes it surmounteth the necessite of destyne. Thanne ryght swich comparysoun as is of skillynge to undirstondynge, and of thing that ys engendrid to thing that is, and of tyme to eternite, and of the cercle to the centre; ryght so is the ordre of moevable destyne to the stable symplite of purveunce. Thilke ordenaunce moveth the hevene and the sterres, and atemprith the elementes to-gidre amonges hem-self, and transformeth hem by entrechaungable mutacioun. And thilke same ordre neweth ayein alle thinges growynge and hallynge adoun, by semblable progressions of sedes and of sexes (that is to seyn, mal and femele). [1485] And this ilke ordre constreyneth the fortunes and the dedes of men by a bond of causes nat able to ben unbownde; the whiche destynal causes, whan thei passen out of the bygynnynges of the unmoevable purveunce, it moot nedes be that thei ne be nat mutable. And thus ben the thinges ful wel I-governed yif that the symplite wellyng in the devyne thoght scheweth forth the ordre of causes unable to ben I-bowed. And this ordre constreyneth by his propre stablete the moevable thingis, or elles thei scholden fleten folyly. For whiche it es that alle thingis scmen to ben confus and trouble to us men, for we knowen nat considere thilke ordenaunce. [1490] Natheles the propre maner of this thing, dressynge hem to gode, we knowen alle; for ther nys no thing that we knowen nat considere thilke ordenaunce of yvel, ne thilk thing that we knowen nat considere thilke ordenaunce of wikkid folk nys nat doon to us, the whiche schrewes, as I have schewid, ful plentyuously, seken good, but wikkid errour mystorneth hem; ne thei comynge fro the poynt of sovereyn good be declyneth nat fro his bygynnyng.

[1480] C. *As H Cx. to god.*  
[1485] *Confusio*, 'ratiocinatio.'  
[1490] *Confusio*, Fr. 'saxes', 'fetiur' confused  
[1495] *Confusio*, 'cum' causal con-  
[1500] *Confusio*, 'temporal.'

But thou mayst seyn, "What unreste may ben a worse confusioun than that gode men han som tyme adversite and som tyme prosperite, and schrewes also han now thingis that they desiren and now thinges that thei haten?" Whethir men lyven now in swich holnesse of thought (as who seith, ben men now so wyse) that swiche folk as thei demen to ben gode folk or schrewes, that it moste nedes ben that folk ben swiche as thei wenen? But in this manere the domes of men discorden, that thilke men that som folk demen worthy of mede, other folk demen hem worthy of torment. [1495] But lat us graunten, I pose, that som man may wel demen or knowen the good folk and the badde; may he thanne knowen and seen thilke innereste atemprance of corages as it hath ben wont to ben seyd of bodyes? (As who seith, may a man speken and determinen of atemprance in corages, as men were wont to demen or speken of complexions and atemprances of bodies?) Ne it ne is nat an unlike miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat (as who seith, but it is lik a mervayle or miracle to hem that ne knowen it nat) whi that swete thinges ben covenantable to some bodies that ben holt, and to some bodies bytter thinges ben covenantable; [1500] and also why that some syk folk ben holpen with lyghte medicynes, and some folk ben holpen with sharpe medicynes. But natheles the leche, that knoweth the manere and the atemprance of hele and of maladye, ne mervyleth of it no-thing. But what othir thing semeth hele of corages but bounte and prowess? And what othir thing semeth maladye of corages but vices? Who is elles keper of good or dryvere away of yvel but god, governour and lechere of thoughtes? The whiche god, whan he hath byholden from the hye tour of his purveunce, he knoweth what

[1495] *What unreste*, etc., 'Cum, tu inquietus, potest ulla iniquior confusio?' Chaucer begins with Fr. 'Mais tu diras,' and then turned to Latin, construing 'inquietus' as a noun.

[1494] *Whethir men*, etc., do men, etc.

[1495] *Lik a mervayle*, rather a *lik mervayle*.



is covenable to every wight, and lenyth hem that he woot that is covenable to hem. [1505] Lo herof comyth and herof is don this noble miracle of the ordre destynal, whan god, that al knoweth, dooth swiche thing, of whiche thing unknowynge folk ben astonyd. But for to constreyn (as who seith, but for to comprehend and to telle) a fewe thingis of the devyne depnesse, the whiche that mannys resoun may undirstonde, thilke man that thou wenest to ben ryght just and ryght kepynge of equite, the contrarie of that semeth to the devyne purveaunce, that al woot. And Lucan, my famylier, telleth that the victorious cause likide to the goddess, and the cause overcomen likide to Catoun. Thanne what so ever thou mayst seen that is doon in this world unhopid or unwened, certes it is the ryghte ordre of thingis; but as to thi wikkid opynioun, it is a confusioun. [1510] But I suppose that som man be so wel I-thewed that the devyne jugement and the jugement of mankynde accorden hem to gidre of hym; but he is so unstedfast of corage that, yif any adversite come to hym, he wol foreletten peraventure to continue innocence, by the whiche he ne may nat withholden fortune. Thanne the wise dispensacion of god sparith hym, the whiche man adversite myghte enpeyren; for that god wol nat suffren hym to travaile, to whom that travaile nis nat covenable. Another man is parfit in alle vertus, and is an holi man and neigh to god, so that the purveaunce of god wolde deme that it were a felonie that he were touched with any adversites; so that he wol nat suffre that swich a man be moeved with any bodily maladye. [1515] But so as seyde a philosophre, the more excellent by me,—he seyde in Grec that “vertues han edified the body of the holi man.” And ofte tyme it be-tydeth that the somme

of thingis that ben to done is taken to governe to good folk, for that the malice haboundaunt of schrewes scholde ben abated. And god yeveth and departeth to other folk prosperites and adversites, I-meddled to hepe afir the qualite of hir corages, and remordith some folk by adversite, for thei ne scholden nat waxen proude by long welefulnesse; and other folk he suffreth to ben travailed with harde thingis, for that thei scholden confermen the vertues of corage by the usage and the exercitacioun of pacience. [1520] And other folk dreden more than thei oughten the whiche thei myghte wel beren, and thilke folk god ledeth in-to experience of hem-self by aspre and sorweful thingis. And many othir folk han bought honourable renoun of this world by the prys of glorious deth; and som men, that ne mowen nat ben overcomen by torment, han yeven ensample to other folk that vertu mai nat ben overcomyn by adversites.

And of alle these thingis ther nis no doute that thei ne ben doon ryghtfully and ordeynly, to the profit of hem to whom we seen these thingis betyde. For certes, that adversite cometh somtyme to schrewes and somtyme that that they desiren, it comith of these forseide causes. [1525] And of sorweful thingis that betyden to schrewes certes no man ne wondreth; for alle men wenen that thei han wel desservid it, and that thei ben of wykkid meryt. Of whiche schrewes the torment somtyme agasteth othere to don felonies, and somtyme it amendeth hem that suffren the timentes; and the prosperite that is given to schrewes scheweth a gret argument to good folk what thing thei scholde demen of thilke welefulnesse, the whiche prosperite men seen ofte serven to schrewes. In the whiche thing I trowe that god dispenseth. For peraventure the nature of som man is so overthrowng to yvel,

1507. *to constreyn*, rather to *speke schortly of*.

1509. *Lucan*, v. *Pharsalia* l. 128.

1510. *but as to*, etc., rather *but to thi opinion it is a withed confusion*.

1515. *continens* should be *hamten* or *usen*, *colere*; Fr. *'continuer'* read as *continuer*.

1517. *taken*, entrusted.

1526. *of wykkid meryt*, *'made meritorious'*, *'de mauvaise merite'*.

and so uncovenable, that the nedy poverté of his houshold myghte rather egren hym to don felonies; and to the maladye of hym god putteth remedye to yeven hym rycheas. [1530] And som othir man byholdeth his conscience defouled with synnes, and makith comparysoun of his fortune and of hym-self, and dredith peraventure that his blisfulnesse, of whiche the usage is joyeful to hym, that the lesynge of thilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorwful to hym; and therefore he wol change his maneris, and, for he dredith to lesen his fortune, he foretith his wikkidnesse. To other folke is welefulnesse I-yeven unworthely, the whiche overthroweth hem in-to destruccion, that thei han disservid; and to som othir folk is yoven power to punysshon, for that it schal be cause of continuacion and exercisyng to good folk, and cause of torment to schrewes. [1535] For so as ther nis noon alliaunce bytwixe good folk and schrewes, ne schrewes ne mowen nat acorden among hem-self. And whi nat? For schrewes discorden of hem-self by hir vices, the whiche vices al to-renden her consciences, and doon ofte time things the whiche thingis, when thei han doon hem, they demen that tho thingis ne scholden nat han ben doon. For whiche thing thilke sovereyne purveunce hath makid ofte tyme fair myracle, so that schrewes han makid schrewes to ben, gode men. For when that some schrewes seen that they suffren wrongfully felonies of othere schrewes, they wexen eschaufed in-to hate of hem that moyed hem, and retornen to the fruyt of vertu, when thei studien to ben unlyk to hem that thei han hated. Certis only this is the devyne myght to the whiche myghte yvelis ben thanne gode whan it useth the yvelis covenably and laweth out the effect of any good. [1540] (As who seith that yvel is good

1530. *uncovenable*, rather *extraneous*, 'inopportuna', probably read as *inopportuna*.

1535. *continuacion*, 'continuance' ('exercitium' read as *continuance*).

1537. *omit fair before myracle*.

1538. *omit*.

1540. *omit*, 'ancum bien.'

only to the myghte of god, for the myght of god ordeyneth thilke yvel to good.)

For on ordre embraseth alle thinges, so that what wyght that departeth fro the resoun of thilke ordre which that is assigned to hym, algatis yit he alideth in-to an othir ordre; so that no thing is lefevel to folye in the reame of the devyne purveunce (as who seith, no thing nis withouten ordonaunce in the reame of the devyne purveunce), syn that the ryght strong god governeth alle thinges in this world. For it nis nat lefevel to man to comprehendyn by wit, ne unfolden by word, alle the subtil ordonaunces and disposicionis of the devyne entente. For onoly it owghte suffise to han lokid that god hym-self, makere of alle natures, ordeineth and dresseth alle thingis to gode; [1545] whil that he hasteth to withholden the thingis that he hath makid into his semblaunce (that is to scyn, for to withholden thingis in-to gode, for he hym-self is good), he chasith out alle yvel fro the boundes of his comynalite by the ordre of necessite destinable. For whiche it folweth that, yif thou loke the purveunce ordeynynge the thinges that men wenen ben outraious or haboundaunt in crthis, thou ne schalt nat scen in no place no thing of yvel. But I se now that thou art charged with the weyghte of the questioun, and wery with lengthe of my resoun, and that thou abydest som swetnesse of songe. Tak thanne this drawght, and, whanne thou art wel reffresched and refect, thou schalt be more stedfast to stye in-to hevere questions or thinges. [1550]

'Si vis celsi iura.'—Metrum 6

Yif thou, wys, wilt demen in thi pure thought the ryghtes or the lawes of the heye thondrene (that is to seyn, of god), loke thou and byhoold the heightes of the sovereyn hevenc. Ther kepyn the sterres, be ryghtful alliaunce of thinges,

1544. *man*, A<sub>1</sub> *to no man*; C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *men*.

1550. *or thinges*, A<sub>2</sub> H *of thinges*; C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> *omit*.

hir oolde pees. The sonne, I-moevid by his rody fyr, ne distorbeth nat the colde cerche of the mone. Ne the sterre yclepid the Bere, that enclyneth his ravysschyng coursis abowte the sovereyn heighte of the world—ne the same sterre Urta nis nevere mo wasschen in the depe westrene see, ne coveyeth nat to deeyen his flaumes in the see of the occian, although it see othere sterres I-plowngid in the see. And Hesperus the sterre bodith and telleth alwey the late nyghtes, and Lucyfer the sterre bryngeth ayein the clere day. [1555]

And thus maketh Love entre-changeable the perdurable courses; and thus is discordable bataille y-put out of the contre of the sterres. This accordaunce atempryth by evenelyke maneres the elementes, that the moiste thingis, stryvyng with the drye thingis, yeven place by stoundes; and that the colde thingis joynen hem by feyth to the hote thingis; and that the lyghte fyr ariseth in-to heighte, and the hevy erthes avalen by her weyghtes. By thise same causes the floury yer yeldeth swote smelles in the first somer seoun warmyng; and the hote somer dryeth the comes; and autumpne comith ayein hevy of apples; and the fletyng reyn by-deweth the wynter. This a-tempraunce norysscheth and bryngeth forth alle thingis that brethith lif in this world; [1560] and thilke same attempraunce, ravysschyng, hideth and bynymeth, and drencheth undir the laste deth, alle thinges I-born.

Among thise thinges sitteth the heye make, kyng and lord, welles and bygynnyng, lawe and wys juge to don equite, and governeth and enclyneth the brydles of thinges. And tho thinges that he stireth to gon by moevyng, he with-draweth and aresteth, and affermeth the moevable or wandryng thinges. For

yif that he ne clepide nat ayein the ryght goyng of thinges, and yif that he ne constreynede hem nat eftsones into roundnesses enclyned, the thingis that ben now contynued by stable ordenaunce, thei scholden departen from hir welle (that is to seyn, from hir bygynnyng), and failen (that is to seyn, tornen into noght). This is the comune love to alle thingis, and alle thinges axen to ben holden by the fyn of good. [1565] For elles ne myghten they nat lasten yif thei ne comen nat eftsones ayein, by love returned, to the cause that hath yeven hem beinge (that is to seyn, to god).

*'Iam ne igitur vides.'*—Prosa 7

Sestow nat thanne what thing folweth alle the thingis that I have seyd?

'What thing?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'al outrely that alle fortune is good.'

'And how may that be?' quod I.

'Now undirstand,' quod sche, 'so as al fortune, whethir so it be joyeful fortune or aspre fortune, is yeven eyther bycause of gerdonyng or elles of exercisyn of good folk, or elles bycause to punyschen or elles chastisen schrewes; thanne is alle fortune good, the whiche fortune is certeyn that it be either ryghtful or elles profitable.' [1570]

'Forsothe this is a ful verray resoun,' quod I; 'and yif I considere the purveaunce and the destyne that thou taughtest me a litel here byfor, this sentence is sustenyd by stedfast resouns. But yif it like unto the, lat us nombren hem amonges thilke thingis, of whiche thou seydest a litel here byfor that thei ne were nat able to ben weened to the peple.'

'Why so?' quod sche.

*1564. roundnesses enclyned, 'flexos orbis,' 'rondes flechies.'*

*1564. that ben now contynued, etc. 'Qua nunc stabili continet ordo'; 'continet' as cont. floweth (or through Fr. 'contenue'); 'ordo' as ablative through 'par ordenaunce'. A contynued, probably a correction.*

*1555. bodith, etc., 'seras nuntiat umbras.'*  
*1560. the perdurable, C<sub>1</sub> H Cx. omit the; perhaps the original reading was *her*, Fr. '*leur*.'*  
*1560. brethith, A<sub>1</sub> bredith; C<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> Cx. berith.*  
*1565. Among thise thinges, 'interes,' read as 'interes,' so also in French.*

'For that the comune word of men,' quod I, 'mysuseth this manere speche of fortune, and seyn ofte tymes that the fortune of som wyght is wikkid.'

'Woltow thanne,' quod sche, 'that I approche a litil to the wordis of the peple, so that it seme nat to hem that I be overmoche departed fro the usage of mankynde?'

'As thou wilt,' quod I.

'Demestow nat,' quod sche, 'that alle thing that profiteth is good?' [1575]

'Yis,' quod I.

'And certes thilke thing that exerciseth or corrigith profitith?'

'I confesse it wel,' quod I.

'Thanne is it good,' quod sche.

'Whi nat?' quod I.

'But this is the fortune,' quod sche, 'of hem that eyther ben put in vertu and batayllen ayein aspre thingis, or elles of hem that eschuen and declynen fro vices and taken the weye of vertu.'

'This ne mai I nat denye,' quod I.

'But what seistow of the merye fortune that is yeven to good folk in guerdoun? Demeth aught the peple that it is wikkid?'

'Nay forsothe,' quod I; 'but thei demen, as it soth is, that it is ryght good.' [1580]

'And what seistow of that othir fortune,' quod sche, 'that, although it be aspre and restreyneth the schrewes by ryghtful torment, weneth aught the peple that it be good?'

'Nay,' quod I, 'but the peple demeth that it is moost wrecchid of alle thingis that man ben thought.'

'Wolow and loke wel,' quod sche, 'lest that we, in folwyng the opynioun of the peple, have confessid and concluded thing that is unable to be wened to the peple?'

'What is that?' quod I.

'Certes,' quod sche, 'it folweth or comith of thingis that ben grauntid that alle thingis that so evere it be, of hem that ben in possessioun of vertu, or that ben in synne, they say.

in the encres of vertu, or elles in the purchasyng of vertu, that thilke fortune is good; and that alle fortune is ryght wikkid to hem that duellen in schrewidnesse.' (As who seith: 'And thus weneth nat the peple.') [1585]

'That is soth,' quod I, 'al be it so that no man dar confessen it ne by-knowen it.'

'Whi so?' quod sche; 'for ryght as the stronge man ne semeth nat to abaisen or disdaigne as ofte tyme as he herith the noyse of the bataile, ne also it ne semeth nat to the wise man to beren it greuously as ofte as he is lad into the stryf of fortune. For, bothe to the to man and cek to the tothir thilke difficulte is the matere, to the to man of encres of his glorious renoun, and to the tothir man to confermen his sapience (—that is to seyn the asprenease of his estat). For therfore it is called "vertu," for that it sustenith and enforceth by hise strengthes that it nis nat overcomen by adversites. Ne certes thou, that art put in the encres or in the heyghte of vertu, ne hast nat comen to fleten with delices, and for to welken in bodily lust; [1590] thou sowest or plawntest a ful egre bataile in thy corage ayeins every fortune. For that the sorwful fortune ne confownde the nat, ne that the myrie fortune ne corrumpe the nat, occupye the mene by stidefast strengthes. For al that evere is undir the mene, or elles al that overpasse the mene, despyseth welefulnesse (as who seith, it is vicious), and ne hath no mede of his travaile. For it is set in your hand (as who seith, it lyth in your power) what fortune yow is levest (that is to seyn good or yvel). For alle fortune that semeth scharp or aspre, yif it ne exercise nat the good folk ne chastiseth the wikkide folk, it punysseth. [1595]

1587. *semeth*, 'debet' read as *debet*.

1590. *encres*, *heyghte*, 'profectu', 'hastatou'.

1591. *sowest or plawntest*, 'conseruic' (*proseruicium*).

1595. *yif it ne*, etc., should be *yif it ne exercise ne chastiseth*, it *punysseth*. The translation combines two variant readings of the Latin.

## 'Bella his quinis.'—Metrum 7

The wrekere Attrides (that is to seyn, Agamenon), that wrought and contynued the batailles by x yer, recovered and purgide in wrekyng, by the destruccioun of Troye, the loste chaumbris of mariage of his brothir. (That is to seyn that he, Agamenon, wan ayein Eleyne that was Menelaus wif his brothir.) In the mene while that thilke Agamenon desirede to yeven sayles to the Grykkyssche naveye, and boughfe ayein the wyndes by blood, he unclothide hym of pite of fadir; and the sory preest yeveth in sacrificyng the wreccchide kuttynge of throte of the doughter. (That is to seyn that Agamenon leet kутten the throte of his doughter by the preest, to maken alliaunce with his goddes, and for to han wynd with whiche he myghte wenden to Troye.) [1600]

Ytakus (that is to seyn Ulixes) bywepete his felawes I-lorn, the whiche felawes fyerse Poliphemus, ligginge in his grete cave, had fretyn and dreynt in his empty wombe. But natheles Poliphemus, wood for his blynde visage, yald to Ulixes ioye by his sorrowful teres. (This is to seyn that Ulixes smoot out the eye of Poliphemus, that stood in his forheed, for whiche Ulixes hadde ioye whan he say Poliphemus wepyng and blynd.)

Hercules is celebrable for his harde travaille. He dawntide the proude Centauris (half hors, half man), and he byraffe the dispoilyng fro the cruel lyoun (that is to seyn, he slouhe the lyoun and rafte hym his skyn); he smot the briddes that byghten Arpiis with certein arwes; [1605] he ravysschide applis fro the wakyng dragoun, and his hand was the more hevy for the goldene metal; he drowh Cerberus (the hound of

helle) by his treble cheyne; he, overcomer, as it is seyde, hath put an unneke lord foddre to his crwel hors (this to seyn that Hercules slough Diomedes, and made his hors to freten hym); and he, Hercules, slough Idra the serpent, and brende the venym; and Achelous the fiod, defowled in his forheed, dreynthe his shamefast visage in his strondes (that is to seyn that Achaleous coude transfiguren hymself into diverse liknesse, and, as he faught with Hercules, at the laste he torned hym in-to a bole, and Hercules brak oon of his hornes, and he for schame hidde hym in his ryver); [1610] and he, Hercules, caste adoun Antheus the geaunt in the strondes of Libye; and Kacus apaysede the wratthes of Evander (this to seyn that Hercules slough the monstre Kacus, and apaysed with that deth the wratthe of Evander); and the bristiled boor markide with scomes the scholdres of Hercules, the whiche scholdres the heye cercle of hevene sholde thrists; and the laste of his labours was that he susteynede the hevene uppon his nekke unbowed; and he disservide eftsones the hevene to ben the pris of his laste travaile.

Goth now thanne, ye stronge men, ther as the heye wey of the greet ensaumple ledith yow. [1615] O nyce men! why nake ye your bakkes? (As who seith, "O ye slowe and delicat men! whi flee ye adversites, and ne fyghte nat ayeins hem by vertu, to wynnyn the mede of the hevene?") For the erthie overcomen yeveth the sterres. (This to seyn that whan that erthly lust is overcomyn, a man is makid worthy to the hevene.)

## EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS

## INCIPIIT LIBER QUINTUS

'Dixerat orationisque cursum.'—Prosa 1

Sche hadde seyde, and tornede the cours of hir resoun to some othere thingis to

1613. *scomes*, flocks of foam, *spuma*.  
1618. *the cours*, C<sub>1</sub> C<sub>2</sub> by *cours*.  
1618. *rationis*, 'orationis' read as *rationis*.

1596. *recovered*, etc., 'recouura' ('piavi'), and Latin gloss 'purgavit ulciscendo.'

1598. *fits of fadir*, 'pietatem paternam' (in gloss).

1598. *yeveth in sacrificyng*, etc., 'Foderat natum jugulum.'

1598. *kuttynge of throte* is due to a note in Aq.

1601. *empty*, rather *grete*.

1604. *dispoilyng*, rather *spell*.

ben treted and to ben Ispedd. Than seide I, 'Certes ryghtful is thin amonestynge and ful digne by auctorite. But that thou seydest whilom that the question of the devyne purveance is enlaced with many othere questiouns, I undirstande wel and prove it by the same thing. But I axe yif that thou wenest that hap be anything in any weys; and yif thou wenest that hap be anything, what is it?' [1620]

Thanne quod sche, 'I haste me to yelden and assoilen to the dette of my byheste, and to schewen and openen the wey, by whiche wey thou maist comen ayein to thi contre. But al be it so that the thingis whiche that thou axest ben ryght profitable to knowe, yit ben thei divers somewhat fro the path of my purpos; and it is to douten that thou ne be makid weery by mys-weyes, so that thou ne maist nat suffise to mesuren the ryghte weie.'

'Ne doute the ther-of no thing,' quod I; 'for for to knowen thilke thingis to gidre, in the whiche thinges I delite me getly,—that schal ben to me in stede of rest, syn it nis nat to douten of the thingis folwyng, whan every syde of thi disputesioun schal han ben stedfast to me by undoutous feyth.' [1625]

'Thanne,' seide sche, 'that manere wol I don the,' and bygan to speken ryght thus: 'Certes,' quod sche, 'yif any wyght diffynisse hap in this manere, that is to seyn that "hap is a bytydyng I-brought forth by foolissh moevynge and by no knytyng of causes," I conferme that hap nis ryght naught in no wise; and I deme al outrelly that hap nis, ne duelleth but a voys (as who seith, but an idel word), withouten any signifiacioun of thing summitted to that voys. For

1618. *ful digne*, etc., 'dignissima auctoritate' misconstrued.

1619. *by the same thing*, rather by the thing itself, i.e. by experience.

1620. *in any weys*, at all.

1625. *sermon . . . to gidre*, 'agmoscere' ends first clause; 'simul cum' begins the second one. Chaucer took 'agmoscere simul' together.

1626. *thing summitted*, 'rei subjecta.'

what place myght ben left or duellynge to folie, and to disordenaunce, syn that god ledeth and constreyneth alle thingis by ordre? For this sentence is verray and soth, that "no thing hath his beyng of naught," to the whiche sentence noon of these oolde folk ne withseide nevere; [1630] al be it so that they ne undirstoden ne mended it nat by god prince and bygygnere of wirkyng, but thei casten as a maner foundement of subiect material (that is to seyn, of the nature of alle resouns). And yif that any thing is woxen or comen of no causes, thanne schal it seme that thilke thing is comen or woxen of nawght; but yif this ne mai nat ben don, thanne is nat possible that hap be any swich thing as I have diffynyschid a litel here byforn.'

'How schal it thanne be?' quod I. 'Nys ther thanne no thing that by right may ben clepid othere hap or elles aventure of fortune; or is ther awght, al be it so that it is hidd fro the peple, to whiche thing these wordes ben covenable?'

'Myn Aristotles,' quod sche, 'in the book of his *Phisic* diffynyseth this thing by schort resoun, and nyghe to the sothe.'

'In whiche manere?' quod I. [1635]

'As ofte,' quod sche, 'as men don any thing for grace of any other thing, and an other thing than thilke thing that men entenden to don bytydeth by some causes, it is clepid "hap." Ryght as a man dalf the erthe bycause of tylyinge of the feld, and founde ther a gobet of gold bydolven; thanne wenen folk that it is byfalle by fortunous bytydyng. But forsothe it nis nat of naught, for it hath his propre causes, of whiche causes the cours unforseyn and unwar semeth to han makid hap. For yif the tilere of the feeld ne dulve nat in the erthe, and yif the hidere of the gold ne hadde byd the gold in thilke place, the gold ne hadde nat ben founde. These ben thanne the

1631. *by god*, in respect to god.

1631. *as*, as it were.

1635. *thing*, C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> omit.

1639. *dulve*, pret. subj. of *dolven*.

causes of the abregginge of fortuit hap, the whiche abreggyng of fortuit hap cometh of causes encontrynge and flowynge togidre to hem-self, and nat by the entencioun of the doere. [1640] For neither the hidere of the gold ne the delvere of the feeld ne undirstoden nat that the gold sholde han ben founde; but, as I seide, it bytidde and ran togidre that he dalf there as that oothir had hid the gold. Now mai I thus diffinys-shen "hap": hap is an unwar betydinge of causes assembled in thingis that ben doon for som oothir thing; but thilke ordre, procedinge by an uneschuable byydinge to-gidre, whiche that descendeth fro the welle of purveaunce, that ordeyneth alle thingis in hir places and in hir tymes, makith that the causes rennen and assemblen togidre.

*'Rupis Achemenic.'*—Metrum 1

Tigris and Eufates resoven and springen of o welle in the craggas of the roche of the contre of Achemenye, ther as the feinge bataile fischeth hir dartes retourned in the breestis of hem that folwen hem. [1645] And sone aftir the same ryverys, Tigris and Eufates, unioignen and departen hir watres. And if thei comen togidre, and ben assemblid and clepid togidre into o course, thanne moten thilke thingis fleten togidre whiche that the watir of the entrechaungynge flood bryngeth. The schippes and the stokkes, araced with the flood, moten assemblen; and the watris I-medled wrappeth or emplieth many fortunel happes or maneris; the whiche wandrynge happes natheles thilke enclynynge lowenesse of the erthe and the flowynge ordre of the slydinge watir governeth. Right so fortune, that

1639. *abreggyng of fortuit hap*, 'fortuiti compendii' (accidental gain) glossed 'fortuiti eventus'; Fr. 'l'abregement du cas fortunel' with wrong meaning of *compendium*, which Chaucer follows.

1641. *undirstoden* (C<sub>2</sub> *undirstonden*, but probably a correction), 'intendit'; Fr. 'entendirent', which Chaucer misunderstood.

1645. *the feinge bataile*, etc., i.e. in Parthia.

semeth as it fletith with alakid or un-governed bridles, it suffreth bridelis (that is to seyn, to ben governed), and passeth by thilke lawe (that is to seyn, by the devyne ordenaunce). [1650]

*'Animadverto inquam.'*—Prosa 2

'This undirstonde I wel,' quod I, 'and I acorde me that it is ryght as thou seist, but I axe yif ther be any liberte of fre wille in this ordre of causes that clyven thus togidre in hem-self. Or elles I wolde witen yif that the destinal cheyne constrineth the moeynges of the corages of men.'

'Yis,' quod sche, 'ther is liberte of fre wil. Ne ther ne was nevere no nature of resoun that it ne hadde liberte of fre wil. For every thing that may naturely usen resoun, it hath doom by whiche it discernith and demeth every thing; thanne knoweth it by it-self thinges that ben to fleen and thinges that ben to desiren. [1655] And thilke thing that any wight demeth to ben desired, that axeth or desireth he; and fleeth thilke thing that he troweth be to fleen. Wherefore in alle thingis that resoun is, in hem also is liberte of willynge and of nillynge. But I ne ordeyne nat (as who seith, I ne graunte nat) that this liberte be evenlylk in alle thinges. For-why in the sovereynes devynes substaunces (that is to seyn in spirites) jugement is more cleer, and wil nat I-corrupted, and myght redy to speden thinges that ben desired. But the soules of men moten nedes be more fre whan thei loken hem in the speculacioun or lokinge of the devyne thought; [1660] and lasse fre whan thei slyden in-to the bodies; and yit lasse fre whan thei ben gadrid to gidre and comprehended in erthli membres. But the laste servage is whan that thei ben yeven to vices and han I-falle fro the possessioun of hir propre resoun.

1650. *passeth*, moves along.

1660. *loken hem* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> him), 'contemplant'; Fr. 'se garent'; mistranslated.

For aftir that thei han cast away hir eyghen fro the lyght of the sovereyn sothfastnesse to lowe thingis and derke, anon thei derken by the cloude of ignorance and ben troubled by felonous talentes; to the whiche talentes when thei approchen and assenten, thei hepen and encrecen the servage whiche thei han joyned to hem-self; and in this manere thei ben caytiis fro hir propre liberte. The whiche thingis natheles the lokyng of the devyne purveaunce seth, that alle thingis byholdeth and seeth for eterne, and ordeyneth hem everiche in here merites as thei ben predestinat; and it is seid in Greke that "alle thinges he seeth and alle thinges he herith." [x665]

'*Puro clarum lumine.*'—Metrum 2

Homer with the hony mouth, (that is to seyn, Homer with the swete ditecs) singeth that the sonne is cler by pure light; natheles yit ne mai it nat, by the infirme light of his bemes, breken or persen<sup>1665</sup> the inward entrayles of the erthe or elles of the see. So ne seth nat god, makere of the grete world. To hym, that loketh alle thinges from an hey, ne withstondeth no thinges by hevynesse of erthe, ne the nyght ne withstondeth nat to hym by the blake cloudes. Thilke god seeth in o strok of thought alle thinges that ben, or weren, or schollen comen; and thilke god, for he loketh and seeth alle thingis alone, thou maist seyn that he is the verrai sonne.<sup>1666</sup>

'*Tum ego en inquam.*'—Prosa 3

Thanne seide I, 'Now am I confowndide by a more hard doute than I was.'

'What doute is that?' quod sche, 'for certes I coniecte now by whiche thingis thou art trubled.' [1670]

'It semeth,' quod I, 'to repugnyn and

<sup>1665</sup> *talentes*, 'affectibus.'

<sup>1666</sup> *sothfastnesse*, Homer, *Il.* iii. 277; *Odys.* xii. 323.

<sup>1667</sup> *Puro clarum lumine* Phœbum Meilidū canis ois *hymnia*.

to contrarien gretly, that god knoweth byforn alle thinges and that ther is any freedom of liberte. For yif it so be that god loketh alle thinges byforn ne god ne mai nat ben desceyved in no manere, thanne moot it nedes ben that alle thinges betyden the whiche that the purveaunce of god hath seyn byforn to comen. For whiche, yif that god knoweth byforn nat oonly the werkcs of men, but also hir conseilles and hir willes, thanne ne schal ther be no liberte of arbitre; ne certes ther ne may be noon other dede, ne no wil, but thilke whiche that the devyne purveaunce, that ne mai nat ben disceyved, hath felid byforn. [1675] For yif that thei myghten writen away in othere manere than thei ben purveyed, thanne ne sholde ther be no stedefast prescience of thing to comen, but rather an uncerteyn opynioun; the whiche thing to trowen of god, I deme felonye and unleveful. Ne I ne proeve nat thilke same resoun (as who seith, I ne allowe nat, or I ne preyse nat, thilke same resoun) by whiche that som men wenen that thei mowe assoilen and unknyten the knotte of this questioun. For certes thei seyn that thing nis nat to comen for that the purveaunce of god hath seyn byforn that it is to comen, but rather the contrarie; and that is this: that, for that the thing is to comen, that therefore ne mai it nat ben hidd fro the purveaunce of god; and in this manere this necessite slideth ayein into the contrarie partie: [1680] ne it ne byhoveth nat nedes that thinges betiden that ben I-purveid, but it byhoveth nedes that thinges that ben to comen ben I-purveid: but, as it were, y travailed (as who seith, that thilke answerer procedith ryght as though men travaileden or weren besy) to enqueren the whiche thing is cause of the whiche thing, as

<sup>1671</sup> ff. Cp. *Troilus*, iv. 967-1078.

<sup>1677</sup> *proven*, wrong meaning of 'probe'; Fr. 'loc'; cp. Chaucer's gloss.

<sup>1681</sup> *nedes*, necessarily.

<sup>1682</sup> *y travailed*, MSS. *ytravailed* (H. Ch. *travailed*), cp. *Troilus*, v. 1009; Fr. 'marcher vaillonne', both incorrect translations of 'labourer'. Cp. Chaucer's gloss.



whether the prescience is cause of the necessite of thinges to comen, or elles that the necessite of thinges to comen is cause of the purveaunce. But I ne enforce me nat now to schewen it, that the bytydyng of thingis I-wyst byform is necessarie, how so or in what manere that the ordre of causes hath it-self; although that it ne seme naught that the prescience bringe in necessite of bytydyng to thinges to comen. [1685] For certes yif that any wyght sitteth, it byhoveth by necessite that the opynioun be soth of hym that coniecteth that he sitteth; and ayeinward also is it of the contrarie: yif the opynioun be soth of any wyght for that he sitteth, it byhoveth by necessite that he sitte. Thanne is here necessite in the toon and in the tothir; for in the toon is necessite of syttinge, and certes in the tothir is necessite of soth. But therfore sitteth nat a wyght for that the opynioun of the sittynge is soth, but the opynioun is rather soth for that a wyght sitteth byform. And thus, although that the cause of the soth cometh of that other side (as who seith, that although the cause of soth cometh of the sittynge, and nat of the trewe opynioun), algates yit is ther comune necessite in that oon and in that othir. [1690] Thus scheweth it that y may make semblable skiles of the purveaunce of god and of thingis to comen. For although that for that thingis ben to comen therfore ben thei purveied, and nat certes for thei be purveied therfore ne bytide thei nat; natheles byhoveth it by necessite that eyther the thinges to comen ben I-purveied of god, or elles that the thinges that ben I-purveied of god betyden. And this thing only suffiseth I-now to destroien the freedom of oure arbitre (that is to seyn, of our fre wil). But certes now scheweth it wel how fer from the sothe and how up-so-doun is this thing that

we seyn, that the betydyng of temporel thingis is cause of the eterne prescience. [1695] But for to wenen that god purveie the thinges to comen for thei ben to comen, —what oothir thing is it but for to wene that thilke thinges that bytiden whilom ben causes of thilke sovereign purveaunce that is in god? And her-to I adde yit this thing: that ryght as whanne that I woot that a thing is, it byhoveth by necessite that thilke selve thing be: and eek whan I have knowen that any thing schal betyden, so byhovith it by necessite that thilke same thing betide: so folweth it thanne that the betydyng of the thing that I wyste byform ne may nat ben eschued. And at the laste, yif that any wyght wene a thing to ben oothir weyes than it is, it nis nat oonly unscience, but it is desceyvable opynioun ful divers and fer fro the sothe of science. Wherefore, yif any thing be so to comen that the betydyng of it ne be nat certein ne necessarie, who mai witen byform that thilke thing is to comen? [1700] For ryght as science ne may nat ben medled with falsnesse (as who seith, that yif I woot a thing, it ne mai nat ben fals that I ne woot it), ryght so thilke thing that is conceived by science may ben noon other weies than as it is conceived. For that is the cause why that science wanteth lesynge (as who seith, why that wytyng ne resceyvet nat lesynge of that it woot); for it byhoveth by necessite that every thing be ryght as science comprehendeth it to be. What schal I thanne seyn? In which manere knoweth god byform the thinges to comen, yif thei ne ben nat certein? For yif that he deme that thei ben to comen uneschewably, and so may be that it is possible that thei ne schollen nat comen, god is disceyved. [1705] But not oonly to trowe that god is disceyved, but for to speke it with mouthe, it is a felonous synne. But yif that god woot that ryght so as thinges ben to comen, so schollen they comen, so that

1684. *I ne enforce me nat* should be *I enforce me*. Ch. and Fr. translate 'non nitamur' a variant of 'nos nitamur'.  
1692. *skiles*, arguments.

1705. *that I ne woot it*. The 'so' is due to the negative in the main clause.

he wite egaly (as who seith, indifferently) that thingis mowen ben doon or elles nat I-doon, what is thilke prescience that ne comprehendeth no certein thing ne stable? Or elles what difference is ther bytwixe the prescience and thilke jape-worthid devynynge of Tyresie the divynour, that seide, "Al that I seie," quod he, "either it schal be or elles it schal nat be?" Or elles how mochel is worth the devyne prescience more than the opinioun of mankynde, yif so be that it demeth the thinges uncertayn, as men doon, of the whiche domes of men the betydinge is nat certein? But yif so be that noon uncertein thing ne mai ben in hym that is certein welle of alle thinges, than is the betydinge certein of thilke thingis whiche he hath wist byforn fermely to comen. [1710] For whiche it folweth that the fredom of the conseiles and of the werkis of mankynde nis noon, syn that the thought of god, that seeth alle thinges withouten error of falsnesse, byndeth and constreyneth hem to a bytydng by necessite. And yif this thing be oonlys I-grauntid and resceyved (this is to seyn, that ther nis no fre wil), thanne scheweth it wel how gret trestruccioun and how gret damages ther folwen of thingis of mankynde. For in idel ben ther thanne purposed and byhyght medes to good folk, and peynes to badde folk, syn that no moevynge of fre corage voluntarie ne hath nat disservid hem (that is to seyn neither mede ne peyne). And it scholde seme thanne that thilke thing is alther-worst whiche that is now demed for alther-moost just and moost ryghtful, that is to seyn that schrewes ben punyschid or elles that good folk ben I-gerdoned. [1715] The whiche folk, syn that hir propre wil ne sent hem nat to the toon ne to that othir (that is to seyn neither to good ne to harm), but [ther] constreyneth hem certein necessite of thingis to comen; thanne ne schulle ther nevere be, ne nevere were,

1708. *Tyresias*, Tyresias; cp. 84.

1710. *no more*, 'est palle', is no freedom.

1715. *proposed*, offered.

1726. *was*, supplied from Fr.

vice ne vertu, but it scholde rather ben confusion of alle disertes medlid withouten discrecioun. And yit ther folweth another inconvenient, of the whiche ther ne mai be thought no more felonous ne more wikke, and that is this: that, so as the ordre of thingis is I-led and cometh of the purveaunce of god, ne that no thing is lefevel to the conseiles of mankynde (as who seith that men han no power to don no thing ne wilne no thing), thanne folweth it that oure vices ben referrid to the makere of alle good (as who seith, thanne folweth it that god oughte han the blame of our vices, syn he constreyneth us by necessite to doon vices). [1720]

Than nis ther no resoun to han hope in god, ne for to preien to god. For what scholde any wyght hopen to god, or why scholde he preien to god, syn that the ordenaunce of destyne, the whiche that mai nat ben enclyned, knytteth and streyneth alle thingis that men mai desiren? Thanne scholde ther be don awy thilke oonly alliaunce bytwixen god and men, that is to seyn, to hopen and to preien. But by the pris of ryghtwisnesse and of verray mekenesse we diserven the gerdon of the devyne grace whiche that is inestimable (that is to seyn, that it is so greet that it ne mai nat ben ful I-preysed). And this is oonly the manere (that is to seyn, hope and preieris) for whiche it semeth that men mowen speken with god, and by resoun of supplicacion be conioyned to thilke cleernesse that nis nat aprochid no rather or that men byseken it and impetren it. [1725] And yif men ne wene nat that hope ne preieres ne han no strengthis by the necessite of thingis to comen I-resceyved, what thing is ther thanne by whiche we mowen ben conioyned and clyven to thilke sovereyne

1717. *inconvenient*, 'desconvenue', inconvenience.

1725. *only the manere . . . for which*, the only way . . . by which.

1725. *no rather or*, 'prius quoque', which Chaucer has wrongly connected with 'inaccessus luci', should be *and rather or*, i.e. even before.

1726. *I-resceyved*, conceded.

prince of thingis? For whiche it byhoveth by necessite that the lynage of mankynde, as thou songe a litel here byforn, be departed and unioyned from his welle, and failen of his bygynnyng (that is to seyn, god).

*'Quenam discors.'*—Metrum 3

What discordable cause hath to-rent and unioyned the byndyng or the alliance of thingis (that is to seyn, the coniunctions of god and of man)? Whiche god hath establisshid so grete bataille bytwixen these two sothfast or verreie thinges (that is to seyn, bytwyxn the purveance of god and fre wil) that thei ben singular and dyvided, ne that they ne wole nat ben medled ne couplid togidre. But ther nis no discord to the verray thinges, but thei clyven alwey certain to hem-self. [1730] But the thought of man, confownded and overthrown by the derke membres of the body, ne mai nat be fyr of his derked lookyng (that is to seyn, by the vigour of his insyghte while the soule is in the body) knowen the thyne subtile knytinges of thinges. But wherfore eschaufeth it so by so gret love to fynden thilke notes of soth I-covered? (That is to seyn, wherfore eschaufeth the thought of man by so gret desir to knowen thilke notificaciouns that ben I-hid undir the covertures of soth?) Woot it aught thilke thing that it angwisshous desireth to knowe? (As who seith, nay; for no man ne travaileth for to witen thingis that he wot. And therefore the texte seith thus :) [1735] But who travaileth to wite thingis I-knowe? And yif that he ne knoweth hem nat, what sekith thilke blynde thought? What is he that desireth any thyng of which he wot right nought?

1732. Chaucer's glosses here are derived mainly from Fr.

1733. *But ther nis*, etc., 'An nulla est,' etc. *And thus* as 'ac' or perhaps gloss is Aq. 'An not nota notations.' Similarly, *But whanne*, etc.

(As who seith, who so desireth any thing, nedes somewhat he knoweth of it, or elles he coude nat desiren it.) Or who may folwen thinges that ne ben nat I-wist? And thoughte that he seke tho thingis, wher schal he fynde hem? What wyght that is al unkunynge and ignoraunt may knowe the forme that is I-founde? [1740] But whanne the soule byholdeth and seeth the heye thought (that is to seyn, god), thanne knoweth it togidre the somme and the singularites (that is to seyn the principles and everyche by hym-self). But now, while the soule is hidd in the cloude and in the derknesse of the membres of the body, it ne hath nat al foryeten itself, but it withholdeth the somme of thinges and lesith the singularites. Thanne who so that sekith sothnesse, he nis in neyther nother habite, for he not nat al, ne he ne hath nat al foryeten; but yit hym remembreth the somme of thinges that he withholdeth, and axeth conseil, and retretith deepliche thinges I-seyn by-forn (that is to seyn, the greté somme in his mynde). So that he mowe adden the parties that he hath foryeten to thilke that he hath withholden.' [1745]

*'Tum illa vetus inquit hac est.'*—Prosa 4

Than seide sche 'This is,' quod sche, 'the olde questioun of the purveance of god. And Marcus Tullius, whan he devyded the divynaciouns (that is to seyn, in his book that he wrot of dyvynaciouns), he moevede gretly this questioun; and thou thilf hast y-sought it mochel, and outrely, and longe. But yit ne hath it nat ben determined, ne I-sped fermely ne diligently of any of yow. And the cause of this derknesse and of this difficulte is, for that the moevyng of the resoun of mankynde ne may nat moeven to (that is to seyn, applien or joigen to) the simplicitie of the devyne prescience; the

1743. *neither neither*, neutro.  
1744. *retretith* (A1 Ag *retitit*), neutro, 'retractans.'

1745. *devyded* ('distribut'), Cx. *devyded*; Cx. *distribuyd* (from rubric).

whiche symplecite of the devyne prescience, yif that men myghte thinke in any manere (that is to seyn, that yif men myghten thinke and comprehend the thinges as god seeth hem), thanne ne scholde ther duelle outrely no doute. [1750] The whiche resoun and cause of difficulte I schal assaye at the last to schewe and to speden, whanne I have first I-spendid and answerd to the resouns by whiche thou art y-mooved. For I axe whi thou wenest that thilke resouns of hem that assoulen this questioun ne be nat speedful I-now ne sufficient; the whiche solucioun, or the whiche resoun, for that it demeth that the prescience nis nat cause of necessite to thinges to comen, than weneth it nat that fredom of wil be disturbed or y-let be prescience. For ne drawestow nat argumentes fro elles where of the necessite of thingis to comen (as who seith, any oother wey than thus) but that thilke thinges that the prescience woot byforn ne mowen nat unbetyde? [1755] (That is to seyn, that thei moten betide.) But thanne, yif that prescience ne putteth no necessite to thingis to comen, as thou thi-self hast confessed it and byknownen a litel here byforn, what cause or what is it (as who seith, ther may no cause be) by whiche that the endes voluntarie of thinges myghten be constrained to certain bytydyng? For by grace of possessioun, so that thou mowe the betere undirstonde this that folweth, I pose that ther ne be no prescience. Thanne axe I, quod sche, 'in as moche as aperteneth to that, scholden thanne thingis that comen of fre wil ben constrained to bytiden by necessite?'

'Nay,' quod I.

'Thanne ayeinward,' quod sche, 'I suppose that ther be prescience, but that it ne putteth no necessite to thingis;

1752. *I-spendid*, etc., 'expendero' (I shall have considered), 'respondu'.

1753. *For ne drawestow nat*, etc., 'Num enim tu adducis, etc.'

1755. *Argumentes* (H Cx. *positionis*), 'positionis' (do), 'posicionis'.

thanne trowe I that thilke selve fredom of wil schal duellen al hool and absolut and unbounden. But thou wolt seyn that, al be it so that prescience nis nat cause of the necessite of tydyng to thingis to comen, algatis yit it is a sign that the thingis ben to bytyden by necessite. [1760] By this manere thanne, althoughe the prescience ne hadde nevere I-ben, yit algate or at the leste wey it is certain thing that the endes and bytydynges of thingis to comen scholden ben necessarie. For every signe scheweth and signifieth oonly what the thing is, but it ne makith nat the thing that it signifieth. For whiche it byhoveth first to schewen that no thing ne bytydeth that it ne betideth by necessite, so that it mai apiere that the prescience is signe of this necessite; or elles, yif ther nere no necessite, certes thilke prescience ne myghte nat ben signe of thinge that nis nat. But certes, it is now certain that the proeve of this, y-susteyned by stedfast resoun, ne schal nat ben lad ne proved by signes, ne by argumentes I-taken fro withoute, but by causes covenable and necessarie. [1765] But thou mayst seyn, "How may it be that the thingis ne betyden nat that ben I-purveied to comen?" But certes ryght as we trowen that the thingis whiche that purveaunce woot byforn to comen, ne ben nat to bytiden. But that ne scholde we nat demen; but rathir, althoughe that thei schal betyden, yit ne have thei no necessite of hir kynde to betyden. And this maystow lyghtly aperceyven by this that I schal seyn. For we seen many thingis whan thei ben don byforn oure eyen, ryght as men seen the cartere worken in the tornynge and in atemprynge or adressynge of hise cartes or chariottes. [1770] And by this manere (as who seith, maistow undirstonden) of alle othere werkmen. Is ther thanne any necessite (as who seith, in our look-

1765. *argumentis I-taken*, etc., 'positio autem secus argumentis'.

1766. *But certes*, etc., the answer to the preceding question.

1770. *cartere, cartes, chariottes, chariots*.

ynge) that constreynith or compelleth any of thilke thingis to ben don so?'

'Nay,' quod I, 'for in idel and in veyn were al the effect of craft, yif that alle thingis weren moeved by constreynynge (that is to seyn, by constreynynge of our eyen or of our sighte).'

'The thingis thanne,' quod sche, 'that, whan men doon hem, ne han no necessite that men doon hem, eek the same thingis, first er thei ben don, thei ben to comen withoute necessite. For why ther ben some thingis to betyden, of whiche the eendes and the bytydynges of hem ben absolut and quit of alle necessite. [1775] For certes I ne trow nat that any man wolde seyn thus: that tho thingis that men don now, that thei ne weren to bytiden first or thei weren I-doon; and thilke same thingis, al-thoughe that men hadden I-wyst hem byform, yit thei han fre bytydynges. For right as science of thingis present ne bryngith in no necessite to thingis that men doon, right so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bryngith in no necessite to thinges to bytiden. But thou maist seyn that of thilke same it is I-douted, as whethir that of thilke thingis that ne han noon issues and bytydynges necessities, yif therof mai ben any prescience; for certes thei semen to discorden. For thou wenest, yif that thingis ben I-seyn byfore, that necessite folwith hem; [1780] and yif necessite faileth hem, thei ne myghten nat ben wist byform, and that nothing may be comprehended by science but certein; and yif tho thinges that ne han no certein bytydyngis ben I-purueid as certein, it scholde ben dirknesse of opinioun, nat bothfastnesse of science.' And thou wenest that it be dyvers for the holnesse of science that any man schol deme a thing to ben otherwyse than it is it-self. And the cause of this error is that of alle the thingis that every wyght hath I-knowe, thei wenen that tho thingis ben I-knowe al only by the strengthe and by the nature of the thinges that ben I-wyst or

[1786] *but certein*, but certainty; cp. 1711, 1717.

I-knowe. And it is al the contrarye; for al that evere is I-knowe, it is rather comprehendid and knowen, nat afir his strengthe and his nature, but afir the faculte (that is to seyn, the power and the nature) of hem that knowen. [1785] And, for that this schal mowen schewen by a schort ensaumple, the same rowndnesse of a body, otherweys the sighte of the eigne knoweth it, and otherweys the touchynge. The lookynge, by castynge of his bemys, waiteth and seeth for afir al the body togidre, withoute moevynge of it-self; but the touchynge clyveth and conioyneth to the rounde body, and moeveth aboute the envyrounynge, and comprehendeth by parties the roundnesse. And the man hym-self, ootherweys wit byholdeth hym, and ootherweys ymaginacioun, and otherweys resoun, and ootherweys intelligence. For the wit comprehendith withoute-forth the figure of the body of the man that is establisschid in the matere subgett; [1790] but the ymaginacioun comprehendith oonly the figure withoute the matere; resoun surmountith ymaginacioun and comprehendith by an universel lokynge the comune spece that is in the singuler peces; but the eigne of the intelligence is heyere, for it surmountith the envyrounynge of the universite, and loketh over that bi pure subtilte of thought thilke same symple forme of man that is perdurable in the devyne thought. In whiche this oughte gretly to ben considered, that the heyeste strengthe to comprehend thinges embraseth and contienith the lowerest strengthe; but the lowerest strengthe ne ariseth nat in no manere to the heyere strengthe. For wit ne mai no thing comprehend out of matere ne the ymaginacioun loketh nat the universels speces, ne resoun ne

[1786] *schal mowen schewen*, may be made clear.

[1789] *wit*, 'sensus.'

[1790] *ymaginacioun*, 'imaginatio.'

[1791] *resoun*, 'ratio.'

[1791] *spes*, 'speciem.'

[1792] *singuler peces*, 'singularibus.'

[1793] *sighte of the intelligence*, 'intelligentia oculi.'

taketh nat the symple forme so as intelligence takith it; but intelligence, that lookith al aboven, whanne it hath comprehendeth the forme, it knoweth and demyth alle the thinges that ben undir that foorme. [1795] But sche knoweth hem in. thilke manere in the whiche it comprehendeth thilke same symple forme that ne may nevere ben known to noon of that othere (that is to seyn, to none of the thre forseide strengthis of the soule). For it knoweth the univerte of resoun, and the figure of ymaginacioun, and the sensible material conceived by wit; ne it ne useth nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit withoute-forth; but it byholdeth alle thingis, so as I schal seie, by a strook of thought formely withoute discours or collacioun. Certes resoun, whan it lokith any thing universel, it ne useth nat of ymaginacioun, nor of wit; and algates yit it comprehendith the thingis ymaginable and sensible. For resoun is she that diffynscheth the universel of here conceyte ryght thus:—Man is a resonable two-foted beest. [1800] And howso that this knowynge is universel, yit is ther no wyght that ne wot wel that a man is a thing ymaginable and sensible; and this same considereth wel resoun; but that nis nat by ymaginacioun nor by wit, but it lookith it by resonable concepcioun. Also ymaginacioun, albeit so that it takith of wit the bygynnynges to seen and to formen the figures, algates althoughe that wit ne were nat present, yit it envyrrowneth and comprehendith alle thingis sensible; nat by resoun sensible of demyng, but by resoun ymaginatyf. Seestow nat thanne that alle the thingis in knowynge usen more of hir faculte or of hir power than .thei don of the faculte or power of thingis that ben I-knowe? Ne that nis nat wrong; for so as every judgement is the dede or the doying of hym that demeth, it byhoveth that every

wyght performe the werk and his entencioun, nat of foreyne power, but of his propre power. [1805]

'Quondam porticus attulit.'—Metrum 4

The porche (that is to seyn a gate of the toun of Athenis there as philosophis hadden hir congregacioun to desputen)—thilke porche broughte somtyme olde men, ful dirke in hir sentences (that is to seyn philosophis that hyghten Stoycenis), that wenden that ymages and sensibilities (that is to seyn, sensible ymaginaciouns or ellis ymaginaciouns of sensible thingis) weren enprientid in-to soules fro bodyes withoute-forth; (as who seith that thilke Stoycenis wenden that sowle had ben nakid of it-self, as a mirour or a clene parchemyn, so that alle figures most first comen fro thingis fro withoute in-to soules, and ben emprientid in-to soules); ryght as we ben wont somtyme by a swift poyntel to fycchen lettres emprientid in the smothnesse or in the pleynesse of the table of wex or in parchemyn that ne hath no figure ne note in it. (Glose. But now argueth Boece ayens that opynioun and seith thus:) [1810] But yif the thryvyng soule ne unpliteth no thing (that is to seyn, ne doth no thing) by his propre moevynges, but suffrith and lith sulgit to the figures and to the notes of bodies withoute-forth, and yeldith ymages ydel and vein in the manere of a mirour, whennes thryveth thanne or whennes comith thilke knowynge in our soule, that discernith and byholdith alle thinges? And whennes is thilke strengthe that byholdeth the singular thinges? Or whennes is the strengthe that devyde thinges I-knowe; and thilke strengthe that gadreth togidre the thingis devyded; and the strengthe that cheisth his entrechaunged wey? For somtyme it heveth up the heued (that is

1795, *formely*, 'formaliter.'  
1800, *nat by resoun*, etc., mistranslation of  
'non sensibilis et imaginaria ratione (method)  
judicandi.'

1805, *the werk and his entencioun*, 'nam operam.'

1813, *his entrechaunged wey*, 'alternatim legens iter.'

to seyn that it hevyth up the entencioun to ryght heye thinges), and som tyme it descendith in-to ryght lowe thinges; and whan it retorneth in-to hym-self it reproveth and destroyeth the false thingis by the trewe thinges. [1825] Certes this strengthe is cause more effcient, and mochel more myghty to seen and to knowe thinges, than thilke cause that suffrieth and receyveth the notes and the figures empressid in manere of matere. Algis the passion (that is to seyn the suffraunce or the wit) in the quyke body goth byform, excitynge and moevynge the strengthes of the thought. Ryght so as whan that cleernesse smyteth the eyen and moeveth hem to seen, or ryght so as voys or soun hurteleth to the eres and commoeveth hem to herkne; than is the strengthe of the thought I-moevid and excited, and clepith forth to semblable moevyngis the spesces that it halt withynne it-self, and addith tho spesces to the notes and to the thinges withoute-forth, and medleth the ymagis of thinges withoute-forth to the formes I-hidd withynne hym-self. [1826]

'Quod si in corporibus sentiendis.'—

Prosa 5

But what yif that in bodyes to ben feled (that is to seyn, in takynge of knowlechynge of bodily thinges), and albeif so that qualites of bodies that ben obiect fro withoute-forth moeven and entalente the instrumentes of the wittes, and albeif so that the passioun of the body (that is to seyn, the wit or the suffraunce) goth to-form the strengthe of the wirkyng corage, the whiche passioun or suffraunce clepith forth the dede of the thought in hym-self and moeveth and existeth in this mene-while the formes

1825. *in manere of matere*. Construe with *reproveth*.

1826. *hurteleth, C; Ag hurteleth, H; Cxt hurteleth.*

1827. *But what yif that, 'Quod si.'*

1828. *and albeif so that, 'quamvis'; and is a strengthening particle, i.e. even though; likewise in and 1829.*

that resten within-forth—and yif that in sensible bodies, as I have seid, our corage nis nat y-taught or emprinted by passioun to knowe these thinges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strengthe the passioun or suffraunce subject to the body, [1825] moche more than the thingis that ben absolut and quit fro alle talentes or affecciouns of bodyes (as god or his aungelis) ne folwen nat in discernynge thinges obiect fro withoute-forth, but thei accomplissen and speden the dede of hir thought. By this resoun thanne ther comen many maner knowynges to diverse and differynge substaunces. For the wit of the body, the whiche wit is naked and despoiled of alle oothre knowynges,—thilke wit cometh to beestis that ne mowen nat moeven hem-self her and ther, as oistres and muscles and oothir swich schelle fyssche of the see, that clyven and ben norisschid to roches. But the ymaginacioun cometh to remuable bestis, that semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any thing. But resoun is al onoly to the lynage of mankynde, ryght as intelligence is onoly the devyne nature. [1830] Of whiche it folweth that thilke knowynge is more worth than these oothre, syn it knoweth by his propre nature nat onoly his subget (as who seith, it ne knoweth nat al onoly that apertenith properly to his knowynge) but it knoweth the subiect of alle oothre knowynges. But how schal it thanne be, yif that wit and ymaginacioun stryven ayein reasynge, and seyn that, of thilke universel thinges that resoun wenith to seen, that it nis ryght naught? For wit and ymaginacioun seyn that that that is sensible or ymaginable, it ne mai nat ben universel. Thanne is either the judgement of resoun soth ne that ther nis no thing sensible; or elles, for that resoun woot wel that many thinges ben subject to wit and to ymaginacioun, thanne is the

1825. *y-taught or emprinted, 'imprimatur'*. The rest of the phrase is from the Fr., hence the confusion.

1826. *things* is object of *semen*.

1833. *that that is, that what is.*

concepcioun of resoun veyn and fals, whiche that lokith and comprehendith that that is sensible and singuler as universel. [1835] And yif that resoun wolde answere ayein to thise two (that is to seyn, to wit and to ymaginacioun), and seyn, that sothly sche hir-selve (that is to seyn, resoun) lokith and comprehendith, by resoun of universalite, bothe that that is sensible and that that is ymaginable; and that thilke two (that is to seyn, wit and ymaginacioun) ne mowen nat stretchen ne enhaunsen hem-self to knowynge of universalite, for that the knowynge of hem ne mai exceden ne surmounten the bodily figures: certes of the knowynge of thinges, men oughten rather yeven credence to the more stidfast and to the more parfit judgement. In this manere stryvyng thanne we that han strengthe of resonynge and of ymagynynge and of wit (that is to seyn, by resoun and by ymaginacioun and by wit)—we scholde rather preise the cause of resoun (as who seith, than the cause of wit and of ymaginacioun). [1840]

Semblable thing is it, that the resoun of mankynde ne weneth nat that the devyne intelligence byholdeth or knoweth thingis to comen, but ryght as the resoun of mankynde knoweth hem. For thou arguist and seist thus: that if it be seme nat to men that some thingis han certeyn and necessarie betydynges, thei be mowen nat ben wist byform certainly to betyden, and thanne nis ther no prescience of thilke thinges; and yif we rowe that prescience be in thise thingis, hanne is ther nothing that it ne bytydeth by necessite. But certes yif we myghten han the judgement of the devyne thought, as we ben parsoners of resoun, ryght so as we can demyd that it byhovith that ymaginacioun and wit ben bynethe resoun, ryght o wolde we demen that it were ryghtfull hing, that mannys resoun oughte to ummyttan it-self and to ben bynethe the levyn thought. [1845] For whiche yif

1834. The apostrophe begins with *certes*, 1838.

1844. *personers of*, sharers in.

that we mowen (as who seith that, if that we mowen, I conseile that) we enhaunse us in-to the heichte of thilke sovereign intelligence; for ther schal resoun wel seen that that it ne mai nat byholden in it-self. And certes that is this, in what manere the prescience of god seeth alle thinges certains and diffynasched, althoughe thei ne han no certein issues or bytydyngis; ne this nis noon opinioun, but it is rather the simplicitie of the sovereign science, that nis nat enclosed nor I-schet withinne none boundes.

*'Quam variis figuris.'*—Metrum 5

The beestes passen by the erthes be ful diverse figures. For some of hem han hir bodyes straught, and creppyn in the dust, and drawn aftir hem a traas or a furwe I-contynued (that is to seyn, as naddres or snakes); [1850] and oother beestis, by the wandryng lyghtnesse of hir wynges beten the wyndes, and overswymmen the spaces of the longe air by moyst fleyng; and oother beestes gladen hem self to diggen hir traas or hir steppys in the erthe with hir goinges or with hir feet, and to gon either by the grene feeldes, or elles to walken undir the wodes. And al be it so that thou seest that thei alle discorden by diverse foormes, algatis hir faces enclyned hevryeth hir dulle wittes. Only the lynage of man heveth heyest his heie heved, and stondith light with his upryght body, and byholdeth the erthes undir hym. And, but yif thou, erthly man, waxest yvel out of thi wit, this figure amonesteth the, that axest the hevvene with thi ryghte visage, and hast areised thi forheved to beren up an hye thi corage, [1855] so that thi thought ne be nat I-hevved ne put lowe undir fote, syn that thi body is so heyghe areysed.

1849. This metre is very badly translated.

1850. *passen by*, 'passent . . . par'; 'personers'.

1851. *by the wandrynges*, etc., 'alacrum lapsum'.

1852. *mayst fleynges*, 'liquido volatu'.

1853. *to walken undir*, etc., 'subire alacrum'.



'*Quoniam igitur uti paulo ante.*'—Prosa 6

Therefore thanne, as I have schewed a litel here byforne that alle thing that is I-wist nis nat knownen by his nature propre, but by the nature of hem that comprehendn it, lat us loke now, in as mochil as it is lefevel to us (as who seith, lat us loke now as we mowen) whiche that the estat is of the devyne substaunce; so that we mowe eek knownen what his science is. The comune jūgement of alle creatures resonables thanne is this: that god is eterne. Lat us considere thanne what is eternite; for certes schal schewen us togidre the devyne nature and the devyne science. [1860] Eternite thanne is parfit possessioun and altogidre of lif interminable. And that schewethe more clearly by the comparysoun or collacioun of temporel thinges. For alle thing that lyveth in tyme, it is present, and procedith fro preterites into futures (that is to seyn, fro tyme passed into tyme comynge), ne ther nis nothing established in tyme that mai enbrasen togidre al the space of his lif. For certis yit ne hath it nat taken the tyme of tomorwe, and it hath lost that of yisterday. And certes in the lif of this dai ye ne lyve no more but right as in this moevable and transitorie moment. [1865] Thanne thilke thing that suffreth temporel condicioun, although that it nevere bygan to be, ne thoughte it nevere ne cese for to be, as Aristotile demed of the world, and althoghe that the lif of it be strecchid with infinite of tyme; yit algatis nis it nat swich thing that men mighten trowen by ryghte that it is eterne. For although that it comprehende and embrace the space of lif infinit, yit algatis ne embraseth it nat the space of the lif altogidre; for it ne hath nat the futuris that ne ben nat yit, ne it ne hath no lengere the preterites that ben I-doon or I-passed. But thilke thing thanne that hath and comprehendith togidre al the

plente of the lif interminable, to whom ther ne failleth naught of the future, and to whom ther nis noight of the preteryt escaped nor I-passed, thilke same is I-witnessed and I-proevid by right to ben eterne; [1870] and yit it byhovith by necessite that thilke thing, be alwey present to hym-self, and compotent (as who seith, alwey present to hym-selve, and so myghty that al be right at his plesaunce), and that he have al present the infinite of the moevable tyme. Wherefor som men trowen wrongfully that, when thei heren that it semede to Plato that this world ne hadde nevere bygynnyng of tyme, ne that it nevere schal han failynge, thei wenen in this manere that this world be makid coetene with his makere. (As who seith, thei wene that this world and god ben makid togidre eterne, and that is a wrongful wenyng.) For other thing is it to ben I-lad by lif interminable, as Plato grauntide to the world, and oother is it to enbrace togidre al the presence of the lif intermynable, the whiche thing it is clear and manyfest that it is propre to the devyne thought. [1875] Ne it ne scholde nat semen to us that god is eldere than thinges that ben I-maked by quantite of tyme, but rather by the proprete of his simple nature. For this ilke infinit moevynge of temporel thinges folweth this presentarie estat of the lif unmoevable; and, so as it ne mai nat contrefetin it, ne feynen it, ne be evene lik to it, for the immoevable (that is to sein, that is in the eternite of god), it failleth and fallith into moevynge fro the simplicitie of the presence of god, and discreaith into the infinit quantite of future and of preterit. And so as it ne mai nat han togidre al the plente of the lif, algates yit for as moche as it ne ceseth nevere for to ben in som manere, it semyth somdel to us that it folwith and resembleth thilke thing that it ne mai nat atyne to, ne

1860. *nature and science are the subjects of*

1877. *scheweth, 'imitatur.'*  
1878. *discreaith* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> H Cx. A<sub>2</sub> B *discreet-*  
*eth*), *'decreaist.'*

fulfillen; and byndeth it-self to som maner presence of this litle and swift moment, the whiche presence of this litle and swift moment, [1880] for that it bereth a maner ymage or liknesse of the ai duellynge presence of god, it grauntith to swich manere thinges as it betydyth to, that it semeth hem that thise thinges han I-ben and ben. And\* for that the presence of swiche litle moment ne mai nat duelle, therefore it ravysschide and took the infynit wey to tyme (that is to seyn, by successioun). And by this manere is it I-doon, for that it sholde contynue the lif in goinge, of the whiche lif it myght nat embrace the plente in duellinge. And for-thi yif we wollen putten worthi names to thinges and folwen Plato, lat us seyen thanne sothly that god is "eterne," and that the world is "perpetuel." Thanne, syn that every jugement knoweth and comprehendith by his owne nature thinges that ben subject unto hym, ther is sothly to god always an eterne and presentarie estat; [1885] and the science of hym that overpasseth alle temporel moevement duelleth in the simplicitie of his presence, and embraceth and considereth alle the infynit spaces of tymes preterites and futures, and lokith in his simple knowynge alle thingis of preterit ryght as thei weren I-doon presently ryght now. Yif thou wolt thanne thinken and avise the prescience by whiche it knoweth alle thinges, thou ne schalt naught demen it as prescience of thinges to comen, but thou schalt demen more ryghtfully that it is science of presence or of instaunce that nevere ne failleth. For whiche it nis nat y-cleped "previdence," but it sholde rather ben clepid "purveaunce," that is established ful fer fro ryght lowe thinges, and byholdeth fro afer alle thinges, right as it were fro the heye heichte of thinges. [1890]

Why axestow thanne, or whi desputestow thanne, that thilke thingis ben doon by necessite, whiche that ben y-seyn and knowen by the devyne sighte, syn

1888. *avis*, consider.

that forsothe men ne maken nat thilke thingis necessarie whiche that thei seen ben I-doon in hir sighte? For addith thi byholdynge any necessite to thilke thinges that thou byholdest present?\*

\*Nay,' quod I.

*Philosophie.* 'Certes thanne, yif men myghte maken any digne comparysoun or collacioun of the presence devyne and of the presence of mankynde, ryght so as ye seen some thinges in this temporel present, ryght so seeth god alle thinges by his eterne present. [1895]

Wherefore this devyne presence ne chaungeth nat the nature ne the proprete of thinges, but byholdeth swiche thingis present to hymward as thei shollen betyde to yowward in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confowndeth nat the jugementes of thingis; but by o sight of his thought he knoweth the thinges to comen, as wol necessarie as nat necessarie. Ryght so as whan ye seen togidre a man walke on the erthe and the sonne arisen in the hevene, albeit so that ye seen and byholden the ton and the tothir togidre, yit natheles ye demen and discernen that the toon is voluntarie and the tother is necessarie. Ryght so thanne the devyne lookynge, byholdynge alle thinges undir hym, ne trowbleth nat the qualite of thinges that ben certainly present to hymward; but, as to the condicioun of tyme, forsothe thei ben futur. [1900] For which it folweth that this nis noon opynioun, but rather a stidfast knowynge I-strengthid by soothnesse that, whan that god knoweth any thing to be, he ne unwot not that thilke thing wanteth necessite to be. (This is to sein that whan that god knoweth any thing to betide, he wot wel that it ne hath no necessite to betyde.) And yif thou seist here that thilke thing that god seeth to

1895. *presence* both times seems to be a mistake for *presentis*; Lat. 'presentis,' Fr. 'present.'

1896. *presence* should be *prescience*, 'prenoio,' 'prescience.' In 1932 H reads *prescience* for *presence*, and similarly H Cx. In 1939 have *prescience* for *presence*.

1900. *troubleth*, 'perturbat'; Fr. 'trouble'; L. 'destourbe.'

1902. *ne unwot not*, 'non nesciat.'

betide, it ne may nat, unbytide (as who seith, it moot bytide), and thilke thing that ne mai nat unbytide, it mot bytiden by necessite, and that thou streyne me to this name of necessite, certes I wol we confessen and byknowen a thing of ful sad trouthe. But unnethe schal ther any wight mowe seen it or come therto, but yif that he be byholdere of the devyne thought. [1905] For I wol answeren the thus: that thilke thing that is futur, when it is referred to the devyne knowynge than is it necesserie; but certis when it is undirstonden in his owene kynde, men seen it outrely fre and absolut fro alle necessite.

For certes ther ben two maneris of necessites: that oon necessite is symple, as thus; that it byhovith by necessite that alle men ben mortal or dedly; anothir necessite is condicionel, as thus: yif thou wost that a man walketh, it byhovith by necessite that he walke. Thilke thing thanne that any wight hath I-knowe to be, it ne mai ben noon oothir weys. thanne he knowith it to be. [1910] But this condicion draweth nat with hir thilke necessite simple; for certes this necessite condicionel—the propre nature of it ne makith it nat, but the adieccioun of the condicioun makith it. For no necessite ne constreyneth a man to gon that goth by his propre wil, al be it so that when he goth that it is necessarie that he goth. Ryght on this same manere thanne, yif that the purveance of god seeth any thyng present, than moot thilke thing ben by necessite, althoghe that it ne have no necessite of his owne nature. But certes the futures that bytiden by freedom of arbitrie, god seth hem alle togidre presentes. These thynges thanne, yf thei ben referrid to the devyne sighte, than ben they makid necessarie by the condicioun of the devyne knowynge. [1915] But certes yif thilke thyngis ben considered by hem-self, thei ben absolut of necessite,

and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of the liberte of hir owne nature. Thanne certes withoute doute alle the thynges shollen ben doon whiche that god woot byform that thei ben to comen. But some of hem comen and bytiden of fre arbitrie or fre wil, that, al be it so that thei bytiden, yet algates ne lese thei nat hir propre nature in beinge; by the whiche first, or that thei weren I-don, thei hadden power noght to han bytyd.

‘What is this to seyn thanne,’ quod I, ‘that thynges ne ben nat necesserie by hir propre nature, so as thei comen in alle maneris in the liknesse of necessite by the condicioun of the devyne science?’

‘This is the difference,’ quod sche, ‘that tho thynges that I purposide the a litel her byform (that is to seyn, the sonne arysynge and the man walkynge), that ther whiles that thilke thynges ben I-doon, they ne myghte nat ben undoon; [1920] natheles that oon of hem, or it was I-doon, it byhovide by necessite that it was I-doon, but nat that oothir. Ryght so is it here, that the thynges that god hath present withoute doute thei shollen ben. But some of hem descendith of the nature of thynges (as the sonne arysynge); and some descendith of the power of the doeris (as the man walkynge). Thanne seide I no wrong that, yif that these thynges ben referred to the devyne knowynge, thanne ben thei necessarie; and yif thei ben considered by hem-self, than ben thei absolut fro the boond of necessite. Ryght so as alle thyngis that apereth or scheweth to the wittes, yif thou referre it to resoun, it is universal; and yif thou loke it or referre it to itself, than is it singular. But now yif thou seist thus: that, “If it be in my power to chaunge my purpos, than schal I voiden the purveance of god, whan peraventure I schal han chaungid the thyngis that he knoweth byform.” [1925] thanne schal I answeren the thus: “Certes thou maist wel chaungen

1905. *presens* (C<sub>2</sub> A<sub>2</sub> H<sub>2</sub> B *present*); Lat. ‘*presens*’, Fr. ‘*présence*’. Chaucer probably carried over the French adjective.

1919. C<sub>2</sub> H<sub>2</sub> C<sub>2</sub> omit *the* before *condicion*.  
1924. *alle thyngis*, ‘*tous*’; perhaps therefore the ‘*it*’s (‘*le*’) that follow.

thi purpos; but for as mochel as the present sothnesse of the devyne purveaunce byholdeth that thou maist chaunge thi purpos, and whethir thou wolt chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou torne it, thou ne maist nat eschuen the devyne prescience, ryght as thou ne maist nat fleen the sighte of the present eye, althoghe that thou torne thiself by thi fre wil into diverse accions." But thou maist sein ayen: "How schal it thanne be—schal nat the devyne science ben chaunged by my disposicioun whan that I wol o thing now and now anothis; and thilke prescience—ne semeth it nat to entrechange stoundis of knowynge?" (As who seith, ne schal it nat seme to us that the devyne prescience entrechaungith hise diverse stoundes of knowynge, so that it knowe som-tyme o thyng, and somtyme the contrarie?) [1930]

'No,' quod I.

'No forsothe,' quod sche, 'for the devyne sighte renneth to-for, and seeth alle futures, and clepith hem ayen, and retorneth hem to the presence of his propre knowynge; ne he ne entrechaungith nat, so as thou wenest, the stoundes of foreknowynge, as now this, now that; but he ay duellynge cometh byfor, and embraseth at o strook alle thi mutaciouns. And this presence to comprehenden and to seen alle thingis—god ne hath nat taken it of the bytydyng of thinges to come, but of his propre symplicite. And herby is assoiled thilke thing that thou putttest a litel here byfor, that is to seyn,

that it is unworthy thing to seyn that our futures yeven cause of the science of god. For certis this strengthe of the devyne science, whiche that embraseth alle thinges by his presentarie knowynge, establiasheth manere to alle thinges, and it ne oweth nawht to lattere thinges. [1935] And syn that thise thinges ben thus (that is to seyn, syn that necessite nis nat in thinges by the devyne prescience), thanne is ther freedom of arbitre, that duelleth hool and unwemmed to mortal men; ne the lawes ne purposen nat wikkidly medes and peynes to the willynges of men, that ben unbownden and quyt of all necessite; and god, byholdere and forwytere of alle thingis, duelleth above, and the present eternite of his sighte renneth alwey with the diverse qualite of our dedes, dispensynge and ordeynynge medes to gode men and tormentes to wikkide men. Ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben ther put in god hope and preyeris, that ne mowen nat ben unspedful ne withouten effect whan they been ryghtful.

'Withstond thanne and eschue thou vices; worschipe and love thou vertues; areise thi corage to ryghtful hopes; yilde thou humble preieres an heyghe. [1940] Gret necessite of prowesse and vertu is encharged and comaunded to yow, yif ye nil nat dissimulen; syn that ye worken and don (that is to seyn, your dedes or your werkcs) byfor the eyen of the juge that seeth and demeth alle thinges.'

#### EXPLICIT LIBER BOECII.

1930. *stoundes*, 'vices.'  
1933. *presence to comprehend*, etc., 'presence de . . . comprendre,' i.e. power to comprehend things in present time.

1935. *manere*, 'modum,' 'propre manere'; rather bound.

1935. *lattere thinges*, 'posterioribus.'

## TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

## BOOK I

THE doublé sorwe of Troilus to tellen,  
That was the king Priámus' sone of  
Troye,

In loving how his aventurés fellen  
Fro wo to wele, and after out of joye,  
My purpos is, or that I parté fro ye.—  
Thesiphoné, thou help me for t' endite  
Thise woful vers, that wepen as I write !

To thee clepe I, thou Goddesse of  
tormént,  
Thou cruel Furie, sorwing evere in payne !  
Help me that am the sorwful instrument  
That helpeth lovers, as I can, to pleyne !  
For wel sit it, the sothé for to seyne,  
A woful wight to han a dreyre fere,  
And to a sorwful tale, a sory chere !

For I, that God of Lovés servants serve,  
Ne dar to Love for myn unliklinesse  
Preyen for sped, al sholde I therfor sterve,  
So fer am I from his help in derknésse :  
But nathéles, if this may don gladnésse  
Unt' any lover and his cause availle,  
Have he my thank, and myn be this  
travaile !

But ye lovéres, that bathen in gladnésse,  
If any drope of pité in you be,  
Remembreth you on passéd hevinesses  
That ye han felt, and on th' adversité  
Of other folk ; and thenketh how that ye  
Han felt that Lové dorsté you displese,  
Or ye han wonne him with too gret an  
ese.

And preyéth for hem that ben in the cas'  
Of Troilus, as ye may after here,  
That Love hem bringe in havené to solás ;

For relations of MSS. and letters by which  
they are quoted, see Introduction.  
Thesiphoné, Thesphona.  
L. e. Love.

And ek for me preyéth to God so dere  
That I have might to shewe in som manére  
Swich payne and wo as Lovés folk endure,  
In Troilus' unsely aventüre.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben de-  
speyred

In love, that neveré n'il recovered be,  
And ek for hem that falsly ben apeyred  
Thorough wikked tonges, be it he or she ;  
Thus biddeth God for his benigneté  
So graunte hem soone out of this world  
to pace,

That ben despeyred out of Lovés grace.

And biddeth ek for hem that ben at ese  
That God hem graunte ay good per-  
séveraunce,

And sende hem might hir ladies so to plesse  
That it to Love be wotship and plesaunce.  
For so hope I my soule best t'avaunce,  
To preye for hem that Lovés servants be,  
And write hir wo, and live in charité,

And for to have of hem compassioun  
As though I were hir owné brother dere.—  
Now herkneith with a good entencioun,  
For now wol I gon streight to my matére,  
In which ye may the doublé sorwes here  
Of Troilus in loving of Criseyde,  
And how that she forsook him or she  
deyde.

—It is wel wist how that the Grekés  
stronge

In armés with a thousand shippés wente  
To Troyewardés, and the cité longe

44. a. In love, that God hem graunte sé-  
veraunce.

45. ladies, a and others lover.

47. favaunce, J Cp. Cl. a. avaunce.

55. herkneith. Shows that Troilus was written  
for recitation. See l. 430 ; ll. 29, 1751 ; ill. 499,  
1335. But see later, v. 570.

Asscgeden wel ten yer or they stente, 60  
And in diversé wise and oon entente  
The ravissching to wroken of Eleyne  
By Paris don, they wroughten al hir peyne.

Now fil it so, that in the town ther was  
Dwelling a lord of gret auctorité,  
A gret devyn that clepéd was Calcas,  
That in sciéce so expert was, that he  
Knew wel that Troyé sholde destroyed be  
By answer of his God, that highté thus,  
Daun Phebus, or Appollo Delphicus. 70

So when that Calcas knew by calculinge,  
And ek by answer of this Appollo,  
That Grekés sholden swich a peplé bringe  
Thorough which that Troyémoste be for-do,  
He caste anon out of the town to go;  
For wel wiste he by sort that Troyé sholde  
Destroyed ben, ye, woldé who-so n'olde.

For-which for to departen softely  
Took purpos ful this fór-knowingé wise,  
And to the Grekés oost ful privily 80  
He stal anon; and they in curteys wise  
Him deden bothé worship and servise,  
In trust that he hath konning hem to rede  
In every peril which that is to drede.

The noise up ros, when it was first aspyed  
Thorough al the town, and generally was  
spoken,

That Calcas traytour fled was and allyed  
With hem of Grece; and casten to ben  
wroken

On him that falsly hadde his feyth so  
broken,  
And seyden he and al his kyn at onés 90  
Ben worthy for to brennen fel and bonés.

Now haddé Calcas left in this mischaunce,  
Al unwist of this false and wikked dede,  
His daughter, which that was in gret  
penaunce;

60. *wel*, H<sub>4</sub> γ *nigh*.

71. *that*, *ay this*.

83. *a Hefyng in hym (good f) kunnyng hem to*  
rede. Boc. Da lui sperando sommo e buon con-  
gilio.

85. *The noise up ros*, a Gret rumour gan  
mow. Boc. Fu rumor grande.

87. *γ thart sale after traytour*.

93. *Al unwist*, a *Unknowning*.

For of her lif she was ful sore in drede  
As she that n'isté what was best to rede;  
For bothe a widwé was she, and alone  
Of any frend, to whom she dorste her  
mone.

Criseydé was this lady name al right:  
As to my dom in al Troyés cité 100  
N'as non so fair; for, passing every  
wight,  
So angelik was hir natif beauté,  
That lik a thing immortal seméd she,  
As is an hevenissh parfit créature  
That down were sent in scorning of nature.

This lady, which that herde al-day at ere  
Her fadres shame, his falsnesse and tresoun,  
Wel nigh out of her wit for sorwe and fere,  
In widwes habit large of samyt broun,  
On knees she fil biforn Ectór a-doun 110  
With pitous vois, and tendrely wepinge  
His mercy bad, her-selven excusinge.

Now was this Ector pitous of nature,  
And saw that she was sorwfully bigon,  
And that she was so fair a créature;  
Of his goodnesse he gladed her anon,  
And seydé, 'Lat your fadres treason gon  
Forth with mischaunce! And ye yourself  
in joye  
Dwellet with us whil you good list in  
Troye!

'And al th' honour that men may don you  
have, 120  
As ferforth as your fader dwelléd here,  
Yc shul han, and your body shal men save  
As fer as I may aught enquire and here.'  
And she him thanked with ful humble  
chere,

81. *passing*, a *over* (H<sub>4</sub> omits).

104. *is*, *ay doth*.

106. *herde al-day*, γ and others *al-day herde*.

109. *large*, J G H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>3</sub> *blak*.

111. *a With chere and vois ful pitous*, and

*wepyngs*. Boc. E lagrimosa . . . e con voce q̃

con vista assai pietosa.

118. *Forth with mischaunce*, a *To very hap*.

123. *and*, γ and others *or*.

124. *a thanked ofte in humble chere*. Boc.

Elia di questo li ringiato assai

E più volte.

And ofter wolde and it had ben his wille,  
And took her leve, and hom, and held  
her stille.

And in her hous sh' abood with swich  
meyné

As til her honour nedé was to holde,  
And whil she was dwellinge in that cité  
Kepte her estat, and bothe of yonge and  
olde 130

Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her  
tolde.

But whether that she children hadde or non,  
I rede it nat; therfor I lete it gon.

The thinges fellen as they don of werre  
Bytwixen hem of Troye and Grekés ofte;  
For som day boughten they of Troye it  
derre,

And eft the Grekés founden nothing softe  
The folk of Troye. And thus Fortúne  
on-lofte,

And under eft, gan hem to wheelen bothe  
After her cours, ay whil they weren  
wrothe. 140

But how this town com to destruccioun  
Ne falleth naught to purpos me to telle,  
For it were here a long digressioun  
Fro my matere, and for you long to dwelle.  
But the Trojánés gestés, as they felle,  
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,  
Who-so that can may rede hem as they  
write.

But though that Grekés hem of Troyé  
shetten,

And hir cité bysegéd al aboute,  
Hir olde usagé n'oldé they nat letten 150  
As for t' honoure hir Goddés ful devoute;

138. This may be due to Chaucer's mis-reading Boccaccio, who says 'she had no need to ture for son or daughter.'

140. I and others say until that they were wrothe. 143. For it were here, so B; a. For why it were; for it were.

144. for you long to dwelle, so H<sub>2</sub> (see H.F. 1. 258); rest var.

145. Trojanes, so P H<sub>2</sub> R; Cl. Troians; rest Troian.

146. Dares and Dite, Dares and Dictys, supposed writers on the Trojan war.

147. a goddess and to tute.

But aldermost in honour, out of doute,  
They hadde a relik, heet Palladion,  
That was hir trust aboven everychon.

And so bifil whan comen was the time  
Of Apéril, when clothéd is the mede  
With newé grene, of lusty Ver the prime,  
And swoté smelling flourés white and rede,  
In sondry wises shewéd, as I rede,  
The folk of Troye hir observaunces olde,  
Palladionés festé for to holde. 161

And to the temple in al hir besté wise  
In general ther wenté mony a wight  
To herkennen of Palladion servise;  
And namély so mony a lusty knight,  
So mony a lady fressh and mayden bright,  
Ful wel arayéd bothé meste and leste,  
Ye, bothé for the seson and the feste.

Among thise othré folk was Criseydá  
In widwes habit blak; but nathéles, 170  
Right as our firsté letté is now an A,  
In beauté first so stood she makélés:  
Her goodly loking gladdé al the prees:  
N'as neveré seyn thing to ben prayésd derre,  
Nor under clouddé blak so bright a sterre,

As was Criseyde, as folk seyde everychoné  
That her behelden in her blaké wede.  
And yit she stood ful lowe and stille alone  
Behinden othré folk in lítel brede 179  
And nigh the dore, ay under shamés drede,  
Simple of atir and debonaire of chere,  
With ful assuréd loking and manére.

This Troilus, as he was wont to gide  
His yongé knightés, ladde hem up and doun  
In th'ilké largé temple on every side,  
Biholding ay the ladies of the toun,  
Now here, now there; for no devocioun

153. Palladion, the Palladium or sacred image of Pallas.

156. Apéril, a Apperville (possibly intended as a pun. See III. 353).

158. smelling, so a Cx. D; J and others smellen. Boc. Riveste i prati d'erbette e di fiori.

167. Jo. the before meste and leste; a. Ful wel biseyn the meste, meste and leste; a. Ful wel arayéd bothé meste, meste and leste.

174. neveré seyn, so Cx. Ad. H<sub>2</sub>; J and others neveré yet seyn.

183. This, a Dawn.

Hadde he to non, to reven him his reste,  
But gan to preyse and lakken whom him  
leste.

And in his walk ful faste he gan to wayten  
If knight or squier of his companye<sup>191</sup>  
Can for to sike or lete his yen bayten  
On any woman that he coude espye:  
He woldé smile and holden it folye,  
And seye him thus, 'God wot, she slepeth  
softe

For love of thee, whan thou tornest ful ofte!

'I have herd told, pardieux, of your livinge,  
Ye lovers, and your lewéd óbservaunces,  
And which a labour folk han in winnunge  
Of love, and in the keping which dout-  
aunces;<sup>200</sup>

And whan your preye is lost, wo and pen-  
aunces!

O verray foolés, nyce and blynd ben ye!  
Ther n'is nat oon can war by other be!

And with that word he gan caste up the  
browe

Ascaunces, 'Lo! is this nat wislyspoken?'  
At which the God of Love gan loken rowe  
Right for despit, and shop for to ben wroken:  
He kidde anon his bowé n'as nat broken!  
For sodeinly he hitte him at the fulle;  
And yit as proud a pecok can he pulle!

O blindé world! O blinde entencioun!<sup>211</sup>  
How often falleth al thr' effect contraire  
Of surquidrye and foul presumpcioun;  
For caught is proud, and caught is de-  
bonaire!

This Troilus is clomben on the staire,  
And litel weneth that he mot descenden!  
But alday failleth thing that foolés wenden!

is proudé Bayard ginneth for to skippe  
Out of the wey, so priketh him his corn,

195. *softe*, J Cx. G S *ful softe*.

196. *drawed*, y om.

200, 203. *a reads*:

O verray folyn I may ye no thing see?

Kan men of yow y-war by other be?

201, 202. *a reads*:

Yee bachelis, Loves bowe was not y-broken!

For, by myn heed, he...

213. *the a. Doun*.

Til he a lasshe have of the longé whippe,  
Than thenketh he, 'Though I prounce al  
beforn

First in the trais, ful fat and newé shorn,  
Yit am I but an hors, and horses lawe  
I mot endure and with my ferés drawe.'

So ferde it by this fiershe and proudé knight:  
Though he a worthy kingés soné were,  
And wendé no thing haddé had swich might  
Ayein his wil, that sholde his herté sterve,  
Yit with a look his herté wex a-feré,<sup>229</sup>  
That he that now was most in pride above  
Wex sodeinly most subget unto Love.

For thy ensaumplé taketh of this man,  
Ye wisé, proude, and worthy folkés alle,  
To scornen Love, which that so sooné can  
The fredom of your hertés to him thralle!  
For evere it was, and evere it shal bifalle,  
That Love is he that allé thing may binde;  
For may no man for-do the lawe of kinde.

That this be soth, hath provéd, and doth yit.  
For this, trowe I, ye knowen, alle or some:  
Men redennat that folk han gretter wit<sup>242</sup>  
Than they that han ben most with love  
y-nome;  
And strengest folk ben therwith overcome,  
The worthieste and grettest of degree:  
This was, and is, and yit men shal it see.

And trewélíche it sit wel to be so;  
For alderwisest han therwith ben plesed,  
And they that have ben aldermost in wo,  
With love have ben confórted most and  
eséd;

And ofte it hath the cruel herte apeséd,<sup>250</sup>  
And worthy folk maad worthier of name,  
And causeth most to dreden vice and shame.

Now, sith it may nat goodly be withstonde,  
And is a thing so vertuous in kinde,  
Refuseth nat to Love for to be bonde,  
Sin, as him-selven list, he may you binde.  
The yerde is bet that bowen wol and wise,

224. *with*, *a. as*.

227. *swich*, R G H<sub>2</sub> S *swich a*.

229, 231. *wex*, so H<sub>2</sub> G D; others *man*.

237. *alle*, J and others *al*.

257. *a. Better is the wound*.



Than that that brest; and therfor I you  
rede  
To folwen Love, that you so wel can lede.

But for to tellen forth in special <sup>260</sup>  
As of this kinges sone of which I tolde,  
And leten other thing collateral,  
Of him thinke I my talé forth to holde,  
Bothe of his joye and of his carés colde;  
And al his werk as touching this matére,  
For I it gan, I wil ther-to refere.

Within the temple he wente him forth,  
pleyng,

This Troilus, of every wight aboute;  
On this lady, and now on that lokinge,  
Whe'r-so she were of towne or of withoute;  
And upon cas bifil that thorough a route <sup>271</sup>  
His ye percéd, and so depe it wente,  
Til on Criseyde it smot, and ther it stente.

And sodeinly he wex ther-with astonéd,  
And gan her bet beholde in thrify wise.  
'O mercy, God!' thoughte he, 'wher  
hastow wonéd,

That art so fair and goodly to devise?'  
Ther-with his herté gan to sprede and rise;  
And softe he sikéd lest men mighte him  
here, <sup>279</sup>  
And caughte ayein his firsté pleyng chere.

She n'as nat with the leste of her stature;  
But alle her limés so wel answeringe  
Werén to wommanhode, that créature  
N'as neveré lassé mannish in seminge;  
And ek the puré wise of her movinge  
Shewédé wel that men mighte in her gesse  
Honour, estat, and wommanly noblesse.

To Troilus right wonder wel with-alle  
Gan for to like her moving and her chere,  
Which somdel deignous was; for she let  
falle <sup>290</sup>  
Her look a lite aside in swich manére

<sup>259.</sup> *β Love; γ him; α Now followeth him.*

<sup>261.</sup> *G γ omit As.*

<sup>263.</sup> *forth, Cl H<sub>1</sub> for; S forth for; G omits.*

<sup>264.</sup> *joye, J G Cl joye.*

<sup>279.</sup> *he, so α G; β γ omit.*

<sup>282.</sup> *α She shewéd.*

<sup>283.</sup> *To, so J H<sub>3</sub> γ; rest The.*

Ascaunces, 'What! may I nat stonde  
here?'

And after that her lokng gan she lighte,  
That neveré thoughte him sen so good  
sighte.

And of her look, in him ther gan to quiken  
So gret desir, and swich affeccoun,  
That in his hertés botmé gan to stiken  
Of her his fixe and depe inpressioun;  
And, though he erst had pouréd up and  
down,

He was tho glad his hornés in to shrinke: <sup>299</sup>  
Unnethés wiste he how to loke or wink!

Lo! he, that leet him-selven so conninge,  
And scornéd hem that Lovés peynés dryés,  
Was ful unwar that Love had his dwell-  
linge

Within the subtil stremés of her yen,  
That sodeynly him thoughte he felté dyen,  
Right with her look, the spirit of his herte.—  
Blesséd be Love, that can thus folk con-  
verte!

She, this in blak, liking to Troilus <sup>309</sup>  
Over allé thing, he stood for to beholde;  
Ne his desir, ne wher-for he stood thus,  
He neither cheré madé, ne word tolde;  
But, from a-fer his maner for to holde,  
On other thing som time his look he casté,  
And eft on her, whil that servisé laste.

And after this, nat fullich al a-whaped,  
Out of the temple al esiliche he wente,  
Repenting him that he had evere y-japed  
Of Lovés folk, lest fully the descente  
Of scorn fille on him-self; but what he  
mente, <sup>320</sup>

Lest it were wist on any maner side,  
His wo he gan dissimulen and hide.

Whan he was fro the temple thus departed,  
He streight anon unto the paleys torneth,  
Right with her look thorough-shoten and  
thorough-darted,

Al feyneth he in lust that he sojorneth;  
And al his chere and speche also he borneth,

<sup>307.</sup> *of, γ in.*

<sup>324.</sup> *α β the (Boe.); Cx. γ the*

And ay of Lovè's servants every while  
Himself to wrye, at hem he gan to smile,

And seydé, 'Lord! so ye live al in lest, 330  
Ye lovers! For the conningeste of yow  
That serveth most ententifliche and best,  
Him tit as often harm ther-of as prow:  
Your hire is quit ayein, ye, God wot now!  
Naught wel for wel, but scorn for good  
servise!

In feith your ordre is ruled in good wise!

'In noun-certeyn ben alle your observaunces  
But it a fewé sely pointés be; 338  
Ne no thing asketh so grete attendaunces  
As doth your lay, and that knowe allé ye.  
But that is nat the worsté, as mote I thé!  
But, tolde I you the worsté point, I leve,  
Al seyde I soth, ye wolden at me greve.

'But takethis: that ye lovers ofte eschue  
Or ellés don of good entencioun,  
Ful ofte thy lady wol it mis-construe,  
And deme it harm by her opinioun;  
And yit if she for other enchesoun  
Be wroth, than shaltow han a groin anon!  
Lord, wel is him that may ben of you oon!'

But for al this, whan that he saw his time, 351  
He held his pees; non other boote him  
gainede;  
For Love began his fetherés so to lime,  
That wel unnethé until his folk he fainede  
That othré bisy nedés him destrainede;  
For wo was him, that what to don he n'iste,  
But bad his folk to gon wher that hem liste.

And whan that he in chaumbré was allone,  
He down upon his beddés feet him sette;  
And first he gan to sike, and eft to grone, 360  
And thoughte ay so on her withouten lette,  
That, as he sat and wook, his spirit mette  
That he her saw in temple, and al the wise  
Right of her look; and gan it uewe avise.

Thus gan he make a mirroure of his minde,  
In which he saw al hoolly her figure,

330. *Be fowes sely*; others *sely frowe*.

332. *Or ellés don*, a. *For good*, or *don*.

337. *So*, so *β*; others *in*.

353. *So*, so *a*; *Cz. om. in*; *Rat*; *Cl. a*; others *and*.

And that he wel coude in his herté finde!  
It was to him a right good aventure  
To love swich oon; and if he dede his cure  
To serven her, yit mighte he falle in grace,  
Or ellés for oon of her servants pace. 371

Imaginngé that traváile nor grame  
Ne mighté for so goodly oon be lorn  
As she, ne him for his desir no shame,  
Al were it wist, but in pris and up-born  
Of allé lovers wel more than biforn,—  
Thus argumented he in his ginninge,  
Ful unavisé of his wo cominge.

Thus took he purpos Lovè's craft to suwe,  
And thoughte he woldé werken prively 380  
First for to hiden his desir in muwe  
From every wight y-born al outrély,  
But he mighte taught recovered ben ther-by;  
Remembering him, that love too wide y-  
blowe

Yelt bittréfruit, though sweté seed be sowe.

And over al this, ful muchel more he  
thoughte,  
What for to speke, and what to holden  
inne;

And what to arten her to love he soughte,  
And on a song anon right to beginne, 389  
And gan loude on his sorwé for to winne;  
For with good hope he gan fullliche assente  
Criseydè for to love, and naught repente.

And of his song, not only the senténcé  
As writ myn auctour calléd Lollius,  
But pleyntly, save our tongés difference,  
I dar wel seyn, in al that Troilus  
Seyde in his song, lo, every word right thus  
As I shal seyn! And, who-so list it here,  
Lo, next this vers he may it finden here.

381. *for to*, so *S H<sub>3</sub> Ad.*; others *to*.

386. *ful muchel*, so *H<sub>4</sub> R*; *y yet muchel(?)*; *J* and others *muchel*.

393. In Boccaccio Troilus merely gives way to singing in light-heartedness. Chaucer makes Troilus compose a song (ll. 400-420) which is a translation of Petrarch's 88th Sonnet.

393. *a. And of this song, not only his sentences.*

394. *Lollius*, i.e. Boccaccio (see v. 1653). Why Chaucer always refers to Boccaccio as Lollius, is still a mystery.

399. *he, J y y.*

'If no love is, O God, what fele I so? 400  
And if love is, what thing and which  
is he?

If love be good, from whennés com'th  
my wo?

If it be wikke, a wonder thinketh me  
Whenne every torment and adversité  
That com'th of him may to me savory  
thinke;

For aythurste I the more that ich it drinke.

'And if that at myn owné lust I brenne,  
From whennés com'th my wailing and my  
pleynthe?

If harmagree me, wher-to pleyne I thenne?  
I n'ot, ne why unwery that I feynthe. 410

O quiké deth! O sweté harm so queynthe!  
How may of thee in me swich quantité,  
But-if that I consenté that it be?

'And if that I consente, I wrongfully  
Compleynge y-wis.—Thus posséd to and  
fro,

Al steréles with-in a boot am I  
A-midde the see betwixen windés two  
That in contrárie stonden everé mo.  
Allas! What is this wonder maladye? 419  
For hete of cold, for cold of hete, I dye!

And to the God of Love thus seyde he  
With pitous vois, 'O Lord, now yourés is  
My spirit which that oughté yourés be!  
You thanke I, Lord, that han me brought  
to this!

But whether goddesse or wommán, y-wis,  
She be, I n'ot, which that ye do me serve;  
But as her man I wol ay live and sterve.

'Ye stonden in her yen mightily,  
As in a place unto your vertu digne,  
Wherforé, Lord, if my servise or I 430  
May liken you, so beth to me benigne;  
For myn estat roial here I resigne  
Into her hand, and with ful humblé chere  
Bicome her man, as to my lady dere.'

In him ne deynéd sparen blood roial  
The fir of lové,—wher-fro God me blesse!

406. *ich it drinks*, so J Cx. 7; a RG I *drinks*.  
409. *Lord, O lord*; Cl. S<sub>2</sub> *my lord*.  
419. *wher-fro*, J S Cl. *the wher-fro*; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>1</sub> *ye wher-fro*.

Ne him forbar in no degree for al  
His vertu or his excellent prowesse,  
But held him as his thral lowe in destresse,  
And brende him so in sondrywise ay newe,  
That sixty time a day he lost his hewe. 441

So mochel day fro day his owné thought,  
For lust, to her gan quiken and encrease,  
That everich other charge he sette at  
nought;

For-thy ful ofte, his hoté fir to cesse,  
To seen her goodly look he gan to presse;  
For ther-by to ben eséd wél he wende.  
And ay the neer he was, the more he  
brende;

For ay the neer, the fir the hotter is: 449  
This, trowe I, knoweth al this companye.  
But were he fer or ner, I dar seye this,—  
By night or day for wisdom or folye  
His herté, which that is his bréstés ye,  
Was ay on her, that fairer was to sene  
Than everé was Eleyne or Polyxene.

Ek of the day ther passéd nought an hour  
That to him-self a thousand time he seyde,  
'Good goodly, whom to serven I laboure  
As I best can, now woldé God, Criseyde,  
Yewolden on me rewe, or that I deyde! 460  
My deré herte, allas, myn hele and hewe  
And lif is lost, but ye wol on me rewe!

Alle othré dredés weren from him fledde  
Both of th' assege and his savacioun,  
N' in his desir none othré sounés bredde  
But arguments to his conclusioun,  
That she on him wolde han compassioun,  
And he to ben her man, whil he may  
dure;

Lo, here his lif, and from the deth his  
cure!

449. *a ß day fro day* (Boc. di giorno in giorno);  
7 *day by day*.

457. *That*. We should expect *But*.  
458. *whom* (?), all *to whom*; *to* (after *whom*);  
so D.

458. *laboure*, GA Cl. and *labours*.  
460. *his*, so a ß H<sub>1</sub>; G 7 *him*.

460. *sonner*, so H<sub>2</sub> R and others; J and others  
*former*.

466. *his*, D H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *this*.  
469. *his*, J and others *is*.

The sharpe shourés felle of armés preve 470  
 That Ector or his othre brethren diden,  
 He made him only ther-for onés meve;  
 And yit was he, wher-somen wente orriden,  
 Founde oon the beste and lengest time  
 abiden

Her peril was, and dide ek swich travaile  
 n armés, that to thenke it was mervaille.

but for non hate he to the Grekés hadde,  
 He also for the rescous of the toun,  
 He made him thus in armés for to madde,  
 but only, lo, for this conclusioun, 480  
 'o liken her the bet for his renoun:  
 'ro day to day in armés so he spedde  
 That alle the Grekés as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forth tho refte him Love his  
 sleep,  
 And made his mete his foo; and ek his sorwe  
 Gan multiplyé, that, who-so took keep,  
 It shewed in his hewe on eve and morwe.  
 Therefore a tittle he gan him for to borwe  
 Of other siknesse, lest men of him wende  
 That th' hoté fir of love so sore him  
 brende; 490

And seyde he hadde a fevere, and ferde amis.  
 But how it was, certeyn, I can not seye,—  
 If that his lady understood not this,  
 Or feyned her she n'iste,—oon of the  
 tweye!

But wel rede I, that by no maner weye  
 Ne seméd it as that she of him roughte,  
 Or of his peyne, or what-so-ever he  
 thoughte.

But thenné felté Troilus swich wo  
 That he was wel nigh wood; foray his drede  
 Was this, that she som wight had lovéd so  
 That nevere of him she wolde han taken  
 hede. 501

472. or, R Cl. and (Boc.)

483. a ß alle the (H<sub>1</sub> alle); G J γ the.

487. a ß on eve; γ bothe eve.

490. S<sub>1</sub> D so sore him brende; Ad. him for  
 made; rest him brende.

496. a ß as that (P H<sub>1</sub> as); G γ that.

498. all the (H<sub>1</sub> all than (we)); Ad. han. Boc.

501. the deth Troilo tal dolore. All except H<sub>1</sub>

501. the deth before Troilus.

For that, him thoughte he felte his herte  
 blede;

Ne of his wo ne durste he not biginne  
 To tellen her, for al this world to winne.

But, whan he hadde a spacé from his care,  
 Thus to him-self ful ofte he gan to pleyne:  
 He seyde, 'O fool, now artow in the snare,  
 That whilom japedest at Lovés peyné!  
 Now artow hent! Now gnaw thyn owné  
 cheyne!

Thou were ay wont ech lovert to reprende 510  
 Of thing, fro which thou canst thee not  
 defende.

'What wol now every lover scyn of thee,  
 If this be wist, but evere in thyn absence  
 Laughen in scorn and seyn, "Lo, ther  
 go'th he

That is the man of so gret sapience  
 That held us lovers leest in reverence!  
 Now, thanked God, he may go in the  
 daunce

Of hem that Love list feblély t'avaunce!"

'But, O thou woful Troilus, God wolde,  
 Sith thou most loven thorough thy destiné,  
 That thou biset were on swich oon that  
 sholde 521

Knowe al thy wo, al lakkéd her pité!  
 But al-so cold in love towárdés thee  
 Thy lady is, as frost in winter moone;  
 And thou for-don, as snow in fir is soone.

'God wolde, I were arived in the port  
 Of deth, to which my sorwé wol me lede!  
 A, Lord, to me it were a gret confort!  
 Than were I quit of languashinge in  
 drede!

For, be myn hiddé sorwe y-blowe on  
 brede, 530

I shal bejapéd ben a thousand time  
 More than that fool of whosfolý men rime.

502. a ß For that; J G For that cause; γ  
 For which.

510. ß to reprehende (reprende); rest omit to.

515. so, J D the.

518. feblély t'avaunce; J and others feblý for  
 t'avaunce.

530. be (Boc.); by, C<sub>2</sub>, G S<sub>1</sub> Cl. Cp.

532. that, C<sub>2</sub> R. a.

'But now, help, God! and ye, swete  
for whom  
I pleyne y-caught, ye, neveré wight so  
faste,  
O mercy, deré herte, and help me from  
The deth! For I, whil that my lif may  
laste,  
More than my lif wol love you to my laste.  
And with som frendly look gladdeth me,  
swete,  
Though neveré no thing more ye me  
bihete!'—

Thise wordés, and ful many another mo  
He spak, and calléd evere in his com-  
pleynte 541  
Her namé, for to tellen her his wo,  
Til nigh that he in salté terés dreynete.  
Al was for naught: she herdé not his  
pleynte;  
And whan that he bethoughte on that  
fofye,  
A thousand fold his wo gan multiplye.

Bi-wailing in his chambré thus allone,  
A frend of his, that calléd was Pandaré,  
Com onés in unwar, and herde him grope,  
And saw his frend in swich distresse and  
care: 550  
'Allas!' quod he, 'who causeth al this  
fare?  
O mercy, God! what unhap may this mene?  
Han now thussoné Grekés maad you lene?

'Or hastow som remors of conscience,  
And art now falle in som devocioun,  
And wailest for thy sinne and thyn offence,  
And hast for ferdé caught attricioun?  
God save hem that bi-segéd han our toun,  
That so can leye our jolité on presse, 559  
And bringe our lusty folk to holinesse!'

533-34. I Cp. the.  
534-36. I Cp. the.  
537. my lif; F my lyf (Boc. Che t' ama pith che  
in sua vita amai); H<sub>2</sub> my self; H<sub>4</sub> corrupt; J  
and others my-self.

539. no thing more, y more thing.  
540. me, so a; others te(o).  
541. thousand; H<sub>4</sub> hundred (Boc. in cento).  
549. That so, H<sub>2</sub> Cl. H<sub>1</sub> And so.  
550. on presse, a in press.

These wordés seyde he for the nonés alle,  
That with swich thing he mighte him  
angry maken,  
And with an anger don his sorwé falle.  
As for the time, and his corage awaken;  
But wel wiste he, as fer as tonges spoken,  
Ther n'as a man of gretter hardinesse  
Than he, ne more desired worthinesse.

'What cas,' quod Troilus, 'or what  
aventure  
Hath guided thee to see my languishinge  
That am refús of every créature? 570  
But for the love of God, at my preyenge  
Go henne away, for certés my deyng  
Wol thee disese, and I mot nedés deye;  
Therfor go wey, there n'is no more to seye!

'But if thou wene I be thus sik for drede,  
It is not so; and therfor scorn me nought.  
Ther is another thing I take of hede  
Wel more than aught that Grekés han  
yit wrought,  
Which cause is of my deth for sorwe and  
thought.  
But though that I now telle it theene leste,  
Be thou naught wroth: I hide it for the  
beste.' 581

This Pandar that nigh malt for wo and  
routhe  
Ful oft seyde, 'Allas! what may this be?  
Now frend,' quod he, 'if everé love or  
trouthé  
Hath been, or is, betwixen thee and me,  
Ne do thou neveré swich a cruelté  
To hidé fro thy frend so gret a care!  
Wostow not wel that I am I, Pandaré?

'I woldé parten, with thee al thy payne  
If it be so I do thee no comfórt, 590  
As it is frendés right, soth for to seyne,  
To entréparten wo, as glad desport.

563. his sorwe falle, RS y his wo to falle.  
565. a man, J no man.  
569. my languishinge, J and others me lan-  
guishinge.  
570. scorn me nought, J and others scorn(i)  
nought.  
575. or is, J and others or this.  
580. wolds, so D S<sub>2</sub> Dg.; rest with, wold  
wels.

I have, and shal, for trewe or fals report,  
In wrong and right, y-loved thee al my  
live :  
Hyd not thy wo fro me, but tel it blive.'

Than gan this sorful Troilus to sike,  
And seyde him thus : 'God leve it be  
my beste  
To telle it thee, for sith it may thee like  
Yit wol I telle it, though myn herté brüste :  
And wel wot I, thou mayst do me no reste.  
But lest thou demé I trusté not to thee,  
Now herkné, frend, for thus it stant with  
me.— 602

'Lo, Love, ayeins the whiche who-so de-  
fendeth  
Himselven most, him altherlest availeth,  
With desespair so sorfully m' offendeth,  
That streight unto the deth myn herté  
sailth :

Ther-to desir so brenningly m' assaileth,  
That to be slayn it were a gretter joye 608  
To me than king of Grece ben and Troye !

'Suffiseth this, my fullé frend Pandaré,  
That I have seyde, for now wostow my wo.  
And for the love of God, my coldé care  
So hyd it wel ! I tolde it nevere to mo,  
For harmés mighten solwen, mo than  
two,

If it were wist.—But be thou in gladnése,  
And let me sterve, unknowe, of my des-  
trese !'

'How hast thou thus unkindely and longe  
Hid this fro me? thou fool!' quod  
Pandarus.

'Parasunter thou mayst after swich oon  
longe,

That myn avys anon may helpen us.' 620  
'This were a wonder thing !' quod Troilus.

602. *herke*, J and others *herke*.

603. *Lo, Love* (?), all *Love*.

605. *sorfully*, J and others *sorful* (?).

612. *I tolde*, Cl. *I telle*; H<sup>2</sup> and *telle*; J omits it after *telle*.

613. *He nevere to no mo*; Cx. *nevere no mo*; rest *nevere to me*. (Read? *nevere me* or *nevere to me*. See 675, where G has *nevere to me*.)

619. *myghte*, J *myghtest*.

'Thou coudest nevere in love thy-selven  
wisse :  
How devel mayst thou than bringé me to  
blisse !'

'Ye, Troilus, now herkné,' quod Pandaré,  
'Though I be nice ! It happeth often so  
That oon that exces doth ful yvelé fare,  
Bygood counseil can kepe his frend therfro.  
I have myselven seyn a blind man go,  
Ther-as he fel that coudé loken wyde :  
A fool may eek a wis-man ofté gyde. 630

'A wheston is no kerving instrument,  
But yit it maketh sharpe kerving toles ;  
And ther thou worst that I have aught  
miswent,  
Eschewe thou that, for swich thing to  
thee scole is :

Thus often wisé men ben war by foles.  
If thou so do, thy wit is wel bewared :  
By his contrarie is every thing declared. 640

'For how mighte everé swetnesse han  
ben knowe 638

To him that neveré tasted bitternesse ?  
Ne no man wot what gladnesse is, I trowe,  
That neveré was in sorwe or som destresse :  
Eek whyt by blak, by shame ek worthinesse  
Ech set by other more for other semeth :  
Asmen maysee, and so the wise it demeth.

'Sith thus of two contraries is o lore,  
And that I have in love so ofte assayed  
Grevounces, m'oughté connen wel the more  
Counseilen thee of that thou art amayed ;  
And ek thee n'oughté not ben yvele apayed  
Though I desiré with thee for to bere 650  
Thyn hevycharge : it shal thee lessé dere.

623. *How devel mayst thou than*, so P H<sub>2</sub> Cx. ; S<sub>1</sub> *devel than* ; R *me than* ; J and rest *om. than* ; G H<sub>2</sub> *de(l)* for *devel*.

628. *myselfen seyn*, γ insert *ek* before or after *seyn*.

640. *wot what gladnesse is*, so α β ; R Cx. H<sub>2</sub> γ *may be ivy (R. very) glad*.

646. *And that I have* (?), P H<sub>2</sub> *That γ have* ; rest *I that have*.

647. *Grevounces*, etc., P H<sub>2</sub> *no ought* ; S<sub>1</sub> Dg. *I ought* ; rest *ought* (?). All except H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> Cx. insert *and* before *wel*.

649. *And ek thee (me) oughte not*, so β ; α *And ek thee oughtest* ; γ *Ek thee us oughte not*.

'I wot wel that it fareth thus by me,  
As to thy brother Paris an herdesse,  
Which that y-cleped was Oenone,  
Wrot in a compleynt of her hevynesse :  
Ye saw the lettré that she wrot, I gesse ?  
'Nay, neveré yit, y-wis,' quod Troilus.  
'Now,' quod Pandaré, 'herkneeth, it  
was thus.— 658

"Phebus, that first fond art of medicine,"  
Quodshe, "and coudein every wightés care  
Remédie and reed by herbés he knew fine,  
Yit to himself his conning was ful bare ;  
For Love hadde him so bounden in a snare,  
Al for the daughter of the King Amete,  
That al his craft ne coude his sorwes bete."

'Right so fare I, unhappily for me :  
I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore ;  
And yet paraunter can I reden thee, 668  
And not myself : reprevé me no more !  
'I have no cause, I wot wel, for to sore  
As doth a hawk that listeth for to pleye ;  
But to thyn help yit somewhat can I seye.

'And of oo thing right siker maystow be,  
That certein, for to dyen in the peyne,  
That I shal neveré mo discoveren thee ;  
Ne, by my trouthe, I kepé not restreyne  
Thee fro thy love, though that it were  
Eleyne

That is thy brother wyf, if ich it wiste :  
Be what she be, and love her as thee liste !

'Therefore, as frend, fulliche in me assure,  
And tel me plat now what is th' enchesoun  
And final cause of wo that ye endure ; 682  
For douteth no thing, myn entencioun  
N' is not to you of reprehencioun  
To speke as now, for no wight may bireve  
A man to love, til that him list to leve.

'And witeth wel, that bothé two ben  
vices,—

651. *Oenone*, see Ovid, *Heroid.* v.

652. *Now*, P H<sub>2</sub> Cl. *No*.

653. *he*, γ *she*.

654. *And tel me plat now*, P H<sub>2</sub> G γ *om*.

*om*.

655. *O Cl. thyn enchesoun*.

656. *And*, G J H<sub>2</sub> γ *And thy*.

Mistrusten alle, or ellés allé leve ;  
But wel I wot the mene of it no vice is,  
For for to tristen som wight is a preve 690  
Of trouthe, and for-thy wolde I sayn re-  
meve

Thy wronge conceyt, and do thee som  
wight triste

Thy wo to telle ; and tel me, if thee liste

'The wise seyth, "Wo him that is allone,  
For, and he falle, he hath non help to rise" ;  
And sith thou hast a felaw, tel thy mone ;  
For this n' is not, certéyn, the nexté wise  
To winnen love, as techen us the wise, 700  
To walwe and wepe as Niobé the quene,  
Whos terés yit in marbel ben y-sene.

'Lat be thy weping and thy drerinesse,  
And lat us lissen wo with other speche,  
So may thy woful timé semé lease.  
Delyté not in wo thy wo to seche,  
As don thise foolés that hir sorwes eche  
With sorwé, whan they have misaventure,  
And liste not to seche hem other care.

'Men seyn, "To wrecche is consolacioun  
To have another felaw in his peyne."  
That oughté wel ben our opinioun, 710  
For, bothé thou and I, of Love we pleyne !  
So ful of sorwe am I, soth for to seyne,  
That certéynly no moré hardé grace  
May sitte on me, for-why ther is no space !

'If God wile, thou art not agast of me,  
Lest I wolde of thy lady thee bigile !  
Thou wost thy-self whom that I love, pardé,  
As I best can, gon sithen longé while.  
And sith thou wost I do it for no wile, 720  
And seyst I am he that thou trustest most  
Tel me somewhat sin al my wo thou wost.

Yit Troilus for al this no word seyde,  
But longe he lay as stille as he dede were,  
And after this with siking he abreyde,  
And to Pandaré vois he lente his ér,

690. *For for to*, so H<sub>4</sub> J G H<sub>1</sub> ; *rest For to*.

719. *wile*, so a γ ; J and others *gile*.

720. *seyst*, γ *sithen*.

723. *Pandarus*, so P H<sub>2</sub> G R ; *rest Pandarus*.

725. *lente*, P H<sub>2</sub> G *lente* ; H<sub>4</sub> *lente*.

And ap þat yēn caste he, that in fere  
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye  
He sholdē falle, or ellēs soonē dye;

And criðe 'A-wak' ful wonderliche and  
sharpe;

'What! slombrestow as in a litargye? 730  
For artow lyk an assē to an harpe,  
That hereth soun, whan men the strengēs  
plye,

But in his minde of that no melodye  
May sinken, him to gladden, for that he  
So dul is of his bestialité?'

And with that Pandar of his wordēs stente;  
And Troilus yit him no word answerde,  
For-why to tellen was not his entente 738  
Tonevereno man, for whom that hesoferde.  
For it is seyð, men maketh ofte a yerde  
With which the maker is himself y-beten  
In sundry maner, as thise wisē treten.

And namēliche in his counsēil tellinge:  
That toucheth love, that oughte ben secrē,  
For of himself it wol ynough out-springe,  
But-if that it the bet governed be;  
Eek sometime it is craft to semē flee  
For thing which in effect men huntē faste.—  
Al this gan Troilus in his hertē caste. 749

But nathēles whan he had herd him crye  
'Awak!' he gan to sikē wonder sore,  
And seyðe, 'Freind, though that I stillē lye,  
I am not deaf. Now pees, and cryno more,  
For I have herd thy wordēs and thy lore;  
But suffre me my mischief to biwailen,  
For thy provērbēs may me naught availen!

'Nor other curē canst thou non for me:  
Eek I n'il not be curēd; I wol deye!  
What knowe I of the quenē Niobe!  
Lat be thine olde ensaumple, I thee  
preye!' 760

737. MSS. vary—some word for thing.

739. MSS. vary. H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. *Nevers to no man, for whom he so ferde; eð To no man, for-why that he so ferde (read never for no!).*

747. *It is craft, so a Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; rest it is a craft.*

748. *For thing, y Pro thing. (See ii. 194, 868.)*

749. *In his herte, H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> omit his.*

753. *am, J. G. maw.*

757. *Now, J. and others For.*

'No!' quod tho Pandarus, 'Therefore I seye,  
Swich is delit of folēs to biwepe  
Hir wo, but seken botē they ne kepe!

'Now knowe I, that ther reson in thee  
faileth!

But tel me, if I wistē what she were  
For whom that theel this misaunteraileth,  
Dorstestow that I tolde her in her ere  
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thyself for fere,  
And her besoughte on thee to han som  
routhe?'

'Why, nay!' quod he, 'by God and by  
my trouthe!' 770

'What! not as bisily,' quod Pandarus,  
'As though myn ownē lyf lay on this nede?'

'No, certēs, brother!' quod this Troilus.  
'And why?'—'For that thou sholdest  
neverē spede.'

'Wost thou that wel?'—'Ye, that is out  
of drede!'

Quod Troilus. 'For al that evere ye conne,  
Shen'il to noswiche wreccheas I ben wonne!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Allas! what may this be,  
That thou despeyrēd art thus causēd?

What! liveth not thy lady, bendistē! 780  
How wostow so that thou art gracēd?  
Swich yvel is not alwey bootēd.

Why, put not impossiblē thus thy cure,  
Sith thing to come is ofte in aventure.

'I grauntē wel that thou endurest wo  
As sharp as doth he, Ticius, in helle,  
Whos stomak foulēs tiren everē mo  
That highten voltourēs, as bookēs telle;  
But I may not endure that thou dwelle  
In so unskillful an opinioun 790  
That of thy wo is no curacioun.

'But onēs n'iltow, for thy coward herte  
And for thyn ire and folissh wilfulneme,

761. *tho, al omit except H<sub>4</sub> S<sup>4</sup>.*  
764. *ther reson, so H<sub>4</sub> G R J Cp. H<sub>1</sub>; rest omit ther.*

767. *Dorstestow, so G R C L. H<sub>1</sub>; rest dorst thou.*

767. *tolde her, so H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>2</sub>; P H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. tolde it; rest tolde (Cx. telle).*

773. *No, certēs, brother. a Why, no, parde, sir.*

780. *bendistē, so J Cp. H<sub>1</sub>; othēr bendistē.*

786. *Ticius, Tityus. Ovid, Met. iv. 496; Boethius iii. met. 12.*



For wanttrust, tellen of thy sorwes smerte,  
Ne to thyn owné help do businesse  
As muche as speke a reson more or lesse,  
But li'st as he that list of no thing recche!  
What woman coude lové swich a wrecche?

'What may she demen other of thy deth,  
If thou thus dye, and she n'ot why it is,  
But that for fere is yolden up thy breth,  
For Grekes han bisegéd us, y-wis? 802  
Lord, which a thonk than shaltow han  
of this!

Thus wol she seyn, and al the toun at ones,  
"The wrecche is ded, the devil have his  
bones!"

'Thou mayst allone here wepe and crye  
and knele;  
But love a woman that she wot it nought,  
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not  
fele,—

Unknowe, unkist, and lost, that is  
unsought.

What! many a man hath love ful dere  
y-bought; 810

Ye, twenty winter, that his lady wiste,  
That neveré yit his lady mouth he kiste!

'What! sholde he therfor fallen in despair,  
Or be recréant for his owné tene,  
Or slen himself, al be his lady fair?  
Nay, nay! but evere in oon be fressh  
and grene

To serve and love his deré hertés quene,  
And thanke it is a guerdon, her to serve,  
A thousand fold more than he can deserve!

And of that word took hedé Troilus, 820  
And thoughte anon what foly he was inne,  
And how that soth him seyde Pandarus,  
That for to slen himself mighte he not winne,  
But bothé don unmanhod and a sinne,  
And of his deth his lady naught to wite;  
For of his wo, God wot, she knew ful lite.

794. For, a. And.  
795. speke a reson, a. speke a word (ye).  
802. than, y and others omit.  
803. it, y omits.  
812. Ye, so S; H<sub>2</sub> Ye: rest omit; P Ad. or  
(p) that; Cx. as wiste; G not wiste.  
820. And, y omits.

And with that thought he gan ful soré sike,  
And seyde, 'Allas! what is me best to do?'  
To whom Pandaré answered, 'Yif theelike,  
The beste is that thou tellé me thy wo;  
And have my trouthe, but thou finde it so  
I be thy boié or that it be ful longe, 832  
To peces do me drawe, and sithen hongel'

'Ye, so seystow!' quod Troilus tho,  
'Allas!

But, God wot, it is naught the rather so!  
Ful hard were it to helpen in this cas;  
For wel finde I that Fortune is my fo,  
Ne alle the men that riden conne or go  
May of her cruel wheel the harm with-  
stonde;

For as her list, she play'th with free and  
bonde. 840

Quod Pandarus, 'Than blamestow Fortune  
For thou art wroth: ye, now at erst I see!  
Wostow not wel that Fortune is commune  
To every maner wight in som degree?  
And yit thou hast this confort, lo, pardé!  
That as her joyés moten overgon,  
So mote her sorwes passen everychon.

'For if her wheel stinte any thing to torne,  
Than cesséd she Fortune anon to be.  
Now, sith her wheel by no way may sojorne,  
What wostow, if her mutabilité 852  
Right as thy-selven list wol don by thee,  
Or that she be not fer fro thyn helpinge?  
Paraunter thou hast causé for to singe!

'And therfor wostow what I thee  
beseche?

Lat be thy wo and torning to the grounde;  
For who-so list have heling of his leche,  
To him bihoveth first unwrye his wounde.  
To Cerberus in helle ay be I bounde,  
Al were it for my suster al thy sorwe, 860  
By my wil she sholdé be thyn to-morwe!

830. thy wo, so a<sup>2</sup> J G H<sub>2</sub> A; y and others al  
thy wo.  
831. finde it, y it finde.  
832. seystow, y thou seyst.  
837. heling, G J Cl. helping.  
852. unwrye, J y unwrye.  
860. Al (y), all omit first Al; P H<sub>2</sub> corrupt.  
861. sholdé be thyn, P inserts al before thyn.  
Jo. y inserts al before be.

'Look up, I seye, and tel me what she is  
Anon, that I may gon aboute thy nede.  
Knowe ich her aught? For my love, tel  
me this!

Than wolde I hopen rather for to spede,  
Tho gan the veyne of Troilus to blede,  
For he was hit, and wex al red for shame.  
'A ha!' quod Pandar, 'here biginneth  
game!'

And with that word hegan him for to shake,  
And seyde, 'Thef, thou shalt her namé  
telle!'

870

But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake  
As though men sholde han led him into  
helle,

And seyde, 'Allas! of al my wo the welles,  
Than is my sweté fo calléd Criseyde!'

And wel nigh with the word for fere he  
deyde.

And whan that Pandar herde her namé  
nevene,

Lord! he was glad, and seyde, 'Frend  
so dere,

877

Nowfare aught! for Jovés name in hevenc,  
Love hath bi-set thee wel! Be of good chere!  
For of good namé, wisdom, and manére  
She hath y-nough, and ek of gentillesse.  
If she be fair, thou wost thyself, I gesse!

'N' I neveré saw a moré bountevous  
Of her estat, n' a gladder, ne of speche  
A frendlier, n' a moré gracious  
For to do wel, ne lasse had nede to seche  
What for to don; and al this bet to eche  
In honour to as fer as she may strecche,  
A kingés herté sem'th by heres a wrecche.

'And for-thy look of good confort thou be;  
For certainly, the firsté point is this

892

863. *rather*, P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> Cl. H<sub>1</sub> *the rather(e)*.

875. *the word*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>1</sub> *that word*.

880. *name, wisdom*, R γ insert *and before wisdom*.

883. *N' I neveré saw*, so P H<sub>2</sub> Jo. H<sub>1</sub>; H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. D *No neveré saw I*; G H<sub>3</sub> Cp. Cl. *No neveré saw*.

884. *w' a*, Cl. *ne a*; Cp. *ne*; G *non*; rest *ne*.

890-896. All MSS. except P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> (and Jo. in later hand on margin) omit this stanza; Cx. omits it, but Th. has it.

Of noblé corage and wel ordeyné,—  
A man to have pes with himself, ywis.  
So oughtest thou; for nought but good it is  
To loven wel and in a worthy place:  
Thee oughté not to clepe it hap, but grace.

'And also thenk, and therwith gladdé thee,  
That sith thy lady vertuous is al,  
So solweth it that ther is som pité  
Amongés alle thise othre in general: 900  
And for-ty see that thou in special  
Requeré naught that is aycin her name,  
For vertu streccheth not himself to shame.

'But wel is me that everé I was born,  
That thou bi-set art in so good a place;  
For by my trouthe, in love I dorste han  
sworn

Thee sholdé neveré han tid thus fair a grace.  
And wostow why? For thou were wont  
to chace

At Love in scorn, and for despit him calle  
"Scint Idiot, lord of thise foolcs alle." 910

'How often hastow maud thy nicé japes,  
And seyde, that "Lovés servants every-  
chone

Of nicité ben verray Goddés apés;  
And somé woldé monche hir mete allone  
Iigginga-bedde and make hem for togrone;  
And som," thou seydest, "had a blanché  
fevere,

And preyddest God he sholdé neveré kevere.

"And some of hem toke on hem for  
the cold

More than y-nough," so seydestow ful ofte;  
"And some han feynéd ofté time and  
told

920

How that they waken when they slepen  
softe;

892. *and wel ordeyné*, so P H<sub>2</sub>; J Th. *and wel ordeyne the*; H<sub>4</sub> *thou ordeyne the*.

893. *A man*, J H<sub>4</sub> omit.

896. *Thee*, J H<sub>4</sub> Men.

904. *that everé I was born*, R *that everé was I*; G S Ad. Cp. H<sub>1</sub> *that everé that I was born*.

907. *neveré han tid*, G H<sub>3</sub> J *neveré in love han tid*.

907. *thus fair*, a R Cx. D Cl. *so fair*.

914. *monche*, so a; rest *muche, muche, muche, muche*.

And thus they wolde han brought himself  
a-lofte,

But natheles were under at the laste !  
Thus seydestow, and japedest ful faste.

'Yit seydestow that "for the more part,  
These lovers woldé speke in general,  
And thoughten that it was a siker art  
For failing for t' assayen over-al !"  
Now may I jape of thee, if that I shal !  
But natheles, though that I sholdé deye, 930  
That thou art non of tho, I dorsté seye.

'Now beet thy brest, and sey to God of  
Love,

"Thy grace, Lord ! for now I me repente  
If I mis-spak, for now myself I love."

Thus sey with al thyn herte in good en-  
tente !

Quod Troilus, 'A, Lord ! I me consente,  
And preye to thee my japés thou forgive,  
And I shal neverémoré whil I live.'

'Thou seyst wel,' quod Pandaré, 'and  
now I hope

That thou the Goddés wraththe hast al  
apeded ; 940

And sithen thou hast wopen many a drope,  
And seyð such thing wherwith thy god  
is plesed,

Now woldé neveré God but thou were esed !  
And thenk wel, she of whom rist al thy wo,  
Her-after may thy confort ben also.

'For th'ilke grounde that ber'th the wedés  
wikke

Ber'th eek these holsom herbés as ful ofte ;  
And next the foulé netlé, rough and thikke,  
The rose waxeth sweté, smothe, and softe ;  
And next the waley is the hil o-lofte ; 950  
And next the derké night, the gladdé  
morwe ;

And also joye is next the fyn of sorwe.

922. japedest, P H<sub>2</sub> Cx. Ad. ympeidist (impedest).

923. levere, P H<sub>2</sub> faitours.

923. whil I live, & whil that I live.

929. Pandore, so a R Cx. D ; rest Pandarus.

947. as ful ofte, P H<sub>2</sub> and (for as) ; Cx. omit as.

948. And next, so S ; rest omit And.

949. The rose waxeth swete, & The lile waxeth

swete ; J D y insert and before swete.

'Now looké that a-tempré be thy bridel,  
And for the beste ay suffré to the tide,  
Or ellés al our labour is on ydel :  
He hasteth wel that wisly can abide.  
Be diligent, and trewe, and ay wel hide :  
Be lusty, frée, persévere in thy servise,  
And al is wel, if thou werke in this wise.

'But he that parted is in every place 960  
Is nowher hool, as writen clerkés wise.

What wonder is, though swich oon have  
no grace ?

Eek wostow how ? It far'th of som servise,  
As plante a tree, or herbe, in sondry wise,  
And on the morwé pulle it up as blive !  
No wonder is, though it may neveré thrive.

'And sith that God of Love hath thee  
bestowed

In placé digne un-to thy worthinesse,  
Stond fasté, for to good port hastow  
rowed !

And of thy-self for any hevinesse 970  
Hope alwey wel ; for, but-if dreriness  
Or over-haste our bothé labour shende,  
I hope of this to maken a good ende.

'And wostow why ? I am the lesse a-ferec  
Of this matéré with my necé trete,  
For this have I herd seyð of oldé lered :  
Was neveré man nor woman yit begete  
That was unapt to suffré lovés hete—  
Celestial, or ellés love of kinde.  
For-thysom grace I hope in her to finde. 980

'And for to speke of her in special,  
Her beauté to bithenken and her youthe,  
It sit her naught to be celestial  
As yit, though that her listé bothe and  
couthe :

But trewely it sate her wel right nouthé  
A worthy knight to loven and cherice ;  
And, but she do, I holde it for a vice !

952. Now looks that, H<sub>2</sub> Look that thou ; Ph.  
Look thou that ; G wel (for be).

960. parted, y departed.

960. What wonder is, No wonder is, G  
(for is).

972. bothe, H<sub>2</sub> botheres ; D bother ; G Ad. bothis.

976. of olde lered, so & R ; Cx. of of lered ;

H<sub>2</sub> and lered ; G of lered ; rest of olde lered.

984. though that, J yif that ; R as that ; G that

'Wherefore I am, and wol be, ay redy  
To peyne me to do you this servise;  
For bothe you to plesé, this hope I, 990  
Hereafterward; for ye be bothe wise,  
And conne it counsell kepe in swich a wise  
That no man shal the wiser of it be;  
And so we may be gladed allé three.

'And, by my trouthe, I have right now  
of thee

A good conceit in my wit, as I gesse!  
And what it is, I wil now that thou sec.—  
I thinké, sith that Love of his goodnéssé  
Hath thee converted out of wikkednesse,  
That thou shalt be the besté post, I leve, 1000  
Of al his lay, and most his foos ay greve.

'Ensamplé why, see now these greté  
clerkes,

That erren aldermost ayein a lawe,  
And ben converted from hir wikked werkés  
Thorough grace of God that list hem to  
him drawe,—

Than art they folk that han most God in  
awe,  
And strengest feithéd ben, I understonde,  
And conne an errour alderbest with-  
stonde.'

When Troilus had herd Pandaré, assented  
To ben his helpe in loving of Criseyde, 1010  
Wex off his wo, as who seith, untor-  
mented;

But hotter wex his love; and than heseide  
With sobré chere, although his herté  
pleyde:—

'Now blisful Venus help, or that I sterve,  
Of thee, Pandaré, I may som thank  
deserve!

'But, deré frend, how shal my wo be lesse  
Til this be don? And good, ek tel me this,

988. *Wherefore*, P H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *Therefore*.  
988. *be ay redy*, G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *be al redy*; P *alwey*  
*be redy*; H<sub>2</sub> *al day be redy*.

990. *this*, so P H<sub>2</sub> G J R H<sub>3</sub> D; *rest thus*.

990. *conne it*, J *konne a*.

990. *And, J Now*; Cl. *For*.

1000. *foos ay greve*, so R J S; *a<sup>3</sup> G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. D*  
*thus (fals, fous) greve*; *y* (except D) *foos to greve*.

1000. *erren*, P H<sub>2</sub> G Cx. *are* (arn).

1000. *And good, ek tel*, P H<sub>2</sub> *And ek now tel*.

How wiltow seyn of me and my destresse?  
Lest she be wroth, this drede I most y-wis,  
Or n'il not here or trowen how it is. 1000  
Al this drede I; and ek for the manére  
Of thee, her eem, she n'il no swich thing  
here.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Thou hast a ful gret care  
Lest that the cherl may falle out of the  
mone!

Why, Lord! I hate of thee thy nicé fare!  
Why, entrémete of that thou hast to done!  
For Goddés love, I biddé thee a bone:  
So lat m'alone, and it shal be thy beste!—  
'Why, frend,' quod he, 'now do right  
as thee leste! 1009

'But herké, Pandar, oo word; for I n'olde  
That thou in me wendest so gret folfe,  
That to my lady I desiren sholde  
That toucheth harm or any vilanye;  
For dredéles me weré leveré dye  
Than she of me aught ellés understoode  
But that that mighté sounen in-to goode.'

Tho lough this Pandar, and anon  
answérde,

'And I thy borw, fy! no wight doth but so!  
I roughté naught though that she stood  
and herle 1039

How that thouseyst! But far-wel, I wol go.  
A-dieu! be glad! God spede us bothé two!  
Yif me this labour and this bisnesse,  
And of myspeed be thynal the swetnesse!'

Tho Troilus gan down on knees to falle,  
And Pandar in his armés henté faste,  
And seyde, 'Now, fy on the Grekés alle!  
Yit, pardé, God shal helpe us at the laste!  
And dredéles, if that my lif may laste,  
And God to-for, lo, some of hem shal  
smerte; 1049

And yit m'athinketh, this avaunt m'  
asterte!

'Now, Pandarus, I can no more seye  
But, thou wis, thou wost, thou mayst,  
thou art al!

1038. *fy!* G om.; *Jo. for*; R *untl*.

1043. *al the*, J *y al that*.

1050. *this avaunt*, H<sub>3</sub> *y that this avaunt*.

1051. *Now, Pandarus*, P H<sub>2</sub> *y Now, Pandarus*.

My lif, my deth, hool in thyn hond I leye!  
Help now!—Quod he, 'Yis, by my  
trouthe I shal!—

'God yelde thee, frend! And this in  
special,'

Quod Troilus, 'that thou me recomaunde  
Til her that may me to the deth comaunde!'

This Pandarus, tho désirous to serve  
His fullé frend, tho seyde in this manére;  
'Far-wel, and thenk I wil thy thank  
deserve! 1060

Have here my trouthe, and that thou  
shalt wel here!'

And wente his wey, thenking on this  
matére,

And how he best mighte her besceche of  
grace,

And finde a timé ther-to and a space.

For every wight that hath an hous to founde  
Ne renneth not the werk for to beginne  
With rakel hond; but he wol bide a  
stounde,

And sende his hertés line out fro withinne  
How alderfirst his purpos for to winne.

1058. *tho*, H<sub>4</sub> *ful*.

1059. *tho*, *th*, *th* *than*.

1064. *space*, J *y place*.

1069. *How* (?), all omit (but necessary to the  
sense as well as metre?).

Al this tho Pandar in his herté thoughte,  
And caste his werk ful wisly or he wroughte.

But Troilus lay tho no lenger down, 1072  
But up anon up-on his stedé bay,  
And in the feld he pleydè the lioun.  
Wo was that Greek that with him mette  
a-day!

And in the toun his maner tho forth ay  
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace  
That ech him lovede that lokèd on his face.

For he bicom the frendliést wight, 1079  
The gentillest and ek the mosté free,  
The thriftiest and oon the besté knight,  
That in his timé was or mighté be.  
Dede were his japés and his cruelté,  
His hyé port and his manére estrange;  
And ech of tho gan for a vertu change.

Now let us stinte of Troilus a stounde,  
That fareth lik a man that hurt is sore  
And is somdel of aking of his wounde  
Y-lisséd wel, but heléd no del more.  
And, as an esy pacient, the lore 1090  
Abit of him that go'th about his cure;  
And thus he drieth forth his aventure.

1070. *Al this tho*, so H<sub>4</sub>; rest omit *tho*.

1075. *a-day*, so J and others; rest *that day*.

1078. *on*, a H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *in*.

1092. *drieth*, P H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. A S *driveth*.

## BOOK II

Out of this blaké wawés for to saile,  
O wind, O wind, the weder ginneth clere:  
For in this see the boot hath swich  
travaile,

Of my conning that unnethé I it stere.  
This see clepe I the tempestous matére  
Of davespeyr that Troilus was inne;  
But now of hope the kalendés biginne.

O lady myn, that calléd art Cleó,  
Thou be my speed fro this forth, and my  
muse;  
To rimé wel this book til I have do! 10

1. R omits ll. 1-49.

4. *conning*, J and others *com(m)ing*.

Me nedeth here non other art to use;  
For-why to every lover I m' excuse,  
That of no sentément I this endite,  
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherefore I n'il have neither thank ne  
blame

Of al this werk, but preye you mekely  
Disblameth me if any word be lame;  
For as myn auctour seyde, so seye I.  
Ek though I speke of love unfelingly,  
No wonder is; for it no thing of-newe  
is, 20

A blind man can-not juggen wel in hewes.

21. *man*, J H<sub>3</sub> *wight*; H<sub>4</sub> *knicht*.

Ye knowe ek, that in forme of speche is  
change

Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho  
That hadden pris, now wonder nice and  
straunge

Us thinketh hem; and yit they spake  
hem so,

And spedde as wel in love as men now do:  
Ek for to winnen love in sondry ages,  
In sondry londés sondry ben uságes.

And for-thy if it happe in any wise,  
That here be any lover in this place  
That herkneth, as the story can devise  
How Troilus com til his lady grace,  
And thenketh, 'so n'olde I not love  
purcháce,'

Or wondreth on his speche or his doinge,  
I n'ot; but it is me no wonderinge.

For every wight which that to Romé went  
Halt not oo path, ne alwey oo manére;  
Ek in som lond were al the gamé shent,  
If that men ferde in love as men don  
here,

As thus, ~~in~~ open doing or in chere, 40  
In visitinge, in forme, or seyde hir sawes:  
For-thy men seyn, ech contré hath his  
lawes.

Ek scarcely ben ther in this placé three  
That han in love seyde lik, and don in al,  
For to thy purpos this may líkè thee,  
And thee right nought, yit al is seyde or  
shal;

Ek some men grave in tree, some in ston  
wal,

As it bitit.—But, sin I have begonne,  
Myn auctour shal I folwen, if I conne. 49

—In May that moder is of monthés glade,  
That fresché flourés, blewé, white, and  
rede,

32. Ye, J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>3</sub> S Cx. 1.

32. that, a<sup>2</sup> this.

39. a<sup>2</sup> insert stanza 7 before stanza 5.

35. wonderinge, so H<sub>3</sub> Cl.; a<sup>2</sup> wonder thyng;  
J and others wonderinge.

37. we, so a β; J H<sub>3</sub> nor; γ or.

39. men, so a β; Cx. γ they.

42. syn, H<sub>4</sub> Cl. a<sup>2</sup>yth.

47. some men, a<sup>2</sup> omit men.

50. white, J γ and white.

Ben quike a-gayn, that winter dedé made,  
And ful of hawme is fléting every mede: 3  
Whan Phebus doth his brighté bemés<sup>4</sup>  
sprede

Right in the whité Bole, it so betidde  
As I shal singe, on Mayés day the  
thridde,

That Pandarus, for al his wisé speche,  
Felte ek his part of lovés shokes kene, 3  
That coude he nevere so wel of loving

preche,  
It made his hewe a-day ful ofté grene. 60  
So shoon it, that him fil that day a thridde  
In love, for which in wo to bedde he  
wente,

And made, or it was day, ful many a  
wente.

The swalwé Proigné, with a sorfwul lay,  
Whan morwé com, gan make her way-  
mentinge

Why she forshapen was; and everé lay  
Pandare a-bedde, half in a slomberinge,  
Til she so nigh him made her cheteringe  
How Tereüs gan forth his suster take, 69  
That with the noise of her he gan awake,

And gan to calle and dresse him up to rise,  
Remembring him his erand was to doone  
From Troilus, and ek his grete emprise 74  
And caste, and knew in good plit was  
the moone

To don viage, and took his wey ful soone  
Unto his neces paleys ther biide. 75  
Now Janus, God of Entré, thou him gide!

Whan he was come unto his neces place,  
'Wher is my lady?' to her folk quod  
he;

And they him tolde, and he forth in gan  
pace, 76

And fond two othré ladies ~~se~~ and she  
Withinne a pavéd parlour; and they three

62. in we, J for we; a<sup>2</sup> ful we.

64. Proigné. See L.G.W. vii.

69. Tereüs, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; a<sup>2</sup> Theruus; J  
Tereüs; γ Tereüs.

71. dresse, J dressed; a<sup>2</sup> dressyn.

72. up, J γ; a β omit.

78. nece, J R.Cx. H<sub>3</sub> nec.

Herden a mayden reden hem the geste  
Of al the sege of Thebés, whil hem leste.

Quod Pandarus, *may God protect you*  
"Madame, God you see,  
With al your book and al the com-  
panye!"

"Ey, unclé, now welcómé y-wis!" quod she;  
And up she ros, *and by the hond in hie*  
She took him faste, and seyde, "This  
night thrye—"

To goodé mote it torne!—of you I mette.  
And with that word she doun on bench  
him sette.

"Ye, necé, ye shal faré wel the bet,  
If God wile, al this yer!" quod Pandarus;  
"But I am sory that I have you let *hindur*  
To herken of your book ye preisen thus.  
For Goddés love, what seith it? Tel it us!  
Is it of love? O, som good ye me lere!"  
"Uncle!" quod she, "your maistresse is  
not here!"

With that they gonnen laughe; and tho  
she seyde,

"This romaunce is of Thebés, that werede;  
And we han herd how that King Laius  
deyde

Thourgh Edippus hissone, and al that dede;  
And here we stinten at thisse lertres rede,  
How that the bisshop, as the book can telle,  
Amphiorax, fil thourgh the grounde to  
helle."

Quod Pandarus, "Al this knowe I my-selve,  
And al th' assege of Thebés, and the care;  
For herof ben ther maked bookés twelve.  
But lat be this, and tel me how ye fare.  
Do wey your barbe, and shewe your facé  
bare.

Do wey your book: ris up, and lat us  
daunce,  
And lat us don to May som óbservaunce!"

83. the geste, *as al the geste.*

84. Of al the sege (7). All omit *al*.

86. your book, *y your fayre book.*

87. now, *y myn.*

89. How that, so S. Ad.; rest omit *that.*

90. Amphiorax, Amphiarau. See v. 1500;

and A. 57; C. 7. D. 741.

122. barbe, J G H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. *wingel.*

"Ey, God forbedé!" quod she, "Be ye  
mad?"

Is that a widwes lif, so God you save?  
By God, ye maken me right sore adrad!  
Ye ben so wilde, it semeth as ye rave!  
It sate me wel bet, ay in a cave *better*  
To bidde and *rede* on holy seintés lives!  
Lat maydens gon to daunce, and yongé  
wives!"

"As everé thrive I," quod this Pandarus,  
"Yit coude I telle a thing to do you  
pleye!"

"Now, uncle deré," quod she, "telle it us  
For Goddés love! Is than the sege aweye?  
I am of Grekés fer'd so that I deye!"  
"Nay, nay!" quod he, "As everé mote I  
thrive,  
It is a thing wel bet than swiché five!"

"Ye, holy God!" quod she, "What thing  
is that?"

What! bet than swiché five? Ey, nay,  
y-wis!

For al this world ne can I *quere* *rede* what  
It sholdé ben! Som jape I trowe is this!  
And, but your-selven telle us what it is,  
My wit is for t'arede it al too lene;  
As help me God, I n'ot not what ye  
mene!"

And I your borw, ne neveré shal for me  
This thing be told to you, so mote I thrive!  
"And why so, uncle myn? Why so?"  
quod she.—

"By God," quod he, "that wol I telle as  
blive!"

For prouder woman is ther non on-live,  
And ye it wiste, in al the town of Troye:  
I jape naught, so everé have I joye!"

115. By God, etc., *as* (i.e. P H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub>) *Ye*  
*make me by loves sore adrad.*

116. *as*, R H<sub>2</sub> Cl. *that.*

117. *in a*, J and others *in*.

119. *maydens gon to*, *as* *maydens go daunce.*

123. *the sege*, *y th' assege.*

124. *fer'd so*, so R Cx.; *J fer'd so*; *y so fer'd*;

others *var.*

133. *n'ot not*, so H<sub>2</sub> *y*; *a β om. not.* G R

insert *as* before *I*.

134. *for me*, so *as* *y*; J R Cx. H<sub>2</sub> S<sub>2</sub> D<sub>2</sub>. *quod he*

140. *so*, H<sub>2</sub> *y* *as*.

Tho gan she wondren more than biforn  
A thousand fold, and down her yen caste ;  
For neveré sith the time that she was born  
To knowé thing desired she so faste.  
And with a sik she seyde him at the laste,  
'Now, unclé min, I n'il you not displese,  
Nor axen more that may do you discesse.'

So after this with many wordés glade,  
And frendly talés, and with mery chere,  
Of this and that they pley'de, and gonnen

wade <sup>150</sup>  
In many an uncount glad and deep matere,  
As frendés don, whan they be met i-ferre ;  
Til she gan axen him how Ector ferde,  
That was the townés wal and Grekés yerde.

'Ful wel, I thanke it God,' quod Pandarus,  
'Save in his arm he hath a litel wounde ;  
And ek his fresshé brother Troilus,  
The wisé worthy Ector the secounde,  
In whom that allé vertu list abounde,  
As allé trouthe and allé gentilesse, <sup>160</sup>  
Wisdom, honbúr, fredom, and worthi-  
nesse.'

'In good feith, em,' quod she, 'that  
liketh me !

They faren wel, God save hem bothé two !  
For trewélíche I holde it gret deynté,  
A Kingés sone in armés wel to do,  
And ben of good condicions therto ;  
For gret powér and moral vertu here  
Is selde y-seyn in o persóné i-ferre.'

'In good feith, that is soth,' quod  
Pandarus ;

'But, by my trouthe the king hath sonés  
tweye, <sup>170</sup>

That is to mene, Ector and Troilus,  
That certeinly, though that I sholdé deye,  
They ben as voide of vices, dar I seye,

As any men that live under the sonne :  
Hir might is wide y-knowe, and what they  
conne.

Of Ector nedeth no thing for to telle :  
In al this world ther n'is a bettré knight  
Than he, that is of worthinessé welle ;  
And he wel moré vertu hath than might.  
This knoweth many a wisand worthy wight.  
The samé pris of Troilus I seye : <sup>181</sup>  
God help me so, I knowe not swiché  
tweye ! —

'By God,' quod she, 'of Ector that is soth ;  
Of Troilus the samé thing trowe I,  
For dredéles men telleth that he doth  
In armés day by day so worthily,  
And ber'th him here at hom so gentilly  
To every wight, that allé pris hath he.  
Of hem that me were levest preised be.'

'Ye seye right soth, y-wis !' quod  
Pandarus, <sup>190</sup>

'For yesterday who-so had with him been,  
Mighté han wondred upon Troilus ;  
For neveré yit so thikke a swarm of been  
Ne fleigh, as Grekés for him gonné fleen  
And thourgh the feld in every wightés ere  
Ther n'as no cry but "Troilus is there !"

'Now here, now there he hunted hem so  
faste,

Ther n'as but Grekés blood and Troilus :  
Now him he hurte, and him al doun he  
caste : <sup>199</sup>

Ay wher he wente, it was arrayéd thus :  
He was hir deth, and sheld and lif for us ;  
That, as that day, ther dorsté non with-  
stonde,

Whil that he held his blodyswerd in honde.

174. *live*, so J and others ; *a<sup>2</sup> Cl. liveth* ; others *liven* ; *H<sub>4</sub> liven under sonne*.

176. *nedeth no thing*, so *a<sup>2</sup> J Cx. H<sub>2</sub>* ; *H<sub>4</sub> G nedith (if) no(ugh)t* ; *γ nedeth it no more*.

182. *God help me so, J so helpe me god* ; *G so god helpe me*.

185. *telleth*, so J etc. ; others *telle, tellen*.

188. *alle, J etc. al* ; *Ph. G al the* ; *Cx. overal*.

192. *Mighte, γ He mighte*.

194. *for him, J Cp. and others* ; *rest fro him (see L 748)*.

199. *him . . . him, H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> γ<sup>2</sup> have . . . him*.

142. *more, H<sub>2</sub> G wel more*.

143. *time, H<sub>2</sub> G tid*.

145. *that, R Cx. omit*.

146. *thing, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. a thing*.

147. *Now, a<sup>2</sup> To* ; *R Cx. Ne*.

186. *of good condicions* ; read (7) *good of con-*

*ditions*.

170. *twyweye, all hand*.



'Therto he is the frendlieste man  
Of gret estat, that evere I saw my live,  
And, wher him list, best felawshipé can  
To swich as him think'th ablé for to  
thrive.'—

And with that word tho Pandarus, as blive,  
He took his leve and seyde, 'I wol go  
henne.'—

'Nay, blame have I, myn uncle,' quod  
she thenne. 210

'What aileth you to be thus wery sone,  
And naméliche of wommen? Wol ye so!  
Nay, sitteth down! By God, I have to done  
With you, to speke of wisdom, or ye go!'—  
And every wight that was about them tho,  
That herdé that, gan fer away to stonde,  
Whil they two hadde al that hem liste on  
honde.

Whan that her taleal brought was to an ende  
Of her estat and of her governaunce, 219  
Quod Pandarus, 'Now is it time I wende!  
But yit, I seye, arise and lat us daunce,  
And cast your widwes habit to mischaunce!  
What list you thus your-self to disfigúre,  
Sith you is tid so glad an aventure?'—

'A! wel bithought! For love of God,'  
quod she,

'Shal I not witen what ye mene of this?'—  
'No, this thing axeth leiser,' tho quod he,  
'And ek me woldé muché greve, y-wis,  
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis.  
Yit were it bet my tonge for to stille 230  
Than seye asoeth that were ayeins your wille.

'For, necé, by the Goddessé Minerve,  
And Jupiter that mak'th the thonder ringe,  
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,  
Ye ben the woman in this world livinge,  
Withouten paramours, to my witinge,

209. I wol, G Cz. H<sub>2</sub> D he wolde.

215. the, so a J etc.; others to, too, two.

217. al that hem liste, J al this matere.

217. on honde, γ to honde.

220. is it time, so H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>3</sub>; S<sub>1</sub> time is that;

γ to time, J D to (for I).

221. I seye, arise, J ariseth, I seye. J γ omit

221.

224. so glad, so a β; γ thus faire.

226. not, a<sup>2</sup> now.

That I best love and lothest am to greve;  
And that ye witen wel your-self, I leve.'

'Y-wis, myn uncle,' quod she, 'graunt  
mercy!

Your friendship have I founden everé yit;  
I am to no man holden trewely 241  
So muche as you, and have so litel quit;  
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit,  
As in my gilt I shal you nevere offense;  
And if I have or this, I wol amende!

'But, for the love of God, I you biseche,  
As ye ben he that I most love and triste,  
Lat be to me your fremde maner speche,  
And sey to me your necé what you liste.'—  
And with that word her uncle anon her kiste,  
And seyde, 'Gladly, levé necé dere! 251  
Tak it for gode that I shal seye you  
here!'—

With that she gan her yen down to caste;  
And Pandarus to coughé gan a lite,  
And seyde, 'Necé, alwey, lo! to the laste,  
How-so it be that some men hem delite  
With subtil art hir talés for t' endite,  
Yit for al that, in hir entencioun,  
Hir tale is al for som conclusioun.

'And sithen th'ende is every talés strengthe,  
And this matere is so bihovely, 261  
What sholde I peynte or drawén it on  
lengthe

To you that ben my frend so feithfully?'—  
And with that word he gan right inwardly  
Biholden her and loken on her face,  
And seyde, 'On swich a mirour goodé  
grace!'—

Than thought he thus: 'If I my tale endite  
Aught harde, or make a proces any while,  
She shal no savour han therin but lite,  
And trowe I wolde her in my wil bigile;  
For tendré wittés wenen al be wile 271

239. myn, H<sub>2</sub> γ omit.

248. frende, so A D only; J friends; others  
var. friends, friendly, etc.

250. for gode, so G H<sub>2</sub> etc.; J etc. for god.

253. you down to, J R H<sub>2</sub> look down for to.

257. for t' endite, a etc. to endite.

Wher-as they can not pleylichly under-  
stonde :

For-thy her wit to serven wol I fonde.'—

And lokéd on her in a bisy wise ;  
And she was war that he biheld her so,  
And seydé, 'Lord ! so fasté ye m' avise !  
Say ye me nevere or now ? What sey ye ?  
No ?'—

'Yis, yis !' quod he, 'and bet wol, or I go !  
But, by my trouthe, I thoughté now if ye  
Be fortunat, for now men shal it see. 280

'For t' every wight som goodly aventure  
Som time is shape, if he it can receiven ;  
And if that he wol take of it no cure  
Whan that it com'th, but wilfulliche it  
weiven,

Lo, neither cas ne fortune him deceiven,  
But right his owné slouthe and wrecched-  
nesse :

And swich a wight is for to blame, I gesse !

'Good aventure, O belé nece, have ye  
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take !  
And, for the love of God and ek of me,  
Cache it anon, lest aventure slake ! 291  
What sholde I lenger proces of it make ?  
Yif me your hond ; for in this world is non,  
If that you list, a wight so wel bi-gon.

'And sith I speke of good intencioun,  
As I to you have told wel her-bifom,  
And love as wel your honour and renoun  
As créature in al this world y-born,  
By alle the oothés that I have you sworn,  
And ye be wroth therfóre, or wene I lye,  
Ne shal I neveré see you eft with ye ! 301

'Beth not agast, ne quaketh not ! Wher-  
to ?

Ne chaungeth naught for ferés your hewe !  
For hardily the werste of this is do ;  
And though my tale as now be to you newe,  
Yit trist alwey ye shal me findé trewe ;  
And were it thing that me thoughté  
únsittinge,

To you wolde I no swiché talés bringe.'—

286. omits, γ *verray*.

301. *of it*, α<sup>2</sup> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> to you ; R om.

'Now, my goode em, for Goddés love I  
preye,' 309

Quod she, 'Com off, and tel me what it is !  
For bothe I am agast what ye wol seye,  
And ek me longeth it to wite, y-wis ;  
For whether it be wel or be amis,  
Seyon ! Lat menot in this feréd welle !'—  
'Sowil I don : now herkneth ! I shal telle !

'Now, necé myn, the kingés deré sone,  
The goodé, wisé, worthy, freashe, and free,  
Which alwey for to do wel is his wone,  
The noble Troilus, so loveth thee, 319  
That, but ye helpe, it wil his bané be.  
Lo, here is al ! What sholde I moré seye ?  
Do what you list, to make him live or deye !

'But if ye lete him deyen, I wil sterve :  
I have heremytrouthé, nece, I n'il not lyen,  
Al sholde I with this knif my throté  
kerven !'—

With that the terés braste out of his yen,  
And seyde, '—If that ye don us bothé dyen  
Thus giltéles, than have ye fished faire !  
What mendé ye, though that we bothe a-  
paire ? 329

'Allas ! he which that is my lord so dere,  
That trewé man, that noble gentil knight,  
That naught desireth but your frendly  
chere,

I see him deyn, ther he go'th up right  
And hasteth him with al his fullé might  
For to be slayn, if his fortune assente.  
Allas, that God you swich a beauté sente !

'If it be so that ye so cruel be 337  
That of his deth you listé not to recche,  
(That is so trewe and worthy as we see),  
No more than of a japer or a wrecche,—  
If ye beswich, your beauté may not streche  
To make amendes of so cruél a dede !  
Avisément is good before the nede !

309. *my*, γ<sup>2</sup> omits.

329. *though*, J H<sub>1</sub> if.

331. *gentil*, α<sup>2</sup> *worthy* ; Cx. omits.

333. *his fortune*, G H<sub>3</sub> Cl. *fortune would* ;

H<sub>3</sub> *his fortune would*.

338. *you*, J and others *ye*.

339. *we*, so α β ; G γ *ye*.

342. α, R H<sub>3</sub> omits.

'Wo worth the fairé gemmé vertules !  
 Wo worth that herbealso that doth no bote !  
 Wo worth that beauté that is routhéles !  
 Wo worth that wight that tret ech under-  
 fote !

And ye that ben of beauté crop and rote,  
 If therewithal in you ther be no routhé, 349  
 Than is it harm ye liven by my trouthe !

'And also think wel that it is no gaude ;  
 For me were leveré thou and I and he  
 Were hangéd, than I sholdé be his baudé,  
 As hye, as men mighte on us allé see !  
 I am thyn em : the shamé were to me  
 As wel as thee, if that I sholde assente  
 Thorough myn abet, that he thyn honour  
 shente.

'Now understand, for I you naught requere  
 To bindé you to him thorough no biheste,  
 But only that ye make him bettré chere  
 Than ye han don or this, and moré feste,  
 So that his lif be savéd at the leste : 362  
 This' al and som, and pleylny our entente :  
 God help me so, I neveré other mente.

'Lo, this requesté is not but skile y-wis ;  
 Ne doute of reson, pardé, is ther non.  
 I sette the wersté : that ye dredé this,  
 Men woldé wondrensen him come and gon ;  
 And ther-ayeins answeRé I thus anon, 369  
 That every wight, but he be fool of kinde,  
 Wol deme it love of frendship in his minde.

'What ! Who wil demen, though he see a  
 man  
 To temple go, that he th' imágés eteth ?  
 Think ek how wel and wisly that he can  
 Góverne him-self, that he no thing  
 forgeteth,  
 That wher he com'th he pris and thank  
 him geteth ;  
 And ek therto, he shal come here so selde,  
 What fors were it, though al the town  
 behelde ?

349. *if, J Cl. And.*  
 349. *ther, J G ne; a Cx. Co. omit.*  
 351. *that it is, so J H<sub>2</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> S; H<sub>1</sub> that is;*  
 351. *(that) this is.*  
 359. *And, R only; rest omit.*

'Swich love of frendes regn'th in al this  
 town ;

And wrye you in that mantel everé me !  
 And, God so wis be my savacioun, 381  
 As I have seyde, your best is to do so.  
 But, goodé nece, alway to stinte his wo,  
 So lat your daunger sucred ben a lite,  
 That of his deth ye be not for to wite.'—

Criseyde, which that herde him in this wise.  
 Thoughte, 'I shal felen what he mene,  
 y-wis !'—

'Now, em,' quod she, 'what woldé ye  
 devise ?

What is your reed I sholdé don of this ?'—  
 'That is wel seyde !' quod he, 'Certain  
 best is, 390

That ye him love ayein for his lovinge,  
 As love for love is skilful guerdoninge.

'Think ek how eldé wasteth every houre  
 In ech of you a party of beauté ;  
 And therfor, or that agé thee devoure,  
 Go love, for, old, ther wil no wight of thee !  
 Lat this proverbe a lore unto you be :  
 Too late y-war ! quod Beauté, whan it  
 paste :  
 And Eldé daunteth Daunger at the laste !

'The kingés fool is wont to cryén loude,  
 Whan that him think'th a womman ber'th  
 her hye, 401  
 "So longé mote ye live, and allé proude,  
 Til crowés feet be growe under your ye,  
 And sende you thanne a mirour in to pryé,  
 In which that ye may see your face a-  
 morwe !"  
 I biddé wisahé you no moré sorwe !'—

With this he stinte, and caste adoun the hed ;  
 And she began to breste a-wepe anon,

379. *in, so P H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. S<sub>1</sub> ; G *thour* ; J etc.*  
 379. *omit. (See C. T. B 776.)*  
 380. *wrye, a<sup>2</sup> covers ; y wry.*  
 383. *goodé nece, alway, y<sup>2</sup> alway, good(e) nece.*  
 384. *So, a<sup>2</sup> omit.*  
 385. *not for to, a<sup>2</sup> nothing to ; Cx. H<sub>1</sub> Cl.*  
 385. *no (ugh) to.*  
 387. *As, H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. ye.*  
 403. *be growe, so J R y ; a B be wasse.*  
 406. *I, y<sup>2</sup> Nece, J.*

And seyde, 'Allas, for wo ! Why n'ere  
I ded ?' <sup>409</sup>

For of this world the feith is al a-gon !  
Allas ! What sholden straungé to me don,  
Whan he that for my besté frend I wende,  
Ret me to love, and sholde it medefende ?

'Allas ! I wolde han trusted, doutéles,  
That if that I thorough my disaventure  
Had lovéd outhir him or Achilléus,  
Ector, or any mannés créature,  
Ye n'olde han had no mercy ne mesure  
On me, but alwey had me in repreve !' <sup>419</sup>  
This falsé world, allas, who may it leve ?

'What ! Is this al the joye and al the feste ?  
Is this your red ? Is this my blisful cas ?  
Is this the verray mede of your biheste ?  
Is al this peynted proces seyde, allas,  
Right for this fyn ? O Lady myn, Pallas,  
Thou in this dredful cas for me purveye,  
For so astonéd am I that I deye !'

With that she gan ful sorrowfully to sike. —  
'A ! may it be no bet ?' quod Pandarus ;  
'By God I shal no more come here this  
wike,  
And God to-forn, that am mistrusted thus !  
I see wel that ye setté lite of us, <sup>432</sup>  
Or of our deth ! Allas, I woful wrecche !  
Mighte he yit live, of me were naught to  
recche !

'O cruel God, O dispitousé Marte !  
O Furies three of helle, on you I crye !  
So lat me nevere out of this hous departe,  
If that I menté harm or vilanye !  
But sith I see my lord mot nedés dye,  
And I with him, here I me shrive, and seye  
That wikkedly ye don us bothé deye !' <sup>441</sup>

'But sith it liketh you that I be ded,  
By Neptunus, that God is of the see,  
Fro this forth shal I neveré eté bred  
Til I myn owné herté blood may see !  
For certain I wol deye as sone as he.' —  
And up hesterte, and on his wey he raughte,  
Til she agayn him by the lappé caughte.

<sup>432</sup> *maye*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; others *in*.  
<sup>434</sup> *maye*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; others *in*.

Criseyde, which that wel nigh starf for fere,  
So as she was the ferfullesté wight <sup>450</sup>  
That mighté be, and herde ek with her ere  
And saw the sorwful érne of the knight,  
And in his prayér ek saw non unright,  
And for the harm that mighte ek fallé more,  
She gan to reweand drede her wondersore,

And thoughté thus : 'Unhappés fallen  
thikke  
Alday for love, and in swich maner cas  
As men ben cruel in himself and wikke ;  
And if this man slee here himself, allas,  
In my présence, it n'il be no solás !' <sup>460</sup>  
What men wolde of it deme I cannot seye :  
It nedeth me ful sleighly for to playe !' —

And with a sorwful sik she seyde thrye,  
'A ! Lord ! What me is tid a sory chance !  
For myn estat li'th in a jupartye,  
And ek myn emés lif is in baláunce !  
But nathéles with Goldés governance  
I shal so don, myn honour shal I kepe,  
And ek his lif !' — and stinté for to wepa.

'Of harmés two the lesse is for to chese :  
Yit have I leveré maken him good chere  
In honour, than myn emés lif to lese !' <sup>470</sup>  
Ye seyn, ye nothing ellés me requere ?' —  
'No, wis,' quod he, 'myn owné necé  
dere !' —  
'Now wel !' quod she, 'and I wol do  
my payne !  
I shal myn herte ayein my lust constreyne,

'But that I n'il not holden him in honde ;  
Ne love a man ne can I naught, ne may  
Ayeins my wil ; but ellés wil I fonde, <sup>479</sup>  
Myn honour sauf, plese him fro day to day.  
Ther-to n'olde I not onés have seyde nay,  
But that I drede as in my fantasye ;  
But, cessé cause, ay cesseth maladye !

<sup>454</sup> *harm that mighte ek*, so J *harm ek that might*.

<sup>457</sup> *and*, so R Cx. omit.

<sup>460</sup> *n'il*, so so J ; others *will*, *wol*.

<sup>465</sup> *litt in a*, so H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R ; *litt in*, J P

G H<sub>3</sub> Cx. ; *y litt now in* (Cl. *now litt in*).

<sup>467</sup> *Goddes*, H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>3</sub> D *gode* (*good*).

<sup>476</sup>, <sup>479</sup>, so read : *We love no (a) man, that has no might no may Ayeins his wil*.

<sup>482</sup> *drede*, Cp. *dredde*.

'But here I make a protestacioun,  
That in this proces if ye depper go,  
That certainly for no savacioun  
Of you, though that ye sterven bothé two,  
Though al the world on oo day be my fo,  
Ne shal I nevere of him han other routhe !'  
'I granté wel,' quod Pandar, 'by my  
trouthe !' 490

'But may I trusté wel to you,' quod he,  
'That of this thing that yehanight me here  
Ye wol it holden trewely to me?'—  
'Ye, douteles,' quod she, 'myn unclé  
dere !'—  
'Ne that I shal han cause in this matére,'  
Quod he, 'to pleyne, or ofter you to preche?'  
'Why, no, pardé ! What nedeth more  
speche ?'

Tho fillen they in othré talés glade,  
Til at the laste, 'O goodeem,' quod she tho,  
'For love of God which that us bothé  
made,  
Tel me how first ye wisten of his wo !' 501  
Wot non of it but ye?'—He seyde,  
'No !'—  
'Can he wel speke of love?' quod she ;  
'I preye,  
Tel me ; for I the bet me shal purveye.'—

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smile,  
And seyde, 'By my trouthe I shal you telle !  
This other day, not gon ful longé while,  
With-in the paleis gardin, by a welle,  
Gan he and I wel half a day to dwelle,  
Right for to speken of an ordinaunce' 510  
How we the Grekés mighten disavaunce.

Sone after that bigonné we to lepe,  
And casten with our darters to and fro,  
Til at the laste he seyde he woldé slepe ;  
And on the gres a-doun he leyde him tho ;  
And I afer gan romen to and fro,

491. to you, <sup>a</sup> ther-to.  
493. to, so P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub>; others unto.  
500. love of God, H<sub>4</sub> the love; H<sub>2</sub> Cz. <sup>a</sup> his  
love.  
504. me shal, <sup>a</sup> etc. shal me.  
506. With-in, <sup>a</sup> in-with.  
508. I afer, so J R only; P H<sub>2</sub> yn a fore (!);  
H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>2</sub> etc. after; <sup>a</sup> ther-after.

Til that I herde, as that I welk alone,  
How he bigan ful wofully to grone.

'Tho gan I stalke him softely behinde ;  
And, sikerly the sothe for to seyne' 520  
As I can clepe ayein now to my minde,  
Right thus to Love he gan him for to  
pleyne :

He seyde, 'Lord, have routhe upon my  
payne !

Al have I ben rebél in myn entente,  
Now, mea culpa, Lord, I me repente !

'O God, that at thy disposicioun  
Ledest the fyn, by justé purveyaunce,  
Of every wight, my lowe confessioun' 528  
Accepteingré, and send meswich penaunce  
As liketh thee ; but from deséspaunce,  
That may my gost departe away fro thee,  
Thou be my sheld, for thy benigneté !

'For certés, Lord, so sore hath she me  
wounded,  
That stood in blak, with loking of her yen,  
That to myn hertés botme it is y-sounded,  
Thorugh which I wot that I mot nedés dyen.  
This is the worsté : I dar me not biwryen;  
And wel the hotter ben the gledés rede,  
That men hem wryen with asshen pale and  
dede.' 539

'With that he smot his hed a-doun anon,  
And gan to muttre, I n'ot what trewely;  
And I with that gan stille away to gon,  
And leet ther-of as no-thing wist had I,  
And com ayein a-non, and stood him by,  
And seyde, 'Awak, ye slepen al too longe!  
It semeth not that Lové doth you longe,

'That slepen so that no man may you  
wake !  
Who say everé or this so dul a man ?'  
'Ye, frend,' quod he, 'do ye your hedés  
ake

521. now, so J H<sub>4</sub> etc.; <sup>a</sup> R Cz. A omit.  
523. routhe upon, J R Cl. routhe on; H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>2</sub>  
mercy on (cf).  
529. wryen; J H<sub>1</sub> wren.  
538. covers or this, G or this covers (and ? wove  
say or).

For love, and lat me liven as I can !” 590  
But though that he for was pale and wan,  
Yit made he tho as fresch a countenance  
As though he sholde have led the newe  
daunce !

‘This passed forth, til now this other day  
It fil that I com roming al allope  
Into his chaumbre, and fond how that he  
lay

Upon his bed. But man so soré grone  
Ne herde I never. And what that was  
his mone

Ne wiste I not ; for, as I was cominge,  
Al soodeynly he left his complaynyng ; 560

‘Of which I took som-what suspicioun ;  
And ner I com and fond he wepte sore ;  
And, God so wis be my savacioun,  
As nevere of thing hadde I norouthé more ;  
For neither with engine ne with no lore  
Unnethes mighte I fro the deth him kepe,  
That yit fele I myn herté for him wepe.

‘And God wot, neveré sith that I was born  
Was I so besy no man for to preche, 569  
Ne neveré was to wight so depe y-sworn,  
Or he me tolde who mighté ben his leche !  
But now to you rehersen al his speche,  
Or alle his woful wordés for to souné,  
Ne bid me naught, but ye wol see me  
swoune !

‘But for to save his lif, and ellés nought,  
And to non harm of you, thus am I driven.  
And for the love of God that us hath  
wrought,  
Swich chere him doth, that he and I may  
liven !

Now have I plat to you myn herté shriven ;  
And sith ye wot that myn entente is clene,  
Tak hede ther-of, for I non yvel mene. 581

‘And right good thrift, I preye to God,  
have ye,  
That Hayeswich oony-caught withouté net !  
And, be ye wis as ye be fair to see,

590. we, J G love.

598. nevere sith that, J R that nevere sith.

599. shriven, J P I-shriven.

Wel in the ring than is the ruby set !  
Ther weré neveré two so wel y-met !  
When ye ben his al hool as he is youre,  
Ther mighty God yit graunte us see that  
houre !” — 588

‘Nay, therof spak I not, aha !’ quod she,  
‘As help me God, ye shenden every del !’  
‘A ! mercy, deré nece !’ anon quod he,  
‘What-so I spak, I menté not but wel,  
By Mars, the God that helméd is of stel !  
Now beth not wroth, my blood, my nece  
dere !’

‘Now wel !’ quod she, ‘foryeven be it  
here !’

With this he took his leve and hom he  
wente ;

And, Lord, so he was glad and wel bigon !  
Criseyde aros, no lenger she ne stente,  
But streight into her closet wente anon, 599  
And sette her down as stille as any ston,  
And every word gan up and down to winde  
That he had seyd, as it com her to minde ;

And was somdel astonéd in her thought  
Right for the newé cas. But whan that she  
Was ful aviséd, tho fond she right nought  
Of peril, why she oughte aferéd be ;  
For man may love, of possibilité,  
A womman, so his herté may to-breste,  
And she not love ayein, but-if her leste.

But as she sat allone and thoughté thus,  
Ascry aros at scarmuch al withoute, 611  
And men cri’de in the strete, ‘See, Troilus  
Hath right now put to flight the Grekes  
route !’

With that gan al her meyné for to shoute,  
‘A ! Go we see ! Caste up the latis wide !  
For thorugh this strete he mot to paleys ride ;

588. yit graunte us see, so G H<sub>2</sub> R, etc. ; J Cp. graunte us see ; a<sup>3</sup> us graunte to see.

591. A, y<sup>o</sup> O.

597. And, a<sup>4</sup> Ye ; R Cx. H<sub>2</sub> A.

597. so, a<sup>3</sup> y<sup>o</sup> omit ; G H<sub>2</sub> hom.

603. was, a<sup>3</sup> wez.

606. aferéd be, a R Cx. aferéd to be.

611. Ascry, H<sub>2</sub> G 7H ascry.

615. latis, so H<sub>2</sub> only ; P H<sub>2</sub> G Cx. natis ; J etc. ratis.

'For other wey is fro the yaté non  
Of Dardanus, ther open is the cheyne !'  
With that com he and al his folk anon  
An esy pas, riding in routés tweyne, 620  
Right as his happy day was, soth to seyne,  
For-which, men seith, may not disturbed be  
That shal bitiden of necessité.

This Troilus sat on his bayé stede,  
Al arméd save his hed ful richely ;  
And wounded was his hors, and gan to  
blede,  
On which he rod a pas ful softly.  
But swich a knightly sighté trewely  
As was on him, was not withouten faille  
To loke on Mars, that God is of bataile !

So lik a man of armés and a knight 631  
He was to sen, fulfil'd of heigh prowessse ;  
For bothe he hadde a body and a might  
To don that thing, as well as hardinesse ;  
And ek to sen him in his gere him dresse,  
So fresch, so yong, so weldy seméd he,  
It was an hevene upon him for to see !

His helm to-hewén was in twenty places,  
That by a tissu heng his bak bihinde ;  
His sheld to-dasshé was with swerdes and  
maces, 640  
In which men mighté many an arwé finde  
That thirléd haddé horn and nerf and rinde ;  
And ay the peple cri'de, 'Here com'th  
our joye !  
And next his brother, holder up of Troye !'

For which he wex a litel red for shame,  
Whan he the peple upon him herdé cryen,  
That to beholde it was a noblé game,  
How sobrelithe he casté down his yén.  
Criseyde anon gan al his chere aspyen,  
And let so softe it in her herté sinke 650  
That to her-self she seyde, 'Who yaf me  
drinke ?'

627. *to*, J Cl. *to ther. fro, y to.*

628. *worthy*, so a y ; *β worthy.*

629. *overdun*, *α* H<sub>2</sub> *covered.*

632. *horn and*, *α* *both.*

635. *he the peple*, etc., *α* *he so herde the peple*  
*in him cryen.*

642. *down*, *α* R *adown.*

649. *Criseyde anon*, so *α* R ; rest *Criseyde,*  
*Criseyde.*

650. *it*, J H<sub>4</sub> Ad. C<sub>1</sub> omit.

For of hef owné thought she wex al red,  
Remembering her right thus, 'Lo, this is he  
Which that myn unclé swerth he mot be  
ded

But I on him have mercy and pité ;  
And with that puré thought for-shaméd, she  
Gan in her hed to pulle, and that as faste,  
Whil he and al the peple for-by paste ;

And gan to caste and rollen up and down  
Within her thought his excellent prowésse,  
And his estat, and also his renom, 661  
His wit, his shap, and ek his gentillesse ;  
But most her favour was, for his distresse  
Was al for her, and thoughte it was a routhe  
To slenswich oon, if that he menté trouthe.

Now mighté som envious janglé thus :  
'This was a sodein love ! How mighté  
it be,

That she so lightly lovéd Troilus  
Right for the firsté sighté ?'—Ye, pardé !  
Now, who-so seith so, mote he neveré the !  
For every thing a ginning hathit nedé 671  
Or al be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I seye not that she so sodeinly  
Yaf him her love, but that she gan encline  
To like him first ; and I have told you  
why ;

And after that, his manhod and his pine  
Made love within her herté for to mine :  
For-which by proces and by good servise  
He gat her love, and in no sodein wise.

And also blisful Venus, wel arrayed, 680  
Sat in her seventhé hous of hevené tho,  
Disposéd wel, and with aspectés payed,  
To helpen sely Troilus of his wo ;  
And, soth to seyn, she n'as not al a fo  
To Troilus in his nativité :  
God wot that wel the soner spedde he !

656. (f) MSS. var. ; *α* *And for that thought*  
*pure ashamed she* ; G J etc. *γ* *And with that*  
*thought (J word) for pure (α) ashamed she.*

670. *selth*, J H<sub>2</sub> *seide.*

670. *mote he nevere*, *α* *nevere mote he.*

671. *a*, G R *of.*

677. *within*, R Cx. *in.*

677. *herde*, so *α* Cx. H<sub>2</sub> S<sub>2</sub> D<sub>2</sub> ; R *hardardly* ;

rest omit.

679. *gat*, *α* *wan.*

Now lat us stinte of Troilus a throwe,  
That rideth forth; and let us torné faste  
Unto Criseyde, that heng her hed ful lowe,  
Ther-as she sat allone, and ganto caste 690  
Wher-on she wolde apoynte her at the laste,  
If it so were her em ne woldé cesse  
For Troilus upon her for to presse.

And, Lord! so she gan in her herte arguwe  
In this matere of which I have you told;  
And what to don best were, and what  
t' eschuwe,

That plited she ful ofte in many fold:  
Now was her herte warm, now was it cold;  
And what she thoughté som-what shal I  
write,  
As to myn auctour listeth for t' endite. 700

She thoughté first that Troilus' persóné  
She knew by sighte, and ek his gentillesse;  
And also thoughté, 'It were not to done  
To graunte him love;' yit for his worthi-  
nesse

It were honóur, with pley and with  
gladnesse,  
In honesté with swich a lord to dele,  
For myn estat, and also for his hele.

'Ek wel wot I my kingés sone is he,  
And sith he hath to see me swich delit,  
If I wolde outréliche his sighté fleé, 710  
Paraunter he mighte have me in despit,  
Thorough which I mighté stonde in worse  
plit:

Now were I wis, me haté to purchase  
Withouthéde, ther I may stonde in grace?

'In every thing I wot ther li'th mesure:  
For though a man forbedé dronkenesse,  
He naught forbet, that every créature  
Be drinkéles for alwey, as I gesse;  
Ek sith I wot for me is his distresse,

694. And, J H<sub>4</sub> A.

694. so, H<sub>4</sub> G how.

694. herte, so a<sup>4</sup> J R H<sub>5</sub> S<sub>2</sub> Dg.; rest thought.

694. f'eschuwe, so a<sup>4</sup> Cx. S<sub>2</sub> Dg.; rest eschue.

697. many, G H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>5</sub> S many a.

700. first, so a<sup>4</sup> J R; G H<sub>5</sub> ek this; Cx. H<sub>3</sub>

wot.

700. And also thoughté, etc., so H<sub>4</sub> J R; a<sup>4</sup>

and ayde thus, 'Al were it not, etc.; Cx. H<sub>3</sub>

'And thus she sayde, 'Al were it not, etc.

I oughté not for that thing him despise,  
If it be so, he men'th in goodé wise. 721

'And ek I knowe, of longé time agon,  
I his thewés goode, and that he is not nice.  
N'avauntour, seith men, certeyn, he is  
non;

Too wis is he to don so gret a vice;  
Ne als I n'il him neveré so cherice  
That he may make avaunt by justé cause;  
He shal me neveré binde in swich a clause.

'Now sette a cas, the hardest is, y-wis:  
Men mighten demen that he loveth me.  
What dishonour to myn estat is this? 731  
May ich him lette of that? Why may,  
pardé!

I knowe also, and alday here and see,  
Men loven wommen al biside hir leve;  
And whan hem list no moré, lat hem leve!

'Ek wot I wel he worthy is to have  
Of wommen in this world the thriftieste,  
As ferforth as she may her honour save;  
For out and out he is the worthieste, 739  
Save only Ector, which that is the beste;  
And yit his lif li'th al now in my cure!  
But swich is love, and ek myn aventure!

'Ne me to love, a wonder is it nought;  
For wel wot I myself, so God me spede,  
Al wolde I that no man wiste of my  
thought,

I am oon of the fairest out of drede  
And goodlieste, who-so taketh hede;

720. oughte, so J H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R; rest n'oughte.

721. If it be, so J H<sub>4</sub> R; rest Sith it is.

726. ale, J G H<sub>3</sub> also.

734-735. al biside, etc. a<sup>4</sup> (and Ad. altered) at  
this town aboute Be they the were! Why may,  
withouthen doute! (Boc.)

735. love, so J H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R Cx.; y bilew. (See L.  
686.)

736, 737. Ek wot I, etc., so J H<sub>4</sub> R; rest I  
thence ek how he able is for to have, Of al this  
noble town the thriftieste (p<sup>4</sup> insert the before  
noble).

738. As ferforth as she may, so J H<sub>4</sub> R; a<sup>4</sup>  
That womanman it, so she; Cx. H<sub>3</sub> y<sup>4</sup> To ben his  
love, so she.

741. li'th al now, so J; MSS. var. order.

745. no man, y<sup>4</sup> noon.

746. of, a<sup>4</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> y<sup>4</sup> omit (and? That I am  
oon the fairest).

746. out of, a<sup>4</sup> Cx. withouthen.



And so men seyn in al the town of Troye.  
What wonder is, though he of me have  
joye?

'I am myn owné womman, wel at ese,  
I thanke it God, as after myn estat, <sup>752</sup>  
Rightyong, and stonde untey'd in lusty lese,  
Withouten jalouslye or swich debat :  
Shal non housbóndé seyn to me "Chek-  
mat !"

For either they ben ful of jalouslye,  
Or maisterful, or loven novelrye.

'What shal I don? To what fyn live I  
thus?

Shal I not love, in cas if that me leste?  
What, pardé! I am not religious!  
And though that I myn herté sette at reste  
Upon this knight that is the worthieste, <sup>762</sup>  
And kepe alwey myn honour and myname,  
By allé right it may do me no shame!

But right as whan the sonnè shineth brighte  
In March that chaungeth ofté time his face,  
And that a cloude is put with wind to flighte,  
Which oversprat the sonne as for a space,  
A cloudy thought gan thorough her soulé  
pace,

That overspradde her brighté thoughtés  
alle,

So that for fere almost she gan to falle.

That thought was this: 'Allas! sith I am  
free, <sup>772</sup>

Sholde I now love, and putte in jupartye  
My sikernesse, and thralhen libérté?

Allas! how dorste I thenken that folýe?  
May I not wel in other folk aspye  
Hir dredful joye, hir cónstreynt, and hir  
payne?

Ther loveth non that she n'ath why to  
pleyne!

749. *is*, so J etc.; *a<sup>3</sup>* etc. *is it*; G *ist*.

751. *after*, J R *of*; Cx. *for*.

752. *if*, J *he*; *a<sup>3</sup>* omit.

759. *pardé*, J *y pardious*.

759. *not*, H<sub>3</sub> Cx. *no*.

761. *Upon this knight*, J *unwist of him*.

768. *soulé*, so J G *y*; *a<sup>3</sup>* R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *herle*.

775. *in*, J *by*.

777. *why*, so G Ad. only; J *wee* (1); rest *why*.  
(*Why*, meaning *why*, may be the correct reading.)

'For love is yit the mosté stormy lif,  
Right of himself, that everé was bigonne;  
For everé som mistrust or nicé strif <sup>780</sup>  
Ther is in love, som cloude is over that  
sonne;

Therto we wrecched wommen nothing  
conne

Whan us is wo, but wepe, and, sitte and  
thinke:

Our wreche is this, our owné wo to drinke.

'Also these wikked tongés ben so prest  
To speke us harm, ek men ben sountrewe,  
That, right anon as cesséd is hir lest,  
So cesseth love, and forth to love a-newe!  
But harm y-don is don, who-so it rewe!  
For though these men for love hem first to-  
rende, <sup>790</sup>

Ful sharp beginning breketh ofte at ende.

'How ofté time hath it y-knowén be,  
The tresoun that to wommen hath be do!  
To what fyn is swich love, I can not see,  
Or wher becom'th it whan it is a-go;  
Ther is no wight that wot, I trowé so,  
Wher it becom'th: lo, no wight on it  
sporneth:

That erst was no thing, into nought it  
torneth.

'How bisy, if I love, ek moste I be  
To plesen hem that jangle of love and  
demen, <sup>800</sup>  
And coye hem, that they seyn non harm of  
me;

For, though ther be no causé, yit hem semen  
Al be for harm that folk hir frendés quemen;  
And who may stoppen every wikked tonge,  
Or soun of bellés whil that they be ronge?

And after that her thought began to clere,  
And seyde, 'He which that nothing under-  
taketh,  
Nothing acheveth, be him loth or dere.'

781. *that*, G Cx. *the*.

783. *wefe* and *sitte*, *a<sup>3</sup>* Cx. *sitte (and) wefe*.

784. *to*, G R H<sub>3</sub> *we*.

790. *hath it y-knowen be*, so Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *y*; *a<sup>3</sup>* J R  
*may men rede and see*.

800. *demen*, so *a*; J and others *dyemen*.

802. *that*, *y* omit.

808. *acheweth*, *y* *acheweth*.

And with another thought her hertē  
quaketh;  
Than slepeth hope, and after drede  
awaketh;  
Nowhot, now cold; but thus betwixē tweye  
She rist her up, and wente her for to pleye.

A-down the stayre anon right tho she wente  
Into the gārdin, with her neces three;  
And upand down theymāden manya wente,  
Flexippe and she, Tarbe and Antigone,  
To pleyen, that it joyē was to see;  
And other of her wommen, a gret route,  
Her folwed in the gārdin al aboute.

This yerd was large, and railēd alle th'  
alēyes,  
And a hadwed wel with blosmy bowēs grene;  
Y-benched newe, and sonde dālle the weyes,  
In which she walketh arm in arm bitwene;  
Til at the laste Antigōnē the shene  
Gan on a Trojan lay to singen clere,  
That it an hevenē was her vois to here.

She seyde, 'O Love, to whom I have and  
shal

Ben humblē subgit, trewe in myn entente  
As I best can, to you, Lord, give ich al  
For everē mo myn hertēs lust to rente!  
For neverē yit thy gracē no wight sente  
So blisful cause as me, my lif to lede  
In allē joye and seurtē, out of drede.

'Ye, blisful God, han me so wel biset  
In love, y-wis, that al that bereth lif  
Imaginē ne coude how to be bet;  
For, Lord, withouten jalousye or strif,  
I lovē oon which is most ententif

812. *wente her, J G<sup>8</sup> wente.*

813. *A-down, J H<sub>4</sub> R And down.*

814. *the, J R her; a<sup>8</sup> a.*

815. *they, J<sup>8</sup> ther; H<sub>3</sub> the.*

816. *and she, J<sup>8</sup> she.*

817. *Blosmy, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> blosmed (see Rom. Raw, 108).*

818. *Y-benched, P R H<sub>4</sub> J<sup>8</sup> And benched.*

819. *lay, so a<sup>8</sup> J R; Cx. H<sub>3</sub> J<sup>8</sup> song.*

820. *J<sup>8</sup>, J Cx. and others The.*

821. *han, J Cx. hath.*

822. *al, H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> alle.*

823. *bereth, P H<sub>4</sub> R berryn.*

824. *or, J and.*

825. *which is most, so a<sup>8</sup> J H<sub>3</sub> Cx. D Cl; G R H<sub>3</sub> S<sub>3</sub> which that is most; H<sub>4</sub> A H<sub>1</sub> Cp which that most is.*

To serven wel, unwery or unfeyned,  
That everē was, and leest with harm dis-  
teyned.

'As he that is the welle of worthinesse,  
Of trouthe ground, mirour of goodlihed,  
Of wit Apollo, ston of sikernesne,  
Of vertu rote, of lust findere and hed,  
Thorough which is allē sorwē fto me ded,—  
Y-wis, I love him best, so doth he me:  
Now good thrift have he, wher-so that  
he be!

'Whom sholde I thanken but you, God  
of Love,  
Of al this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne?  
And thanked be ye, Lord, for that I love!  
This is the rightē lif that I am inne,  
To flemen allē maner vice and sinne!  
This doth me so to vertu for t' entende,  
That day by day I in my wil amende.

'And who-so seith that for to love is vice,  
Or thraldom, though he fele in it distresse,  
He outhir is enlous or right nice,  
Or is unmighty, for his shrewēdnesse,  
To love. Lo, swichē maner folk, I gesse,  
Defamen Love, as nothing of him knowe:  
They speken, but they bnten nevere his  
bowe!

'What! Is the sonnē wers of kindē right,  
Though that a man, for feblasse of his  
yēn,  
May not endure on it to see for bright?  
Or love the wers, though wrecches on it  
cryen?  
No wele is worth, that may no sorwē dryen;  
And for-thy, who that hath a hegl of verre,  
For cast of stonēs war him in the werre!

'But I with al myn herte and al my might,  
As I have seyde, wol love unto my laste  
My derē herte, and al myn ownē knight;  
In which myn hertē growēn is so faste,

840. *disteyned, so G R Cp. and others; J and others disteyned.*

841. *sikernesne, J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S H<sub>3</sub> Cl. sacromesne.*

850. *ye, a<sup>8</sup> J G<sup>8</sup> thou.*

851. *Lo, so J H<sub>4</sub> R; rest For.*

852. *For, so J H<sub>4</sub> R D; others Fro.*

And his in me, that it shal evere laste :  
 H. dredde I first to love him to biginne,  
 Now wot I wel ther is no peril inne !

And of her song right with that word she  
 stente ;

And therewithal, 'Now, nect,' quod  
 Criseyde,

'Who made this song now with so good  
 entente ?'

Antigoné answerde anon and seyde,  
 'Madame, y-wis, the goodlieste mayde  
 Of gret estat in al the toun of Troye, 882  
 And let her lif in most honour and joye.'

'For-sothe so it semeth by her song !'  
 Quod tho Criseyde, and gan ther-with to  
 site,

And seyde, 'Lord, is ther such blisse among  
 These lovers, as they conné faire endite ?'

'Ye, wis !' quod freshe Antigoné the white,  
 'For alle the folk that han or ben on-live  
 Ne conné wel the blisse of love-discrive.

'But wené ye that every wrecché wot 890  
 The parfit blisse of lové ? Nay, y-wis !  
 They wenen al be love, if oon be hot !  
 Do wey, do wey, they wot no thing of this !  
 Men mosten axe at seintés, if it is  
 Aught fair in havené, (why ? for they  
 can telle !)

And axen fendes if it be foul in helle.'

Criseyde therto no-thing her answerde,  
 But seyde, 'Y-wis, it wol be night as faste !'  
 But every word which that she of her herde,  
 She gan to prenten in her herte faste ; 900  
 And ay gan love her lassé for t' agaste

874. *dredde*, J etc. *dredde*.

876. *now with*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>5</sub> γ (exc. Cl.);  
 others *with*.

879. *answerde anon*, J *anon answerde*; G<sup>2</sup>  
 omit *anon*.

884. *sits* (J), all *sits*, *syhs*. (Skeat's emendation  
 is here adopted, to avoid the assonant rhyme.)

891. *Nay*, so a β; J γ *Why, nay*.

896. *axen*, J G<sup>2</sup> *axeth*.

898. *If it be*, so a β; J H<sub>5</sub> γ is it.

899. *therto no-thing her*, no a β (var. *ordex*, J  
*nothing therto her*); Cx. H<sub>5</sub> γ *unto that purpos*  
*singde* (S etc.).

902. *love*, J F omit; G *ache*.

Than it dide erst, and sinken in her herte,  
 That she wex somewhat able to converte.

The dayés honour, and the havenés ye,  
 The nightés fo, (al this clepe I the sonne)  
 Gan westren faste, and downward for to  
 wrye,

As he that hadde his dayés cours y-ronne;  
 And whit thingés gan to waxen donne  
 For lak of light, and sterrés for t' apere,  
 That she and alle her folk in wente i-fere.

So whan it likéd her to gon to reste, 911  
 And voided werén tho that voiden oughte,  
 She seyde that to slepen wel her leste :  
 Her womensone unto her bed her broughte.  
 Whan al was huth tho lay she stille and  
 thoughte

Of al this thing ; the maner and the wise  
 Reherse it nedeth nought, for ye ben wise !

A nightingale upon a cedré grene  
 Under the chambré wal ther-as she lay,  
 Ful loudé song ayein the moné shene, 920  
 Paraunter, in his briddés wise, a lay  
 Of lové which that made his herte gay ;  
 Him herkned she so longe in good entente,  
 That at the laste the dedé slep her hente.

And as she slep, anon right tho her mette  
 How that an egle, fetheréd whit as bon,  
 Under her brest his longé clawés sette,  
 And out her herte rente, and that anon,  
 And dide his herte into her brest to gon ;  
 Of which she nought agroos, ne no-thing  
 smerte ; 930  
 And forth he fleigh, with herte left for  
 herte.

Now lat her slepe, and we our talés holde  
 Of Troilus, that is to paleis riden

908. *gan to waxen*, so a β; Cx. H<sub>5</sub> γ *waxen*  
*dimme* and.

910. *in*, so J H<sub>5</sub> R H<sub>5</sub> γ; a<sup>2</sup> G Cx. *hem*.

912. *tho*, H<sub>4</sub> γ *they*.

914. *unto*, γ *til*.

922. *which that*, etc., no a β (a<sup>2</sup> *her for his*);

Cx. H<sub>5</sub> γ *that made her herte fresh and gay*.

923. *Him*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>5</sub>; a<sup>2</sup> *Her*; others *That*.

924. *That*, etc. *til*.

926. *rente*, H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>5</sub> γ *he rente*.

Fro th' ilkē scarmuch of the whiche I tolde,  
And in his chambrē sit and hath abiden,  
Til two or three of his messāges yeden  
For Pandarus, and soughten him so faste,  
Til they him founde and broughte him at  
the laste.

This Pandarus com leping in at ones, 939  
And seyde thus, 'Who hath ben wel y-bete  
To-day, with swerdēs and with slingē-  
stones,

But Troilus, that hath caught himan hete !'  
And gan to jape, and seyde, 'Lord, ye  
swete !

But ris and lat us soupe and go to reste !'  
And he answerde, 'Do we as thee leste !'

With al the hastē goodly that they mighte,  
Thespeddehem fro thesoper and to bedde;  
And every wight out at the dore him dighte,  
And wher him liste upon his wey him  
spedde:

But Troilus, that thoughte his hertē bledde  
For wo, til that he herde som tidinge, 951  
Heseyde, 'Frend, shal I now wepcorsinge?'

Quod Pandarus, 'Bestille, and lat meslepe,  
And don thy hood; thy nedēs spedde be !  
And chees if thou wolt daunce, or singe,  
or lepe !

At shortē wordēs, thou shalt truste in me !  
Sirē, my necē wol don wel by thee  
And love thee best, by God and by my  
trouthe, 958

But lak of pūrsuē make it in thy slouthel !

'For thus ferforth have I thy werk bigonne  
Ero day to day, til this day by the morwe  
Her love of frendship have I to thee wonne,

934. th' ilke (T), all the.

937. so, y. ful.

943. so, a<sup>3</sup> y. so ye.

945. answerde, H<sub>2</sub> y<sup>2</sup> answerde him.

947. and to, so J H<sub>2</sub> G<sup>2</sup> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; a<sup>3</sup> to her;

y<sup>2</sup> om.

949. him spedde, y<sup>2</sup> he spedde.

950. that, y<sup>2</sup> om.

953. Be, so J R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; rest Ly.

955. daunce, or singe, so J D<sup>2</sup>; R daunce, singe;

H<sub>2</sub> G<sup>2</sup> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> singe, daunce; y<sup>2</sup> singe or daunce.

956. truste to, so J etc.; a<sup>3</sup> trust to; y<sup>2</sup> trust.

957. Sirē, Cx. And (read) And sir.

960. have I; J I have, I (t); H<sub>3</sub> y<sup>2</sup> I have.

And therto hath she leyde her feith to borwe:  
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorwe !'  
What sholde I lenger sermoun of it holde?  
As ye han herd bifore, al he him tolde.

But right as flourēs, thorough the cold of night  
Y-closēd, stouping on hir stalkēs lowe,  
Redressen hem ayein the sonnē bright, 969  
And spreden on hir kindē cours by rowe,  
Right so gan tho his yen up to throwe  
This Troilus, and seyde, 'O Venus dere,  
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here !

And to Pandarc he held up bothe his  
hondēs,

And seyde, 'Lord, al thyn be that I have !  
For I am hool: al brosten be my bondēs !  
A thousand Troyēs who-so that me yave,  
Ech after other, God so wis me save,  
Ne mightē me so gladen; lo, myn herte !  
It spredeth so for joye, it wol to-sterle !

'But, Lord, how shal I don ? How shal  
I liven ? 981

Whan shal I next my derē hertē see ?  
How shal this longē time away be driven,  
Til that thou be ayein at her fro me ?  
Thou mayst answerē, "Abid, abid !"

But he

That hangeth by the nekkē, soth to seyne,  
In gret discē abideth for the peyne !'

'Al esily, now, for the love of Marte !'

Quod Pandarus, 'for every thing hath  
time : 989

So longe abid, til that the night departe,  
For al so siker as thou li'st here by me,  
And God to-form, I wol be ther at prime;  
And for-thy, werk somewhat as I shal seye,  
Or on som other wight this chargē leye !

'For, pardē, God wot, I have everē yit  
Ben redy thee to serve; and to this night

963. therto, y<sup>2</sup> also.

965. lenger, J R long(e).

967. the, J a<sup>3</sup> H<sub>3</sub> omit.

967. of, G H<sub>3</sub> omit; D on.

968. stouping, so H<sub>4</sub>; a<sup>3</sup> stoupyng; J and others  
stoupen.

977. Troyes (Boc.), y<sup>2</sup> Troians.

978. so wis me, J R so wy soule.

Have I not feynéd, but emforth my wit  
Don al thy lust, and shal with al my might  
Do now as I shal seyn, and fare aright;  
And if thou n'ilt, wite al thy-self thy care!  
On me is nought along thyn yvel fare! 1008

'I wot wel that thou wiser art than I  
A thousand fold; but if I were as thou,  
God help me so, as I wolde outrély  
Right of mynowné hond write her right now  
A lettre, in which I wolde her tellen how  
I ferde amis, and her biseche of routhe:  
Now help thy-self, and leve it not for  
slouthe!

'And I my-self shal therewith to her gon;  
And, whan thou wost that I am, with her  
there, 1010  
Worth thou upon a courser right anon,  
Ye hardily, right in thy besté gere,  
And rid forth by the place, as nought ne  
were;

And thou shalt finde us, if I may, sittinge  
At som windowe, into the strete lokinge.

'And, if thee list, than maystow us saluwe;  
And upon me mak thou thy countenance;  
But by thy lif be war that thou eschuwe  
To tarien ought! God shilde us fro mis-  
chaunce!

Rid forth thy wey, and hold thy govern-  
aunce! 1020

And we shal speke of theesom what, I trowe,  
Whan thou art gon, to don thine erés glowe!

'Touching thy lettré, thou art wisy-nough:  
I wot thou n'ilt it dignéliche endite,  
As make it with these argumentés touch:

1009. *Right of*, J <sup>1</sup> *Of*.

1009. *right now*, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. *now*.

1008. *not for slouthes*, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *for no slouthes*.

1009. *shal*, <sup>1</sup> *wol*.

1010. *that*, so H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. <sup>1</sup> *rest omit*.

1011. *Worth thou*, so a<sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> *H<sub>3</sub> Love thou*; *rest Worth(e)*.

1017. *mak thou*, so H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> *H<sub>2</sub> R thou make*; *rest make*.

1018. *that thou*, Cx. H<sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> *and faste*.

1020. *dignéliche*, so a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> *J clerkisly*; Cx. *clerkly*; H<sub>4</sub> *clerkisly*; R *gapeky*; G<sup>2</sup> *dignéliche* *is mystéliche* (read? *degnéustiche*).

1025. *As*, a<sup>2</sup> Or; H<sub>4</sub> *As*; G *As to*.

Ne scrivenly ne craftily thou write;  
Behlotte it with thy terés ek a lite:  
And if thou write a goodly word al softe,  
Though it be good, reherce it not too ofte!

'For though the besté harpoun upon live  
Wolde on the besté sounéd joly harpe 1031  
That everé was, with alle his fingres five,  
Toucheay oo streng, or ay oo werblé harpe,  
Al were his nailés pointed neveres o sharpe,  
It sholdé maken every wight to dulle  
To here his glee, and of his strokés fulle.

'Ne jompre ek no discordaunt thing i-feré,  
As thus, to usen termés of phisik  
In lovés termés: hold of thy matére 1039  
The forme alwey, and do that it be lik:  
For, if a peyntour woldé peynte a pik  
With asses feet, and hede it as an ape,  
It cordeth nought; so n'ere it but a jape!

This counsell likéd wel to Troilus;  
But as a dredful lover seyde he this:  
'Allas! my deré brother Pandarus,  
I am ashaméd for to write, y-wis,  
Lest of myn innocence I seyde a-mis,  
Or that she n'olde it for despit receyve;  
Than were I ded, ther mighte it nothing  
weyve! 1050

To that Pandaré answerd, 'Yif thee lest,  
Do that I seye, and lat me therewith gon;  
For, by that Lord that forméd est and west,  
I hope of it to bringe answeré anon  
Right of her hond! And if that thou  
n'ilt non,

Lat ben! And sory mote he ben his live,  
Ayeins thy lust that helpeth thee to thrive!

Quod Troilus, 'Depardieux, I assente!  
Sith that thee list, I wol arise and write!

1026. *scrivenly*, so H<sub>3</sub> R Cx.; J H<sub>4</sub> *scriven-lysh(che)*; others *scrivenish*.

1026. *then*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub>; R omits; Cx. *it*; a<sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> *then it*.

1034. *All were*, so R only; *rest Were*.

1042. *hede*, J *hede*.

1044. *to*, J Cx. H<sub>3</sub> omits; <sup>1</sup> *unto*.

1045. *dredful*, J *dred*.

1045. *seyde he*, so H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup>; R *seyde*; J a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> <sup>1</sup> *he seyde*.

1055. *Right*, <sup>1</sup> *omit* (see l. 1002).

And blisful God preye ich with good  
entente, 1060  
The viage and the lettre I shal endite,  
Sospedeit! And thou, Minerva, the white,  
Yif thou me wit my lettré to devise!  
And sette him down and wrot right in this  
wise.

First, he gan her his right lady calle,  
His hertés lif, his lust, his sorwe leche,  
His blisse, and ek these othre termés allé  
That in swich cas ye-lovers allé seche;  
And in ful humble wise as in his speche  
He gan him recomaunde unto her grace:  
To telle al how, it axeth muchel space.

And after this ful lowly he her preye 1072  
To be not wroth, though he of his folýe  
So hardy was to her to write; and seyde  
That love it made, or ellés moste he dye;  
And pitously gan mercy for to crye;  
And after that he seyde, and leigh fulloude,  
Him-self was litel worth, and lesse he  
coude;

And that she sholde han his conning ex-  
cused,  
That litel was; and ek he dredde her so;  
And his unworthinesse he ay acused; 1081  
And after that than gan he telle his wo;  
But that was infinit for ay and o;  
And how he wolde in trouthe alwey him  
holde;  
And his adieux he made, and gan it folde.

And with his salté terés gan he bathe  
The ruby in his signet, and it sette  
Upon the wax deliverliche and rathe;

1060. *with, a<sup>3</sup> in.*  
1061. *he gan, a<sup>3</sup> gan he.*  
1068. *ye, so H<sub>4</sub> R G<sup>2</sup>: J the; a<sup>2</sup> y these.*  
1070. *And that she sholde, Cx. S And preye*  
*her; H<sub>3</sub> Besochynge her.*  
1073. *infinit, H<sub>3</sub> infynite (later); H<sub>4</sub> infenit;*  
*G infynod; H<sub>3</sub> infynith; P (later) J Cx. y*  
*endles.*  
1083. *for ay and o, so H<sub>3</sub> (later) H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> J R;*  
*P (later) Cx. y withouten he.*  
1084. *how, Cx. y seyde.*  
1085. *And his adieux he made, etc., so R, and*  
*a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> (adieu and omitting he); H<sub>4</sub> And thus an*  
*and made, etc.; J Cx. y And redde it over and*  
*gan the letters folde.*

Therwith a thousand times, or he lette,  
He kisté tho the lettré that he shette,  
And seyde, 'Lettre, a blisful destiné 1091  
Thee shapen is: my lady shal thee see!'

This Pandar up therwith, and that be-time  
On morwe, and to his necés palcis sterte,  
And seicd, 'Slepé ye, and it is prime?'  
And gan to jape, and seicd thus: 'Myn  
herte,

So fresch is it though lové do it smerte,  
I may not slepen nevere a Mayés morwe!  
I have a joly wo, a lusty sorwe!' 1099

Criseyde, whan that she her unclé herde,  
With dredful herte, and désirous to here  
The cause of his comíngé, thus answerde:  
'Now by your fcy, myn unclé,' quod she,  
'dere,

What maner wind gideth you hider here?  
Tel us your joly wo and your penaunce!  
How ferforth be ye put in lovés daunce?'

'By God,' quod he, 'I hoppe alwey  
behinde!'

And she to laughc, as though her herté brest.  
Quod Pandarus, 'Loke alwey that ye finde  
Game in myn hood! But herkneþ if you  
lest.— 1110

Ther is right now come into touné a gest,  
A Grek espye, and telleth newé thingés,  
For-which come I to tellé you tidínges.

'Into the gardin go w', and ye shal here  
Al privily of this a long sermoun.—  
With that they wenten arm in arm i-feré  
Into the gardin fro the chaumbré down;

1091. *Lettre, G omits; J R I wis.*  
1093. *up therwith, Cx. y took the lettre.*  
1095. *Cx. y read: And faste he swor that it*  
*was passed prime.*  
1097. *is it, J Cx. y it is.*  
1097. *though love do it, Cx. y although it sorw.*  
1104. *wind, so a<sup>2</sup> R Cx.; others winde.*  
1104. *you hider, so a<sup>2</sup> only; others you, now,*  
*now you, you now.*  
1108. *as though, so a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> R S; H<sub>4</sub> G and*  
*thought; Cx. D hir thought; J Ad. y<sup>2</sup> it*  
*thought; S<sub>2</sub> Dg. yet if.*  
1109. *alwey that ye, so J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>3</sub> S; G*  
*R that ye alwey; a<sup>2</sup> y alwey ye.*  
1113. *For-which, J H<sub>4</sub> For-why; R for-*  
*thy.*  
1113. *come I, Cx. a<sup>2</sup> I come.*  
1113. *tidínges, R y<sup>2</sup> news tidínges.*

And whan that he so fer was, that the soun  
Of that he spak ther no man heren mighte,  
Heseide her thus, and out the lettré plighte:

'Lo, he that is al hoolly yourés free 1127  
Him recomaundeth lowly to your grace,  
And sent to you this lettré heré by me:  
Aviseth you on it whan ye han space,  
And of som goodly answer you purchace,  
Or, help me God so, pleylnly for to seyne,  
He may not longé liven for the payne!'—

Ful dredfully tho gan she stonden stille,  
And took it nought, but al her humblé chere  
Gan for to change; and seide, 'Scrit ne  
bille, 1130

For love of God, that toucheth swich matére  
Ne bring me non; and also, unclé dere,  
To myn estat have more reward, I preye,  
Than to his lust! What sholde I moré  
seye?

'And loketh now if this be resonable,  
And letteth not for favour ne for slouthé  
To seyn a soth! Now were it covenable  
To myn estat, by God and by your trouthe,  
To taken it, or to han of him routhe,  
In harming of my-self, or in repreve? 1140  
Ber it ayein, for Him that ye on leve!'—

'This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,  
And seide, 'Now is this the mosté wonder  
That evere I say! Lat be this nicé fare!  
To dethe mote I smiten be with thonder,  
If, for the cité which that stondest yonder,  
To you a lettré wolde I bringe or take,  
To harm of you! What list you thus to  
make? 1148

'But thus ye faren wel nigh alle and some,  
That he that most desireth you to serve,  
Of him ye recché leest wher he bicomé,

1150. *Of that he spak, a<sup>2</sup> Of his wordes. ther,*  
so J S only; H<sub>2</sub> D Cp. etc. *spak* (for *spak*).  
1151. *heren, R. his heren.*

1152. *writ to you, so a<sup>2</sup> only; J etc. sent to you;*  
*others sent you.*

1153. *of, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> omit.*

1154. *Scrit, J Cx. Script.*

1155. *myne, y greetest.*

1156. *to, G. y to.*

And whether that he live or ellés sterve!  
But, for al that that evere I may deserve,  
Refuse it not!' quod he, and hente her  
faste,

And in her bosom down the lettré thraste,

And seide her, 'Cast it now away anon,  
That folk may sen and gauren on us  
tweye!'

Quod she, 'I can abide til they be gon!'  
And gan to smile, and seide him, 'Em,  
I preye 1159

Swich answer as you list your-self purveye;  
For trewely I n'il no lettré write!'—  
'No? than wol I, quod he, 'so ye endite!'

Therwith she lough, and seide, 'Go we  
dine!'

And he gan at him-self to japé faste,  
And seide, 'Nece, I have so gret a pine  
For love, that everich other day I faste!'  
And gan his besté japés forth to caste,  
And made her so to laughe at his folyé,  
That she for laughter wendé for to dye.

And whan that she was comén into halle,  
'Now em,' quod she, 'we wol go dine  
anon!'

And gan some of her wommen for to calle  
And streight into her chaumbré gan she  
gon;

But of her bisinessé this was oon  
Amongés othr thingés, out of drede,  
Ful privly this lettré for to rede.

Avised word by word in every line,  
And fond no lak, she thoughte he coude  
good,

And up it putte, and wente her in to dine;  
But Pandarus, that in a study stood, 1180  
Or he was war, she took him by the hood,

1153. *down the lettre, etc., H<sub>4</sub> R Cx., and J S*  
*(he thraste), and a<sup>2</sup> (caste); G<sup>2</sup> y the lettre down*  
*he thraste (Dy. caste).*

1156. *Cast it now, a<sup>2</sup> S; J Cast it; R Cast i-*  
*not; Cx. Cast it faste; y Now cast it.*

1164. *he, J R Pandarus; G Pandarus. R at*  
*himself gan take faste.*

1172. *for to, so J G; a<sup>2</sup> Cx. omit; H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>2</sub> in*  
*to; R gan she; y to her.*

1174. *bisiness. Cp. business.*

1181. *him, D y omit; R the.*

And seide, 'Ye were caught or that ye wiste!'

'I vouché sauf!' quod he, 'Do what you liste!'

Tho weashen they, and sette hem doun, and ete;

And after noon ful sleighly Pandarus Gan drawe him to the window next the strete,

And seide, 'Necé, who hath arayed thus The yonder hous that stant afor-yein us?' 'Which hous?' quod she, and com for to biholde,

And knew it wel, and whos it was him tolde;

And fillen forth in speche of thinges smale, And seten in the window bothé tweye. When Pandarus saw time unto his tale, And say wel that hir folk were alle awaye, 'Now, necé myn, tel on!' quod he, 'I seye, How liketh you the lettré that he wrot? Can he theron? For by my trouthe I n'ot!'

Therwith al rosy hewed tho wex she, And gan to humme, and seide, 'So I trowe!'

'Aquite him wel, for Goddés love!' quod he,

'My-self to-médés wol the lettré sowe!' And held his hondés up, and fel on knowe; 'Now, goodé Necé, be it nevere so lite, Yif me the labour it to sowe and plite.'

'Ye, for I can so writé,' quod she tho, 'Andeek I n'ot what that I sholde him seye.' 'Nay, necé,' quod Pandaré, 'sey not so! Yit at the lesté thanketh him, I preye, Of his good-wil, and doth him not to deye! Now, for the love of me, my necé deré, Refuseth not at this time my preyére!'

'Depardieux,' quod she, 'God leve al be wel!

God help me so, this is the firsté lettre That evere I wrot, ye, al or any del!— And int' a closet for t' avise her bettre She went allone, and gan her herte unfettere Out of Disceynés prison but a lite, And sette her doun, and gan a lettré write;

Of which to telle in short is myn entente Th' effect, as fer as I can understonde.— She thankéd him of al that he wel mente Towárdés her, but holden him in honde She n'oldé nought, ne make her selven bonde

In love; but as his suster him to plesce She wolde ay fain, to don his herte an ese.

She shette it, and to Pandar in gan gon Ther-as he sat and lokéd into strete, And doun she sette her by him, on a ston Of jaspre, upon a quissish gold y-bete, And seide, 'As wisly help me God thegrete, I neveré didé a thing with moré peyne Than written this, to which ye me constreyne!'

And took it him.—He thankéd her, and seide,

'God wot, of thing ful ofté loth bigonne Com'th endé good! And necé myn, Criseyde,

That ye to him of hard now ben y-wonne, Oughte he be glad, by God and yonder sonne,

For-why men seith, "Impressiounés lighte Ful lightly ben ay redy to the flighte."

'But ye han play'd the tirant ny too longe, And hard was it your herté to grave, Now stint, that ye no lenger on it honge, (Al woldé ye the forme of daunger save), But hasteth you to don him joyé have;

1189. com, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx.; others gan.

1193. wate, H<sub>4</sub> on to; J G<sup>3</sup> Cl to.

1195. seye, R preye.

1196. he wrot, so a<sup>3</sup>; others ye wrot(e).

1200. fel, y omit.

1202. Ye, for I can so writé, H<sub>4</sub> Ful feily can I write. (The meaning of the text is not evident.)

1206. that, so P R only.

1206. him, Cx. y<sup>3</sup> to him.

1209. and, J G<sup>3</sup> Cx. O.

1210. me, J G<sup>3</sup> god.

1211. time, J a<sup>3</sup> G th(e).

1215. int', a<sup>3</sup> in.

1217. Disceynes, a<sup>3</sup> Cx. disceynous.

1225. ay, y<sup>3</sup> omit.

1227. into strete, so J Cp.; Cl. into a strete; R to the strete; a<sup>3</sup> etc. into the strete.

1229. gold, P H<sub>4</sub> with gold; H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. of gold

1240. the, y omit.



For trusteth wel too longe y-don hardnesse  
Causeth despit ful oftē for distresse.'—

And right as they declamēd this matere,  
Lo, Troilus, right at the stretē ende,  
Com riding with his tenthē some i-fere  
Al softely, and thiderward gan bende 1250  
Ther-as they sete, as was his wey to wende  
To paleis-ward; and Pandar him espi'de,  
And seidē, 'Nece, y-see who com'th here  
ride!

'O flee not in (he seeth us, I suppose),  
Lest he maythinke that ye him eschuwe!  
'Nay, nay!' quod she, and wex as red as  
rose.

With that he gan her humblēly saluē  
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewēs  
muwe;

And up his look debónerly he caste,  
And bekkēd on Pandaré, and forth he paste.

God wot if he sat on his hors aight, 1261  
Or goodly was biseyn that ilkē day!  
God wot wher he was lik a manly knight!  
What sholde I drecche, or telle of his array?  
Criseyde, which that alle these thingēs say,  
To telle in short, her likēd al in-fere,  
His person, his array, his look, his chere,

His goodly maner, and his gentillesse  
So wel, that never sith that she was born  
Ne haddē she swichē routhe of his distresse;  
And, how-so she hath hard ben her-biforn,  
To God hope I she hath now caught a  
thorn, 1272  
She shal not pulle it out this nextē wike!  
God send mo swichē thornēs on to pike!

'Pandarē, which that stood her fastē by,  
Felter-iren hot, and he bigan to smite;  
And seidē, 'Nece, I preye you hertely,  
'Tel me that I shal axen you a lite:  
A womman that were of his deth to wite,

1247. *declamēd*, a<sup>3</sup> etc. *declared*.  
1253. *y-see*, J R ss; H<sub>4</sub> omits; G Cx. lo.  
1257. *humblēly*, a<sup>3</sup> y<sup>4</sup> *humblly* lo.  
1258. *muwe*, a<sup>3</sup> G etc. *newe*.  
1270. *swich*, R *swich a*.  
1272. *I, so R y<sup>4</sup> only*; rest omit. H<sub>5</sub> *Therow*  
*good hope*.

Withoute his gilt, but for her lak of routhe,  
Were it wel don?'—Quod she, 'Nay, by  
my trouthe!' 1281

'God help me so,' quod he, 'ye sey me  
soth!

Ye felen wel your-self that I not lye!  
Lo, yond he rit!'—'Ye,' quod she, 'so  
he doth.'—

'Wel,' quod Pandaré, 'as I have told you  
thrye,

Lat be your nicē shame and your folye,  
And spek with him in esing of his herte!  
Lat nicētē not do you bothē smerte!'

But theron was to heven and to done! 1289  
'Considerēd allē thing it may not be.—  
And why for speche?—And it were ek,  
too sone

To graunte him yit so gret a libertē.  
For plainly her entente, as seidē she,  
Was for to love him unwist, if she mighte,  
And guerdone him with no-thing but with  
sighte.

But Pandarus thoughte, 'It shal not be so;  
If that I may, this nice opinioun  
Shal not ben holden fully yerēs two!—  
What sholde I make of this a longsermoun?  
He moste assente on that conclusioun 1300  
As for the time; and when that it was  
eve,

And al was wel, he ros and took his leve.

And on his wey ful faste homward he  
spedde,  
And right for joye he felte his hertē daunce;  
And Troilus he fond allone a-bedde,  
That lay, as don these lovers, in a trauce  
Bi-twixen hope and derk desēperance;  
But Pandarus, right at his in-cominge,  
He song, as who seith, 'Somwhat I thee  
bringe!'

1280. *lak of*, y<sup>4</sup> *lakked*.  
1283. *not*, a<sup>3</sup> *ne*.  
1292. *speche*, y<sup>4</sup> *shams*.  
1292. *yt*, so J G<sup>2</sup> Cx.; rest omit.  
1306. *these*, y<sup>4</sup> *the*; G y<sup>4</sup>. (See L. 1268.)  
1309. *Somwhat I thee*, so R only; S<sub>1</sub> *Sum-*  
*ghat now I*; Th. *Lo, somewhat I*; rest *some-*  
*what I*.

And seyde, 'Who is in his bed so sone  
'Y-buried thus?'—'It am I, frend!' quod  
he. 1311

'Who? Troilus? Nay, help me so the  
mone,'

Quod Pandarus, 'thou shalt arise and see  
A charme that was right now sent to thee,  
The which can thee hele of thyn accesse  
So thou thy-self do forth thy bisnesse.'

'Ye, thorough the might of God!' quod  
Troilus.—

And Pandarus gan him the lettre take,  
And seide, 'Pardé, God hath holpen us!  
Have here a light, and look on al this  
blake!' 1320

Lord, ofte gan the herté glade and quake  
Of Troilus, whil that he gan it rede,  
So as the wordes yave him hope and drede.

But finally he took al for the beste  
That she him wrot; forsomwhat he beheld  
On which he thoughte he mighte his  
herté reste,

Al covered she the wordes under sheld.  
Thus to the more worthy part he held,  
That, what for hopeand Pandarus' biheste,  
His greté wo foryede he at the leste. 1330

But, as we may alday our-selven see,  
Thorough more wode or col, the more fir,  
Right so, encresseth hope, of what it be,  
Therwith ful ofte encresseth ek desir:  
Or, as an ook com'th of a litel spir,  
So thorough this lettre which that she him  
sente,  
Encressen gan desir, of which he brente.

Wherefore I seye alway that day and night  
This Troilus gan to desiren more  
Than he dide erst, thorough hope, and  
dide his might 1340

To pressen on, as by Pandarés lore,  
And writen to her of his sorwes sore:  
Fro day to day he let it not refreyde,  
That by Pandaré he somewhat wrot orseyde;

And dide also his othré observances  
That til a lover longeth in this cas;  
And, after-that his deestornéd on chaunces,  
So was he outhér glad or seide 'Allas!'  
And held, after his gestés, ay his pas;  
And after swiche answerés as he hadde,  
So were his dayés sory outhér gladdé. 1351

But to Pandaré alway was his recours;  
And pitously gan ay unto him pleyne,  
And him bisoughté reed or som socours;  
And Pandarus, that say his wode peyne,  
Wex wel ny ded for routhlé, soth to seyne,  
And bisily with al his herté caste  
Som of his wo to sleen, and that as faste;

And seyde, 'Lord, and frend, and brother  
dere, 1359

God wot that thy disese doth me wo!  
But, wilt thou stinten of this woful chere,  
And by my trouthe, or it be dayés two,  
And God to-forn, yit shal I shape it so  
That thou shalt come into a certein place,  
Ther-as thou mayst thy-self preye her of  
grace.

'And certainly, I n'ot if thou it wost,  
But tho that ben expert in love it seye,  
It is oon of the thingés fortheréth most,  
A man to have a leiser for to preye, 1369  
And siker place his wo for to biwreye;  
Foringood herte it mot som routheimpresee  
To here and see the giltles in distresse.

'Paraunter thenkestow "Though it be so  
That Kindé wolde hir don for to biginne

1341. Pandarés, J etc. Pandarus.

1344. he somewhat wrot, so R S only; J he som wrot; a<sup>b</sup> Cx. somewhat he wrot; y<sup>b</sup> he wrot somewhat.

1347. his, y<sup>b</sup> thise.

1353. ay unto, J Cx. S; H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> et cetera to; a<sup>b</sup> alway to; y<sup>b</sup> ay iil him to.

1354. or, a<sup>b</sup> R Cx.; J omits; y and.

1365. preye her, y her preye.

1374. wolde her don for, so J H<sub>4</sub> R and Cx. (omit her); others var.

1315. thes hele, so R only; others helen thee.

1316. So thou thy-self do forth, so R only;

J Cx. So that thou do forth(with); y If thou

is forthwith al.

1321. Lord, so a<sup>b</sup> J G<sup>3</sup>; R Cx. y But.

1323. and, a<sup>b</sup> y or.

1326. which he, J y which him.

1333. encresseth, so J G<sup>3</sup>; others encres of

read? encresse).

To han a maner routhe upon my wo,  
Seith Daunger, Nay, thou shalt me neveré  
winne !

So rewleth her her hertés gost withinne,  
That, though she bendé, yit she stant on  
rote :

What in effect is this unto my bote ?”

“Think her-ayeins, whan that the sturdy  
ook, 1380

On which men hakketh of, é for the nones,  
Receivéd hath the happy falling strook,  
The greté sweigh doth it come al at ones,  
As don these rokkés or these milné-stones;  
For swifter cours com’th thing that is of  
wighté,

“Whan it descendeth, than don thingés  
lighte.

“But reed that boweth down for every blast  
Ful lightly, cessé wind, it wol arise ;  
But so wil not an ook whan it is cast. —  
It nedeth me not longé thee forbiſe. 1390  
Men shal rejoysen of a gret emprise,  
Achevéd wel, and stant withouten doute,  
Al han men been the lenger ther-abouté.

“But, Troilus, now tel me, if thee lest,  
A thing which that I shal now axen thee :  
Which is thy brother that thoulovest beste,  
As in thy verray hertés priveté ?” 1397

“Y-wis, my brother Deiphebus, quod he. —  
Quod Pandarus, “Or hourés twyés twelve,  
He shal thee ese, unwist of it him-selve.

“Now lat m’alone, and werken as I may !”  
Quod he ; and to Deiphébus wente he tho,  
Which hadde his lord and greté frend ben  
ay ;

Save Troilus no man he lovéd so.

To telle in short, withouten wordés mo,

1376. *Nay*, J. omits ; a<sup>3</sup> *than*.

1383. *doth*, J G<sup>3</sup> *makith*.

1385. *it*, G y *it to*.

1385. *crus*, a<sup>3</sup> G Cx. *fulle*.

1387. *But*, so a β ; H<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> ; y<sup>3</sup> *And* ; y<sup>3</sup> *For*.

1387. *for*, so J P H<sub>4</sub> y ; H<sub>2</sub> G Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *with* ; R. *for*.

1390. *longe thee*, y *thou longe to*.

1394. *now*, so β ; a<sup>3</sup> S A omit ; y yet (H<sub>1</sub> *that*).

1395. so J ; others var.

1399. *Quod Pandarus*, R Cr. y *Now quod Pandarus*.

Quod Pandarus, “I preye you that ye be  
Frend to a causé which that toucheth me.”

“Yis, pardé !” quod Deiphébus, “wel thou  
wost,

In al that evere I may, and God to-fore,  
Al n’ere it but for man I lové most, 1410  
My brother Troilus. But sey wherfore  
It is ; for sith the day that I was bore  
I n’as, ne neveré mo to ben I thinke,  
Aycins a thing that mighté thee for-thinke.”

Pandaré gan him thanke, and to him seydé,  
“Lo, sire, I have a lady in this toun,  
That is my nece, and calléd is Criseyde,  
Which some men wolden don oppressioun,  
And wrongfully han her possessioun ; 1419  
Wherfore I of your lordship you biseche  
To ben our frend, withouten moré speche.”

Deiphébus him answérde, “O, is not this  
That thou spek’st of to me thus strangely,  
Criséyda, my frend !” — He seidé, “Yis.”  
“Than nedeth,” quod Deiphébus, “hardly  
No more of this, for trusteth wel that I  
Wol ben her champion with spere and  
yerde :

I roughté not though alle her foes it herde.

“But tel me how—thou wost of this  
matére— 1420

It mighté best availen !” — “Now lat see !”  
Quod Pandarus, “If ye my lord so dere  
Wolden as now do this honour to me  
And preyén her to-morwé, lo, that she  
Come unto you her pleintés to devise,  
Her adversaries wolde of it agrise.

“And if I moré dorsté preye as now,  
And chargen you to han so gret travailé  
To han some of your brethren here with  
you

1418. *the*, P y *that*.

1423. *thus*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. Cl. so.

1426. *of this*, y *to speche*.

1429. *how thou*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> Ad. ; a<sup>3</sup> R Cx. *for thou* ; y *thou that*.

1429. *of*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. omit ; y *al*.

1430. *It*, H<sub>1</sub> omits ; Cx. ! ; y *How* !.

1430. *mighté*, R Cx. *mighté her*.

1433. *And*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> ; rest *To*.

1436. *preye*, Cx. y *preye you*.

'hat mighten in her causé bet auaile, 1439  
'han wot I wel she mighté neveré faile  
'or to ben holpen, what at your instaunce,  
What with her othré frendés governaunce.'

Deiphébus, which that comen was of kinde  
'o alle honour and bounté to consente,  
inswerde, 'It shal bedon! And I can finde  
'it gretter help to this, in myn entente!  
What wiltow seyn, if for Eleyne I sente  
'o speke of this? I trowe it be the beste;  
'or she may leden Paris as her leste. 1449

Of Ector, which that is my lord, my brother,  
t nedeth nought to preye him frend to be;  
'or I have herd him, oo time and ek other,  
peke of Criseyde swich honour, that he  
say seyn no bet; swich hap to him hath  
she,

t nedeth nought his helpés moré crave:  
I shal be swich, right as we wol him have.

Spek thou thy-self also to Troilus  
In my bihalve, and prey him with us  
dine.'— 1458

Sire, al this shal be don! ' quod Pandarus;  
and took his leve, and neveré gan to fine,  
but to his neces hous, as streight as line,  
he com; and fond her fro the mete arise;  
and sette him down, and spak right in this  
wise.—

he seide, 'O verray God, so have I ronnc!  
'o, necé myn, see ye not how I swete?  
'not whe'r ye the moré thank me conne!  
he ye not war how falsé Poliphete  
's now about eft-sonés for to plete,  
and bringe on you advócacyés newe?'—  
I? No! ' quod she, and chaungéd al  
her hewe. 1470

What? Is he more abouté meto drecche  
and dome wrong? What shal I don, allas?

1439. *in*, Cx. omits; <sup>1439</sup> *to*.  
1449. *governance*, <sup>1449</sup> Cx. R. *sustenance*.  
1447. *for Eleyne*, so J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S Ad. Du.;  
*for Eleyne*.  
1455. *more*, so J G<sup>2</sup>; H<sub>4</sub> *more to* (<sup>1455</sup> *us more*  
*to in*); <sup>1455</sup> *for to*.  
1466. *wher*, P G<sup>2</sup> *wher*; J *whar*; others  
*whether*.

Yit of him-selven nothing wolde I recche,  
N'ere it for Antenor and Eneás,  
That ben his frendés in swich maner cas.  
But, for the love of God, myn tuncle dere,  
No fors of that, lat him have al i-fere!

'Withouten that, I have y-nough for us.'—  
'Nay,' quod l'andare, 'it shal no-thing be  
so;

For I have ben right now at Deiphébus,  
At Ector and mine othré lordés mo, 1481  
And shortly makéd ech of hem his fo;  
That by my thrift he shal it neveré winne,  
For aught he can, whan that so he biginne.'

And, as they casten what was best to done,  
Deiphébus, of his owné curtesye,  
Com her to preye, in his propre persóné,  
To holde him on the morwé companýe  
At diner, which she n'oldé not denye,  
But goodly gan to his preyére obeye. 1490  
He thankéd her, and wente upon his weye.

Whan this was don, this Pandar up anon,  
To telle in short, and forth he gan to wende  
To Troilus, as stille as any ston;  
And al this thing he tolde him word and  
ende,

And how that he Deiphébus gan to blende,  
And seide him, 'Now is time, if that thou  
conne,  
To bere thee wel tomorwe, and al is wonne.

'Now spek, now prey, now pitously com-  
pleyne!

Let not for nicé shame, or drede, or  
slouthe! 1500

Som time a man mot telle his owné peyne!  
Bileve it, and she shal han on thee routhe;  
Thou shalt be saved by thy feith in trouthe!  
But wel wot I that thou art now in drede,  
And what it is I leye I can a-rede!

'Thou thinkest now, "How sholde I don  
al this?

1473. *him-selven* (?), all *him-sel*/(e); J *him-sel*/  
*right*; G *himself* yit.

1473. *wolde*, Cp. H<sub>1</sub> *ne wolde*.

1482. *makéd*, so J Cp. etc.; others *mad(e)*.

1500. *Let*, <sup>1500</sup> *a* R Cx. *Leave*.

1504. *that*, so J G<sup>2</sup> S H<sub>3</sub>; rest omit.

1504. *in*, H<sub>4</sub> *a*; H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. *in a*.

For by my cherés mosten folk espye  
That for her love is that I fare amis ; 1508  
Yithadde I levere unwist for sorwédye. —  
Now think not so, for thou dost gret folýe ;  
For I right now have founden oo manére  
Of sleighte, for to coverén al thy chere.

‘Thou shalt gon over night, and that as  
blive,

Unto Deiphébus’ hous, as thee to pleye,  
Thy maladye away the bet to drive,  
For-why thou semest sik, soth for to seye.  
Sone after that, down in thy bed thee leye,  
And sey thou mayst no lenger up endure,  
And ly right there, and byd thyn aventure.

‘Sey that thy fevere is wont thee for to  
take 1500

The samé time, and lasten til a-morwe ;  
And lat see now how wel thou canst it  
make,

For, pardé, sik is he that is in sorwe !  
Go now, farwel ! and, Venus here to borwe,  
I hope, and thou this purpos holdé ferme,  
Thy gráce she shal fully ther conferme !’

\* Quod Troilus, ‘Y-wis, thou nedéles  
Counseilest me that siklich I me feyne,  
For I am sik in earnest doutéles, 1509  
So that wel nigh I stervé for the peyne !’  
Quod Pandarus, ‘Thou shalt the bettré  
pleyne,  
And hast the lassé nede to contrefete,  
For him men demen hot, that men seen  
swete !

‘Lo, hold thee at thy tristé clos, and I  
Shal wel the deer unto thy bowé drive !’  
Ther-with he took his leve al softely.  
And Troilus to paleis wenté blive,  
So glad ne was he never in al his live ;  
And to Pandarés reed gan al assente, 1539  
And to Deiphébus’ hous at night he wente.

1507. *cherés*, J *terus*; a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. *chere*.  
1513. *as blive*, so a<sup>2</sup> Cx. S; J etc. *bylyve*;  
others *blive*.  
1517. *Sone*, a<sup>2</sup> Cl. S; y And.  
1526. *fully ther*, J R *thou fully ther*; G Cx.  
*thou fully*. Cx. 1a and G *Thyn* for *Thy*.  
1532. *nede to*, H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> *nede*.  
1539. *Pandarés*, so H<sub>4</sub> G D; others *Pandarus*.

What nedeth you to tellen al the chere  
That Deiphebus unto his brother made,  
Or his accésse, or his sikly manére ;  
How men gan him with clothés for to lade  
Whan he was leyd ; and how men wolde  
him glade ?

But al for nought : he held forthay the wise  
That ye han herd Pandaré or this devise.

But certein is, or Troilus him leyde,  
Deiphébus had him preyed over night 1549  
To ben a frend and helping to Criseyde :  
God wot that he it graunted abon right,  
To ben her fullé frend with al his might :  
But swich a nedé was to preye him thenne,  
As for to bidde a wood man for to renne !

The morwen com, and neighen gan the time,  
Of mel-tid, that the fairé Queene Eleyne !  
Shoop her to ben an houre after the prime  
With Deiphebus, to whom shen’oldé feyne;  
But as his suster, homly, soth to seyne,  
She com to diner in her pleyne entente ;  
But God and Pandar wiste al what this  
mente. 1561

Com ek Criseyde, al innocent of this,  
Antigoné, her suster Tarbe also. —  
But fle we now prolixité best is,  
For love of God, and lat us fasté go  
Right to th’ effect, withouten talés mo  
Why al this folk assembled in this place :  
And lat us of hir saluings pace ! 1568

Gret honour dide hem Deiphebus certéne,  
And fedde hem wel withal that mighté like ;  
But everé-mo ‘Allas !’ was his reffréyne,  
‘My godé brother Troilus, the sike,  
Li’th yit !’ And therwithal he gan to sike,  
And after that he peynéd him to glade  
Hem as he mighte, and cheré good he made.

1543. *sikly*, J etc. *siklich(e)*.  
1549. *had him preyed*, J G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> *hadde (y) preyd*  
*him*.  
1550. *a frend*, J G<sup>2</sup> *good frend*; S<sub>1</sub> *good lord*.  
1551. *it*, J G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> omit.  
1553. *was*, so a<sup>2</sup> y<sup>2</sup>; J S<sub>1</sub> *was it*; Cx. Ad. Da  
*it was*; G *was for*; R *was that*.  
1557. *Shoop*, y<sup>2</sup> *Shap(e)*.  
1561. *al*, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. *non*.  
1562. *this*, a<sup>2</sup> *it*.  
1575. *he made*, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. G *hem made*.

Compleyned ek Eleyne of his siknése  
So feithfully, that pité was to here;  
And every wight gan waxen for accesse  
A leche anon, and seide, 'In this manére  
Men curen folk.'—'This charme I wol  
thee lere.'

But ther sat oon, al list her not to techen,  
That thoughté, 'Best coude I yit ben his  
leche!'

After compleynte, him gonnen they to  
preise,  
As folk dón yit, whan som wight hath  
bigonne

To preise a man, and up with pris him reise  
A thousand fold yit hyér than the sonne:  
'He is, he can, that fewé lordés conne!'  
And Pandarus, of that they wolde afferme,  
He nought forgat hir preising to conferme.

Herde alwey this Criseyde wel y-nough,  
And every word gan for to notifiye; 1591  
For which with sobré chere her herté lough;  
For who is it that n'olde her glorifye  
To mowén swich a kingly do live or dye?  
But al passe I, lest ye too longé dwelle,  
For for oo fyn is al that evere I telle.

The timé com fro diner for to rise;  
And as hem oughte arisen everychon,  
And gonne a while of this and that devise.  
But Pandarus brak al this speche anon,  
And seidé to Deiphébus, 'Wol ye gon,  
If it your willé be, as I you preyde, 1602  
To speke here of the nedés of Criseyde?'

Eleyne, which that by the hond her held,  
Took first the tale, and seidé, 'Go woblive!'  
And goodly on Criseyde she biheld,

1577. *that pite, J it pite; Th. that it pite; G<sup>2</sup> pite it.*

1585. *up, H<sub>4</sub> y<sup>2</sup> omit.*

1587. *he can, J Cx. that can.*

1590. *away this, Cx. at this; y<sup>2</sup> at this thing.*

1591. *for, J Cx. D Cl. omit.*

1593. *it that, so J G only; R Du. Dg. that that;*

*he that; rest that.*

1593. *n'olde, y ne wolde.*

1594. *do, J a<sup>2</sup> to.*

1596. *For for, so B y; a<sup>2</sup> For; J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> But for.*

1598. *arisen, a<sup>2</sup> Cx. they risen.*

1602. *If it, Cx. y<sup>2</sup> If.*

And seidé, 'Jové, lat him neveré thrive  
That doth you harm, and bring him sone  
of live!

And yeve me sorwé, but he shal it rewe  
If that I may, and allé folk be trewe! 1610

'Tel thou thy neces cas,' quod Deiphébus  
To Pandarus, 'for thou canst best it telle.'—  
'My lordés and my ladies, it stant thus:  
What sholde I lenger,' quod he, 'do you  
dwelle?'

He rong hem out a proce<sup>2</sup> lik a belle  
Upon her fo, that highté Poliphete,  
So héynous, that men mighte on it spete.

Answérde of this ech wers of hem than other,  
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,  
'An-hongéd be swich oon, were he my  
brother, 1620

And so he shal, for it ne may not varien!'  
What sholde I lenger in this talé tarien?  
Pleinlich, at onés, allé they her bigheten  
To ben her frend in al that evere they  
mighten.

Spak than Eleyne and seidé, 'Pandarus,  
Wot ought my lord my brother this matére,  
I mene Ector? Or wot it Troilus?'  
He seidé, 'Ye! But wol ye now me here?  
Me thinketh this, sith Troilus is here, 1629  
It weré good, if that ye wolde assente,  
She tolde her-self him al this, or she wente.

'For he wol have the more her grief at herte  
By causé, lo, that she a lady is,  
And, by your leve, I wol but in right sterte  
And do you wite, and that anon y-wis,  
If that he slepe, or wile ought here of this,  
And in he lep, and seide him in his ere,  
'God have thy soule! Y-brought have  
I thy bere!'

1616. *Upon, J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>2</sup> R Unto.*

1619. *gonnen, a<sup>2</sup> R Cx. gan.*

1621. *it, a<sup>2</sup> Cl. he.*

1623. *at ones alle, so a<sup>2</sup> only; rest all(e) at ones.*

1624. *frend, so B; a<sup>2</sup> S frondes; y<sup>2</sup> help(e).*

1629. *this, sith, so R Cx. H<sub>1</sub> etc.; a<sup>2</sup> sith that;*

*J Cx. Cl. etc. this, sith that.*

1630. *good, R right good.*

1634. *in right, so J G R etc.; H<sub>4</sub> Cx. in; a<sup>2</sup> Cl*

*etc. right in.*

1537. *lep, y lepton*

So smilen gan of this thp Troilus,  
 And Pandarus withouten rekeneþ 1640  
 Out wñte anon, 'Eleyne and Deiphebus,  
 And seide hem, 'So ther be no tarynge  
 Ne more prees, he wol wel that ye bringe  
 Criseyde anon, my lady, that is here,  
 And as he may endure he wol her here.

'But wel ye wot the chaumbré n'is but  
 lite.

And fewe folk may lightly make it warm.  
 Now loketh ye, for I wol han no wite  
 To bringe in prees that mighte don him  
 harm

Or him disesen, for my bettre arm!— 1650  
 Whe'r it be bet sh' abide til eft-sones:  
 Now loketh ye that knowen what to done  
 is.

'I seye for me; best is, as I can knowe,  
 That no wight in ne wendé but ye tweye,  
 But it were I; for I can in a throwe  
 Reherse her cas, unlik that she can seye;  
 And after this she may him onés preye  
 To ben good lord in short, and take her  
 leve; 1658  
 This may not muchel of his ese him reve.

'And ek, for she is straunge, he wol forbere  
 His esé, which that him thar not for you;  
 Ek oþer thing, that toucheth not to here,  
 He wol you telle—I wot it wel—right  
 now,  
 That secret is and for the tounés prow.  
 And they, that knowen no-thing of his  
 entente,  
 Withouten more to Troilus in wente.

1639. *gan of this*, so H<sub>4</sub> Cx. S; others *of this*  
*gan*.

1644. *anon*, so R Cx.; rest omit (γ *Criseyde*).

1645. *her here*, so R; H<sub>2</sub> Cx. *you here*; rest *here*  
 (γ etc. *endure*).

1646. *n'is*, J *my*; rest *is*.

1651. *abide*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> Cx.; others *bide*.

1654. *ye*, J *we*.

1658. *to here* = to her.

1659. *you*, so a<sup>3</sup> J etc.; H<sub>4</sub> R G it; γ *me*.

1665. *known no-thing*, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup>; *know no-*  
*thing*, R S; Ad. Du. *nothing knowe*; *nothing*  
*knowe*, a<sup>3</sup> Cx. γ.

1666. *his*, γ *this*.

1668. *wente*, so H<sub>4</sub> Cx. R; rest *they wente* (G  
 γ *wente*).

Eleyne in al her goodly softé wise  
 Gan him salue, and wommanly to pleye,  
 And seide, 'Y-wis, ye mote algate arise!  
 Now, fairé brother, be al hool, I preye!  
 And gan her arm right over his shulder  
 leye; 1671

And him with al her wit to réconforte,  
 As she best coudé, she gan him desporte.

So after this quod she, 'We you biseke,  
 My deré brother Deiphebus and I,  
 For love of God—and so doþh Pandar  
 eke—

To ben good lord and frend right hertely  
 Unto Criseyde, which that certainly 1678  
 Receiveth wrong, as wot wel here Pandaré,  
 That can her cas wel bet than I declare.'

This Pandarus gan newe his tonge affile,  
 And al her cas reherse, and that anon.  
 Whan it was seid, sone after in a while,  
 Quod Troilus, 'As sone as I may gon,  
 I wol right fayn with al my might ben  
 oon,

Have God my trouthe, her causé to  
 sustene.'

'Now good thrif have ye!' quod Eleyne  
 the Queene.

Quod Pandarus, 'And it your willé be,  
 That she may take her leve or that she  
 go—'

'O, ellés God forbedé,' tho quod he, 1690  
 'If that she vouché-sauf for to do so!'

And with that word quod Troilus, 'Yetwo,  
 Deiphébus and my suster, leef and dere,  
 To you have I to speke of oo matére,

'To ben avisé of your reed the bettre';  
 And fond as hap was at his beddés heed

1669. *algate*, γ *alweyes*.

1673. *him*, γ *him to*.

1674. *So*, Cx. *Sone*.

1687. *Now*, so S only. (See l. 847.)

1687. *Eleyne*, J *Elena*; H<sub>4</sub> *Helena*; R *Helena*  
*tho*.

1688. *And*, J G<sup>3</sup> S γ γ.

1690. O, a<sup>3</sup> GH, etc. Or; H<sub>4</sub> R omit; Cx. *Now*

1690. *tho*, a<sup>3</sup> Cx. etc. *it tho*.

1691. *tho*, J R γ; G<sup>3</sup> *thou*.

1693. *leef*, H<sub>4</sub> *leu*.

The copy of a tretis and a lettre  
That Ector hadde him sent, to axen reed  
If swich a man was worthy to ben deed,  
Wot I not who: but in a grislich wise  
He preyed hem anon on it avise. 1701

Deiphébus gan this lettre to unfold  
In earnest gret; so dide Eleyne the Queene;  
And roming outward, faste it gan biholde,  
Dounward a steire, and in an herber grene  
This ilke thing they redden hem bitwene;  
And largely the mountaunce of an houre  
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now lat hem rede, and torné we anon  
To Pandarus, that gan ful faste pryé 1710  
That al was wel; and out he gan to gon  
Into the greté chaumbre, and that in hye,  
And seide, 'God save al this companye!  
Com, necé myn, my lady Queene Eleyne  
Abideth you, and ek my lordés tweync.

'Ris, tak with you your nece Antigone  
Or whom you list,—or no fors, hardily:  
The lassé pres, the bet.—Com forth with  
me;

And loké that ye thonken humbly 1719  
Hem allé three; and whan ye may goodly  
Your tyme see, taketh of hem your leve,  
Lest we too longe his restés him bireve.'

Al innocent of Pandarus' entente,  
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Go we, uncle dere!  
And-arm in arm inward with him she wente,  
Aviséd wel her wordés and her chere;  
And Pandarus in earnestful manére 1727  
Seide, 'Allé folk, for Goddés love I preye,  
tinteth right here, and softly you pleye.

Aviséth you what folk ben here withinne,  
and in what plit oon is, God him amende!'

1699. was, J war; H<sub>4</sub> G were.

1701. anon on, Cx. bothe anon on; S bothe  
; J G<sup>3</sup> faste on.

1703. and in, so J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> R; Cx. and into; rest  
to.

1707. mountaunce, J etc. mountaunace.

1713. lordés, H<sub>4</sub> R ladies (!).

1729. you, J H<sub>4</sub> G Cx. ye.

And inward, thus: 'Ful softly biginne,  
Nece, I conjure; and heyly you defende,  
On His half which that soule us allénde,  
And in the vertu of corounés tweyne,  
Sle not this man, that hath for you this  
peyne!

'Fy on the devil! Think which oon he is,  
And in what plit he li'th! Com off anon!  
Thenk al swich taried tide, lost it is!  
That wol ye bothé seyn whan ye ben oon!  
Secoundely ther yit devineth non 1741  
Upon you two: com off now, if ye conne!  
Whil folk is blent, lo, al the time is wonne!

'In titeringe, in pursuit, and delays,  
The folk devine at wagging of a stre;  
That, though ye wolde han, after, merie  
dayes,

Than dar ye nought; and why? For  
she and she

Spakswich a word: thus looked he and he!  
Lest time I loste, I dar nought with you  
dele: 1749  
Com off therfore, and bringeth him to hele!'

But now to you, ye lovers that ben here,  
Was Troilus not in a cankerdort,  
That lay, and mighté whispring of hem  
here,

And thoughte, 'O Lord, right now  
renneth my sort,

Fully to deye, or han anon confort!'  
And was the firsté time he sholde her  
preye

Of love: Omighty God, what shal he seye?

1733. Nece, J H<sub>4</sub> G O nece.

1734. half which that, so Cx. S etc.; R H<sub>4</sub>  
behalf that; J H<sub>4</sub> etc. half that.

1735. in the, J H<sub>4</sub> etc. in.

1738. tide, lost it is, so a<sup>3</sup> and Cx. (omit it);  
J and others tide), but lost it (n)is.

1741. Secoundely, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. (And) sitherty.

1741. in, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx.; R and in; J G y and.

1744. That, y And.

1746. Lest, so H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> R; J etc. Las.

1750. cankerdort, so a<sup>3</sup> Cx.; J etc. cankerdort.

1756. And, H<sub>4</sub> And it.

1757. O, a<sup>3</sup> J A.



## BOOK III

O BLISFUL light, of which the bemésclere  
Adorneth al the thriddé hevené faire !  
O sonnés lief, O Jovés daughter dere,  
Plesaunce of love, O goodly debonaire,  
In gentil hertes ay redy to reparaire !  
O verray cause of hele and of gladnesse,  
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodnessse !

In hevene and helle, in erthe and salté see  
Is felt thy might ; if that I wel discerne,  
As man, brid, best, fissh, herbe, and grené  
tree 10

Thee fele in timés with vapour eterne,  
God loveth, and to lové wol not werne ;  
And in this world no livés créature,  
Withouten love, is worth, or may endure.

Ye Jovés first to th'ilke effectés glade,  
Thorough whiche that thingés liven alle  
and be,

Commoeveden, and amorous him made  
On mortal thing ; and as you list ay ye  
Yeve him in love ese or adversité, 19  
And in a thousand formés down him sente  
For love in erthe, and whom you list he  
hente.

Ye fiersé Mars apaisen of his ire,  
And as you list ye maken hertés digne ;  
Algatés, hem that ye wol sette a-fire,  
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne ;  
Ye don hem curteis ben, fresshe and  
benigne ;

And heighe or lowe, after a wight en-  
tendeth,

The joyés that he hath your might him  
sendeth.

Ye holden regne and hous in unité ;  
Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben also ;  
Ye knowe al th'ilké coveredé qualité 31

1. R. omits ll. 1-49. This apostrophe to Venus,  
as planet and goddess of love, is adapted by  
Chaucer from a speech of Troilus in *Illustratio*.

2. 47; <sup>2</sup> Cx. Hg omit.

3. <sup>2</sup> *him* (?) (Boc. <sup>2</sup> *all hem*).

4. <sup>2</sup> *him*, <sup>2</sup> Cx. <sup>2</sup> *him*; H<sub>2</sub> omits; Ph. *hys*;

Book II.

Of thingés which that folk on wondren  
so,  
When they can not construe how it may jo  
She loveth him, or why he loveth here,  
As why this fissh, and not that, com'th to  
were.

Ye folk a lawe han set in univiers ;  
And this knowe I by hem that lovers be,  
That who-so striveth with you hath the  
wers.

Now, lady bright, for thy benignité,  
At reverence of hem that serven thee, 40  
Whos clerk I am, so techeth me devise  
Some joye of that is felt in thy servise.

Ye in my naked herté sentément  
In-hielde, and do me shewe of thy sweet-  
nesse !—

Caliope, thy vois be now présent,  
For now is nede ! Sestow not my destresse,  
How I mot telle anon-right the gladnesse  
Of Troilus, to Venus herynge ?  
To which gladnesse, who nede hath, God  
him bringe !

—Lay al this mené whilé Troilus 50  
Recording his lessoun in this manere :  
'Ma fey !' thoughte he, 'thus wol I seye  
and thus ;

Thus wol I pleyne unto my lady dere ;  
That word is good, and this shal be my  
chere ;

This n'il I not foryeten in no wise.  
God leve him werken as he can devise !

And, Lord, so that his herté gan to quappe,  
Hering her come, and shorté for to sike  
And Pandarus, that ledde her by the  
lappe,

Com neer, and gan in at the curtein pike  
And seide, 'God do bote on allé sike ! 6  
See who is here you comen to visite !  
Lo, here is she that is your deth to wite !

49. *gladnesse*, <sup>2</sup> omits.

53. 548 J Hg *mynt*; R omits l. 53.

58. *shorte*, J H Cx. *see* (e).

Therwith it seméd as he wepte almost.  
 'Ha a!' quod Troilus so refully,  
 'Whe'r me be wo, O mighty God, thou  
 wost!

Who is al there? I see nought trewely.  
 'Sir,' quod Criseyde, 'it is Pandaré and I.'  
 'Ye, sweté herte? Allas, I may not rise  
 To knele and do you honour in som wise.'

And dresséd him upwárd; and she right  
 tho<sup>71</sup>  
 Gan bothe her handessofte upon him leye:  
 'O, for the love of God, do ye not so  
 To me!' quod she, 'ey! what is this to  
 seye?

'Sir, comen am I to you for causes tweye,—  
 'First, you to thanke, and of your lordship  
 eke  
 Continuanee I woldé you biseke.'

'His Troilus, that herde his lady preye  
 Of lordship him, wex neither quik ne ded,  
 He mighte a word for shamé to it seye, so  
 Although men sholdé smiten off his hed;  
 ut, Lord, so he wex sodeinliché red,  
 And sire, his lesson that he wendé konne  
 O preyén her was thourgh his wity-ronne.

Criseyde al this aspi'dé wel y-nough,  
 Or she was wis, and lovede him nevere the  
 lasse,

'Nere he malapert, or made it tough,  
 He was too bold to singe a fool a masse.  
 It whan his shátnégan somewhat to passe,  
 Is wordés, as I may my rimés holde, go  
 wol you telle, as techen bokés olde.

chaungéd vois right for his verray drede,  
 hich vois ek quook, and therto his manére  
 odly abayst, and now his hewés rede,  
 w pale, unto Criseyde, his lady dere,  
 th looké down-cast and humblé yolden  
 chère,—

<sup>1</sup> O mighty, J Ph. R. almighty.

<sup>2</sup> to it, J R. Cx. to him.

<sup>3</sup> words; <sup>4</sup> Cx. word had.

<sup>5</sup> was, <sup>6</sup> to.

<sup>7</sup> wit; <sup>8</sup> Cx. herte.

<sup>9</sup> words, so <sup>10</sup> J Cx. S; <sup>11</sup> G<sup>2</sup> R. workes; <sup>12</sup>

<sup>13</sup> wol you, Cp. H<sub>1</sub> Cl. how wol.

Lo, th' alderfirsté word that him asterte'  
 Was, twyès, 'Mercy, mercy, sweté herte!

And stinte a while; and, whan he mighte  
 out-bringe,<sup>99</sup>  
 The nexté word was, 'God wot, for I have,  
 As ferforthliche as I have had konninge,  
 Ben yourés al, God so my soulé save,  
 And shal til that I, woful wight, be grave!  
 And though I dar ne can unto you pleyne,  
 Y-wis I suffré not the lassé peyne.

'Thus muche as now, O wommanliché wif,  
 I may out-bringe; and if this you displese,  
 That shal I wreke upon myn owné lif  
 Right sone I trow, and do your herte an  
 ese,

If with my deth your wreththe I may  
 apesc.<sup>120</sup>

For, sithen ye han herd me somewhat seye,  
 Now recche I nevere howsoné that I deye.'

Therwith his manly sorwé to biholde  
 It mighte have maad an herte of stoon to  
 rewe;

And Pandar wex as he to water wolde,  
 And pokéd evere his necé newe and newe,  
 And seildé, 'Wo bigon ben hertés trewe!  
 For love of God, mak of this thing an  
 ende,

Or slec us bothe at-onés or ye wende!'

'Ey! what?' quod she, 'by God and by  
 my trouthe<sup>120</sup>

I n'ot not what ye wilné that I seye.'—

'"Ey! what?" quod he, 'that ye han  
 on him routhe,

For Goddés love; and doth him not to  
 deye.'—

'Now thanné thus,' quod she, 'I wolde  
 him preye

To tellé me the fyn of his entente;  
 Yit wiste I neveré wel what that he  
 mente.'

<sup>101</sup> ferforthliche, so a B S; <sup>102</sup> seithfully.

<sup>104</sup> I; <sup>105</sup> R Cx. H<sub>2</sub> I ne.

<sup>110</sup> wreththe, H<sub>2</sub> Cx. S <sup>111</sup> herte. I, all  
 except <sup>112</sup> G<sup>2</sup> S omit.

<sup>111</sup> For, <sup>112</sup> But.

<sup>119</sup> or ye, H<sub>2</sub> <sup>120</sup> or (or) that ye; H<sub>2</sub> J Cx. or  
 we.

What that I mene, O sweté herté dere?  
 Quod Troilus. 'O goodly fresshé free!  
 That with the stremes of your yen clere  
 Ye wolden frendly somtime on me see; 130  
 And thanne agreén that I may ben he,  
 Withouten braunche of vice in any wise,  
 In trouthe alwey to don you my servise

'As to my lady right and chief resort,  
 With al my wit and al my diligence;  
 And I to han, right as you list, confort,  
 Under your yerde, egal to myn offence,  
 As deth, if that I breké your defence;  
 And that youdeigné meso muche honoure,  
 Me to comanden aght in any houre; 140

'And I to ben your verray humble trewe,  
 Secret, and in my peynés pacient,  
 And everé mo desiren fresshly newe  
 To serve and ben y-like diligent,  
 And with good herte al hoolly your talent  
 Receiven wel, how soré that me smerte,—  
 Lo, this mene I, myn owné sweté herte.'

Quod Pandarus, 'Lo, here an hard  
 requeste,

And resonable a lady for to werne!  
 Now, necé myn, by natal Jovés feste, 150  
 Were I a god, ye shulden sterve as yerne,  
 That heren wel this man wol no thing  
 yerne

But your honour, and sen him almost  
 sterve,

And ben so loth to suffren him you serve!'

With that she gan her yen on him caste  
 Ful esly and ful debónerly,  
 Avising her, and hiede her not too faste  
 With nevere a word, but seide him  
 sobrelly,

'Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,  
 And in swich forme as he gan now devise,  
 Receiven him fully to my servise, 161

130. *frendly somtime*, H<sub>2</sub> y<sup>o</sup> *somtime frendly*.

136. *I*, y<sup>o</sup> omits.

139. *you*, so ed J G R S; read *ye*.

144. *y-like*, so ed Cx. H<sub>2</sub>: J and others *ay y-like*.

147. *hiede her*, so ed Cx; others omit *her*.

150. *werne*, y<sup>o</sup> *werne*.

156. *sterve*, y<sup>o</sup> *sterve*.

161. *he*, y<sup>o</sup> *he*; others *ye*.

'Biseching him, for Goddés love, that he  
 Wolde, in honour of trouthe and gentilesse,  
 As I wel mene, ek mené wel to me,  
 And myn honour with wit and bisnesse  
 Ay kepe; and if I may don him glad-  
 nesse

From hennésforth, ywis I n'il not feyne.—  
 Now beth al hool, no lenger that ye pleyne.

'But nathéles this warne I you,' quod she,  
 'A kingés sone although ye be y-wis, 170  
 Ye shal no more have sovereynété  
 Of me in love than right in that cas is;  
 N' I n'il forbere, if that ye don amis,  
 To wraththé you, and, whil that ye me  
 serve,

Cherice you right after ye deserve.

'And shortly, deré herte and al my knight,  
 Beth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse;  
 And I shal trewely with al my might  
 Your bittré tornen al into swetnesse;  
 If I be she that may do you gladnesse, 180  
 For every wo ye shal recovere a blisse.—  
 And him inarmés took, and gan him kisse

Fil Pandarus on knees, and up his yen  
 To hevené threw, and held his hondé  
 hye:

'Immortal God,' quod he, 'that mayst re-  
 dyen,

Cupide I mene, of this mayst glorifye;  
 And Venus, thou mayst maken melodye  
 Withouten hond, me semeth that in touné  
 For this miracle I here ech bellé soune!

'But ho! no more as now of this matere  
 For-why this folk wol comen up anon 190  
 That have the lettré red: lo! I hem here  
 But I conjuré thee Criseyde, and—oon  
 And two—thee Troilus, whan thou mayst  
 gon,

That at myn hous ye ben at myn warnyng  
 For I ful wel shal shapé your cominge;

'And eseth ther your hertés right y-nough  
 And lat see which of you shal bere the bol'

168. *lenger that ye*, so R Cx; J G y *long*.

170. *ye*, y<sup>o</sup> *ye*.

188. *in*, y<sup>o</sup> *in the*.

189. *miracle*, y<sup>o</sup> *miracilla*.

To speke of love !—and right therwith  
 he lough,—<sup>199</sup>  
 'For ther have ye a leiser for to telle.'—  
 Quod Troilus, 'How longe shal I dwelle  
 Or this be don ?' Quod he, 'Whan thok  
 mayst rise,  
 This thing shal be right as I thee devise.'

With that, Eleyne and also Deiphebus  
 Tho comen upward right at the stairés  
 ende ;

And Lord, so tho gan gronen Troilus,  
 His brother and his suster for to blende.  
 Quod Pandarus, 'It time is that we wende :  
 Tak, necé myn, your leve at allé thre,  
 And lat hem speke, and cometh forth  
 with me.'<sup>210</sup>

She took her leve at hem ful thriftily  
 As she wel coude ; and they her reverence  
 Unto the fullé didnen hardily,  
 And speken wonder wel in her absence  
 Of her, in preising of her excellence,  
 Her governaunce, her wit ; and her manére  
 Commendedden, it joyé was to here.

Now lat her wende unto her owné place,  
 And torné we to Troilus ayein,  
 That gan ful lightly of the lettré pace<sup>220</sup>  
 That Deiphebus had in the gardin seyn ;  
 And of Eleyne and him he woldé feyn  
 Delivered ben, and seidé that him leste  
 To slepe, and after-talés to han reste.

Eleyne him kiste and took her levé blive ;  
 Deiphebus ek ; and hom wente every  
 wight ;

And Pandarus, as faste as he may drive,  
 To Troilus tho com, as liné right ;  
 And on a paillet al that gladdé night  
 By Troilus he lay, with blisful chere,<sup>230</sup>  
 To tale, and wel was hem they were i-fere.

Whan every wight was voided butt they two,  
 And alle the dorés weren faste y-shette—

<sup>199.</sup> and right, J H<sub>1</sub> γ a-right.  
<sup>200.</sup> I thee, so R ; α Cx. I ; H<sub>4</sub> thet ; J G  
 how with ; H<sub>2</sub> I well ; γ I you.  
<sup>201.</sup> right as ; α Cx. H<sub>2</sub> at.  
<sup>202.</sup> the, H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> γ than(ne).  
<sup>203.</sup> blithe, H<sub>2</sub> γ merris.

To telle in short withouté wordés mo—  
 This Pandarus withouten any lette  
 Up-roos, and on his beddés side him sette,  
 And gan to speken in a sobré wise  
 To Troilus, as I shal you devise :<sup>238</sup>

'Myn alderlevest lord and brother dere,  
 God wot, and thou, that it eat me so sore  
 When I thee saw so languishing to-yere  
 For love, of which thy wo wex alwey more ;  
 That I with al my might and al my lore  
 Have everé sithen don my bisnesse  
 To bringé thee to joye out of distresse,

'And have it brought to swich plit as thou  
 wost,  
 So that thorough me thou stondest now  
 in weye

To faren wel : I scye it for no boost,  
 And wostow why ? For, shame it is to scye,  
 For thee have I bigonne a game pleye<sup>250</sup>  
 Which that I neveré don shal eft for other,  
 Although he were a thousand fold my  
 brother ;

'That is to seyn, for thee am I becomen,  
 Betwixen game and ernest, swich a mene  
 As maken women unto men to comen :  
 Thou wost thy-selven what I woldé mene.  
 For thee have I my nece, of vices cleene,  
 So fully maad thy gentileasé triste,<sup>258</sup>  
 That al shal ben right as thy-selven liste.

'But God that al wot take I to witnése,  
 That nevere I this for coveitise wroughte,  
 But only for t' abreggè that distresse  
 For which wel nigh thou deydest, as me  
 thoughte.

But, goodé brother, do now as thee oughte  
 For Goddés love, and keeper out of blame ;  
 Sith thou art wis, so save alwey her name.

'For wel thou wost the namé yit of here  
 Among the peple, as who seith, halwed is ;  
 For neveré was ther wight, I dar wel swere,

<sup>256.</sup> So α β ; γ *Alays I nought, thou wost wel  
 what I mene.*

<sup>257.</sup> so save, J G<sup>3</sup> so hope ; γ and save.

<sup>258.</sup> yet, γ as yet.

<sup>259.</sup> So J H<sub>4</sub> G<sup>3</sup> S Cx. ; α R γ *For that man  
 is unwere.*

That everè wistè that she dide amis. 270  
But wo is me, that I, that cause al this,  
May thenken that she is my necè dere,  
And I her em and trator ek i-fere!

'And were it wist that I thorough myn engyn  
Had in my nece y-put this fantasye  
To don thy lust and hoolly to ben thyn,  
Why, al the peplè wolde upon it crye  
And seyn that I the worstè trecherye  
Dide in this cas that everè was bigonne,  
And she fordon, and thou right naught  
y-wonne! 280

'Wherefor, or I wol further gon a pas,  
Thee preye ich eft, although thou  
shuldest deye,  
That priveté go with us in this cas:  
That is to seye, that thou us neverè wreye;  
And be not wroth though I thee oftè preye  
To holden secré swich an heigh matère,  
For skilful is, thou wost wel, my prayère.

'And thenk what wo ther hath betid or this  
For making of avauntés, as men rede,  
And what mischaunce in this world yit  
ther is, 290  
Fro day to day, right for that wikked dede;  
For-which thise wisè clerkés that ben dede  
Han everè thus proverbed to us yonge,  
"The firstè vertu is to kepè tonge."

'And n'ere it that I wilne as now abregge  
Defusioun of speche, I coude almost  
A thousand oldè stories thee alegge  
Of wommen lost thorough falsand folis bost.  
Proverbes can thyselvé y-noweand wost,  
Ayeins that vicé, for to ben a labbe 300  
Though men soth seide as often as they  
gabbe.

273. *trattor* (Y), H<sub>1</sub> *tractor*; J and others *traitour*, *traitour*, etc. (Boc. *traitator*).

277. *peple wolde upon it*, so a<sup>3</sup> J R Cx.; y *world upon it wolde*.

280. *fordon*, so a β; H<sub>4</sub> *forlorn*; G γ *forlost*.

282. So a β; G γ *Yei eft I thes bischope and fully seye*.

293. J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. *Han writte or this, as men gite luche us yonge*.

294. *The*, so a β R Cx.; *That the*, H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>5</sub> H<sub>6</sub>; rest *That*.

300. *Though men soth seide*, so a β; γ *Al seide* *men soth*.

'Oo tonge, allas, so often her-beforn  
Hath maad ful many a lady bright of hewe  
Seyn "weylawey the day that I was born!"  
And many a maydès sorwè for to newe;  
And for the morè part al is untrewé  
That men of-yelpe, and it were brought  
to preve:  
Of kindè non avauntour is to leve.

'Avauntour and a lier, al is on; 309  
As thus: I pose a womman graunteth me  
Her love, and seith that other wol she non,  
And I am sworn to holden it secré,  
And after I go telle it two or three;  
Y-wis, I am avauntour at the leste,  
And lier, for I breké my beheste.

'Now lokè than if they ben aught to blame!  
Such maner folk,—what shal I clepe  
hem, what?—  
That hem avaunte of wommen, and by  
name,  
That neverè yit behighte hem this ne  
that,  
Ne knewe hem morè than myn oldè hat!  
No wonder is, so god me sendè hele, 321  
Though wommen dreden with us men to  
dele!

'I seye not this for no mistrust of you,  
Ne for no wis-man, but for folès nice,  
And for the harm that in the world is now  
As wel for foly ofte as for mallice;  
For wel wot I in wisè folk that vice  
No womman drat, if she be wel avised;  
For wisè ben by folès harm chastised.

'But now to purpos. Levè brother dere,  
Have al this thing that I have seid in  
minde, 331  
And kepè thes clos, and be now of good  
chere,  
For at thy day thou shalt me trewè finde.  
I shal thy proces sette in swich a kinde,  
And God to-forñ; that it shal thee suffice,  
For it shal ben right as thou wolt devise.

309. *Oo*, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. *For* (so probably means *one*).

303. *Hath maad ful*, so a β; G γ *Hasten maad* (omit *ful*).

304. *Seyn*, so R Cx. H<sub>5</sub> S<sub>2</sub> Dg.; rest *Seyde*.

For wel I wot thou menest wel, pardé ;  
 Therefore I dar this fully undertake.  
 Thou wost ek what thy lady graunted thee,  
 And day is set the chartres up to make.  
 Have now good night, I may no longer  
 wake ;  
 And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,  
 That God me sende deth or soné lisse !'

Who mighte tellen half the joye or feste  
 Which that the soule of Troilus tho felte,  
 Fering th'effect of Pandarus' behesté ?  
 His oldé wo that made his herté swelte  
 Can tho for joyé wasten and to-melte ;  
 And al the richesse of his sikés sore  
 At-onés fiedde, he felte of hem no more.

But right so as thise holtés and thise hayis,  
 That han in winter dedé ben and dreye,  
 Revesten hem in grené whan that May is,  
 Whan every lusty listeth best to pleye,  
 Right in that selvé wisé, soth to seye,  
 Nex sodeinly his herté ful of joye,  
 That gladder was ther neveré man in Troye.

And gan his look on Pandarus up-caste  
 Ful sobrelly and frendly for to see,  
 And seide, 'Frend, in Aperil the laste, 360  
 As wel thou wost, if it remembre thee,  
 How neigh the deth for wo thou foundé  
 me,  
 And how thou didest al thy bisnesse  
 To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

Thou wost how longe ich it forbar to seye  
 To thee, that art the man that I best triste ;  
 And peril non was it to thee biwreye,  
 That wiste I wel : but tel me, if thee liste,  
 With I so loth was that thy-self it wiste,  
 How dorste I mo tellen of this matere, 370  
 That quaké now, and no wight may us  
 here ?

But natheles by that God I thee swere  
 Thatas him list may al this world govérne,  
 And if I lye, Achilles with his spere

354. *listeth*, so a B ; γ *liketh*.

355. *to*, R Cx. γ *for to*.

359. *for to*, so H Cx. *on(wa) to*.

371. *wight*, J R Cx. *man*.

Myn herté cleve, al were my lif eterne  
 As I am mortal, if I late or yerne  
 Wolde it biwreye, or dorste, or sholde  
 konne,  
 For al the good that God made under  
 sonne ;

'That rather dye I wolde, and détermine,  
 As thinketh me, now stokked in prisoun,  
 In wrecchednesse, in filthe, and in vermine,  
 Captif to cruel King Agámenoun :  
 And this in alle the temples of this toun  
 Upon the Goddés alle I wol thee swere  
 To-morwé day, if that it lik' th thee here.

'And that thou hast so muché y-don for me  
 That I ne may it neveré mo deserve,  
 This knowe I wel, al mighte I now for  
 thee  
 A thousand timés on a morwé sterve. 380  
 I can no more, but that I wol thee serve  
 Right as thy sclavé, whider so thou wende,  
 For everé-more unto my livés ende !

'But here with al myn herte I thee biseche  
 That nevere in me thou demé swich solýe  
 As I shalscyn : me thoughté by thy speche  
 That this which thou me dost for com-  
 panýe,  
 I sholdé wene it were a bauderye.  
 I am not wood, al if I lewéd be !  
 It is not oon, that wot I wel, pardé ! 390

'But he that go'th for gold or for richéne  
 On swich messagé, calle him as thee list ;  
 And this that thou dost, callé it gentileme,  
 Compassioun, and felawship, and trist.  
 Departe it so, for widé-wher is wist  
 How that ther is diversité required  
 Bitwixen thingés like, as I have lered.

'And that thou knowe I thenké not ne  
 wene  
 That this servise a shamé be or jape,  
 I have my fairé suster Polixene, 400  
 Cassandre, Eleyne, or any of the frapre :  
 Al be she nevere so faire or wel y-shape,

379. *That*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S *But*.

399. *own*, so J a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> ; *rest so*.

411. *Al*, so R ; *rest omit*.

Tellé me which thou wilt of everychone  
To han for thyñ, and lat me thanne allone !

‘But sith thou hast y-don me this servise  
My lif to save, and for non hope of mede,  
So, for the love of God, this grete emprise  
Parforme it out, for now is mosté nede ;  
For heigh and lowe, withouten any drede,  
I wol alwey thine hestés allé kepe :  
Have now good night, and lat us bothé  
slepe.’ 430

Thus held him ech of other wel apayed,  
That al the world ne mighte it betamende ;  
And on the morwé, whan they were arayed,  
Ech to his owné nedés gan entende.  
But Troilus, though as the fir he brende  
For sharp desir of hope and of plesauce,  
He not forgat his wisé governaunce,

But in himself with manhod gan restreyne  
Ech rakel dede and ech unbridled chere,  
That allé tho that livén, soth to seyne, 430  
Ne sholde han wist by word or by manére  
What that he mente, as touching this  
matére :  
From every wight as fer as is the cloude  
He was, so wel dissimulen he coude.

And al this whilé that I you devise,  
As his lif : with al his fullé might  
He was in Martés heigh servise,  
As he is so seyn, in armés as a knight ;  
And for the more part the longé night 439  
He lay and thoughté how he mighté serve  
His lady best, her thonk for to deserve.

I n’il not seyn that, though he lay ful softe,  
That in his thought he n’as somwhat  
diseed,  
Ne that he tornéd on his pilwes ofte,  
And wolde of that he missed han ben esed ;  
But in swich casmen ben notalwey plesed,

428. *not* ; y omits.

427. *wis*, so a β ; γ *gode*.

433. *From every wight*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> *From ech in that*.

435. *this*, γ *the*.

439. *more*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> R Cx. *more*.

442. So J H<sub>4</sub> R S ; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ N!! *I not swere*  
*through*.

442. *ful*, so H<sub>4</sub> R ; *rent* omit.

445. *and*, a<sup>3</sup> R γ *and*.

For aught I wot, no more than was he :  
That can I deme of possibilité.

But certain is, to purpos for to go, 449  
This mené while, as writen is in geste,  
He saw his lady som-time ; and also  
She with him spak whan that she durste  
and leste ;  
And by hir bothe avis, as was the beste,  
Apointeden ful warly in this nede  
In every thing how they wolden procede.

But it was spoken in so short a wise,  
In swich await alwey, and in swich fere,  
Lest any wight devinen or devise  
Wolde on this thing, or to it leye an ere,  
That al this world so lief to hem ne were  
As Cupido wolde hem a spacé sende 461  
To maken of hir speche aright an ende.

But th’ilkélitel that theyspake or wroughte  
His wisé gost took ay of al swich hede,  
It seméd her he wisté what she thoughte  
Withouten word, so that it was no nede  
To bidde him aught to don, or aught  
forbode :  
For which her thoughte that love,  
come it late,  
Of allé joye had opned her the yate.

And, shortly of this proces for to pace, 470  
So wel his werk and wordés he bisette,  
That he so ful stood in his lady grace  
That twenty thousand times or she lette  
She thonked God she everé with him  
mette,  
So coude he him góverne in swich servise  
That al the world ne mighte it bet devise.

For-why she fond him so discret in al,  
So secret, and of swich obéissance,  
That wel she felte he was to her a wal

450. *This mené while* ; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ *That in this*  
*while*.

452. *and*, J and others or.

455. *In every thing*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ S  
*as they durste*.

459. *on this thing*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R S ; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> *in this*  
*speche* ; γ of *hem two*.

461. *As*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ *As that*.

461. *space*, so J a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> H<sub>4</sub> ; R γ *prince*.

468. *her*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ *she*.

Of steel, ~~and~~ <sup>from</sup> every displeaunce,  
That to ben in his godé governaunce, 481  
So wis he was, she was no more afered,—  
I mene, as fer as oughte ben requered.

And Pandarus, to quike alwey this fir,  
Was evere y-like prest and diligent;  
To ese his frend was set al his desir;  
He shof ay on; he to and fro was sent;  
He lettres bar whan Troilus was absént;  
That neveré wight as in his frendes nede  
Ne bar him bet to don his frend to spede.

But now paraunter som man waiten wolde  
That every word or look, or sonde or chere  
Of Troilus that I rehersen sholde 493  
In al this while unto his lady dere;  
I trowe it were a long thing for to here,  
Orof what wight that stant in swich disjoint  
His wordes alle or every look to-point!

For-sothe I have not herd it don or this  
In storie non, ne no man here I wene!  
And though I wolde, I coude not y-wis;  
For ther was some epistel hem bitwene  
That wolde, as seith myn auctour, wel  
contene 500  
An hondred vers, of which him list not  
write;  
How sholde I than a line of it endite?

But to the grete effect. Than seye I thus,  
That—standing in concord and in quieté  
Thise ilk two, Criseyde and Troilus,  
As I have seid, and in this timé swete,  
Save only ofté mighté they not mete,  
Ne leiser han hir speché to fulfelle, 510  
That it bifel right as I shal you telle,

That Pandar, which that alwey dide his  
might

Right for the brin that I shal speke of here,  
As for to bringen to his hous som night  
His fairé nece and Troilus i-fere,  
Wher-as at leiser al this heighe matére

484. *this*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *the*.

490. *to don his frend to spede*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.;  
others *than he withouten drede*.

500. *An hondred vers*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; others  
*neigh half this book*.

508. *only*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. γ others *told*.

Touching hir love were at the fulle up  
bounde,  
Had, as him thoughte, a timé it founde.

For he with grt deliberacioun 519  
Had every thing that ther-to mighte availe  
Forcast and put in execucioun,  
And neither left for cost ne for traveille.  
Come if hem list, hem sholdé no thing  
faile;

And for to ben in aught aspyed there,  
That wiste he wel an impossible were.

And dredles it cler was in the wind  
Of every pye, of every letté-game.  
Thus al is wel; for al this world is blind  
In this matéré, bothé wilde and tame!  
This timber is al redy up to frame: 530  
Us lakketh naught, but that we witen wolde  
A certein houre in which she comen sholde!

And Troilus, that al this púrveyaunce  
Knew at the fulle and waited on it ay,  
Had her-upon ek maad his ordinaunce,  
And founde his cause and ther-to al th'aray,  
That if that he were misséd night or day  
Ther-whil he was abouté this servise,  
That he was gon to don his sacrificé,

And moste at swich a temple alloné walken  
Answéred of Apollo for to be,  
And first to sen the holy laurer  
Or that Apollo spake out of the tre,  
To telle him whan the Grekes sholden  
fleé,—

And for-thy lette him no man, God forbede,  
But preye Apollo that he wolde him spede!

Now is ther litel moré for to done;  
But Pandar up, and (shortly for to seyne)

518. *as him thoughte*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S; others  
*out of doute*.

526. *And*, so Cx. S H<sub>2</sub>; rest omit.

529. *wilde*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S H<sub>2</sub>; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ  
*frende*.

535. *his*, S H<sub>2</sub> γ *grt*.

537. *That if that*, γ *If that*.

543. *Apollo*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *the god (aught)*.

544. *whan the Grekes*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *next when  
Grekes (var.)*.

546. *that he wolde him spede*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.;  
others *helpen in this neede*.



Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone  
 Whan lightles is the world a night or  
 twyne, 550  
 And that the welken shop him for to reyne,  
 He streight a-morwe unto his necé wente :  
 Ye han wel herd the fin of his entente.

Whan he was come, he gan anon to pleye  
 As he was wont, and at him-self to jape ;  
 And finaliche he swor and gan her seye  
 Bythis and that, she sholde him not escape,  
 Ne make him lenger after her to gape,  
 But certainly she mosté by her leve 559  
 Come soupen in his hous with him at eve.

At which she lough, and gan her faste  
 excusen,  
 And seide, 'It raineth : lo, how sholde  
 I gon ?'—  
 'Lat be,' quod he, 'ne stond not thus to  
 musen :

This mot be don : ye shal be ther anon !'—  
 So at the laste her-of they fille at oon,  
 Or ellés, softe he swor he in her ere,  
 He woldé neveré comén ther she were.

And she a-gamé gan him for to rouné,  
 And axéd him if Troilus were there. 569  
 He swor her, 'nay, for hé was out of toune,'  
 And seide, 'Necé, I posé that he were,  
 These thurfté neveré han the moré fere ;  
 For, rather than mens sholde him ther aspye,  
 Me wéré leveré a thousand fold to dye.'

Not list myn auctour fully to declare  
 What that she thoughté whan he seide so,  
 That Troilus was out of toune y-fare,  
 As if he seide soth ther-of or no ;  
 But that she graunted with him for to go  
 Withoute await, sin he her that bisoughte,  
 And as his necé obeyéd as her oughte.

But natheles yit gan she him biseche, 582  
 Although with him to gon it was no fere,  
 For to be war of goosish peples speche

568. And she a-game (7). J R Cx. And she  
 againe (H<sub>2</sub> on game); a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y Some after this she  
 (var.) See ll. 656. 648.

579. 580. So J H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y

But that withoute await with him to go  
 She graunted him . . .

That dremen thinges whiche that neveré  
 were,  
 And wel avise him whom he broughté there,  
 And seide him, 'Em, sin I moste on  
 you triste,  
 Loke al be wel, for I do as you liste.'

He swor her this, by stobkkes and bystones,  
 And by the Goddés that in hevené dwelle,  
 Or ellés were him leveré, fel and bones, 591  
 With Pluto King as depé ben in helle  
 As Tantalus !—What sholde I longé telle?  
 Whan al was wel, he roos and took his leve;  
 And she to soper com, whan it was eve,

With ek a certein of her owné men,  
 And with her fairé nece Antigóné  
 And other of her wommen nine or ten.  
 But who was glad now? Who, astrowén ye,  
 But Troilus, that stood and mighte it see 600  
 Thorough-out a litel window in a stewe  
 Ther he bi-shet til midnight was in mewe,

Unwist of every wight but of Pandaré ?  
 But now to purpos. Whan that she was  
 come

With allé joye and allé frendés fare,  
 Her em anon in armés hath her nome,  
 And after to the soper, alle and some,  
 When timé was, ful softe they hem sette :  
 God wot, ther was no deynté for to fette !

And after soper gonnen they to rise 610  
 At esé wel with hertés fresshe and glade ;  
 And wel was him that coude best devise  
 To liken her, or that her laughen made.  
 He song : she pleyde : he toldé tale of  
 Wade.

But at the laste, as every thing hath ende,  
 She took her leve, and nedés woldé wende.

588. for I do, so J H<sub>2</sub> R Cx; G<sup>2</sup> y and (a<sup>2</sup> 1)  
 do now.

589. this, so J R G<sup>2</sup>; Cx. she; a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> D om; y 711.

596. With ek (7), all With.

598. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> And (qf) her woman wel (a) nine  
 or ten.

599. was, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> is.

600. til, H<sub>2</sub> tul; others sin.

604. now to purpos, so J H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. S; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y  
 to the point now.

614. tale of Wade; see C. T. E 1424.

But O Fortune, executrice of wierdes !  
O Influences of this hevenés hye !  
Soth is, that under God ye ben our hierdes,  
Though to us beestés ben the causes wrye !  
This mene I now, for she gan homward  
hye ; 621

But execut was al biside her leve  
The Goddés wil ; for which she mosté bleve.

The benté moné with her hornés pale,  
Saturn, and Jove, in Cancro joinéd were,  
That swich a reyn from hevené gan avale  
That every maner womman that was there  
Had of that smoky reyn a verray fere ;  
At which Pandaré tho lough, and seidé  
thenne, 629  
'Now were it time a lady to gon henne !

'But, godé nece, if I mighte everé plesé  
You anything, than preyeich you,' quod he,  
'To don myn herte as now so gret an ese  
As for to dwelle hereal this night with me ;  
For, necé, this' your owné hous, pardé !  
Now by my trouthe I seye it not a-game !  
To wende as now, to me it were a shame.'

Criseydé, which that coude as muché good  
As half a world, took hede of his prayére ;  
And sin it ron and al was on a flood, 640  
Shethoughte, 'as good chep may I dwellen  
here,

And graunte it gladly with a frendés chere  
And have a thank, as grucche and than  
abide,  
For hom to gon, it may not wel bi-tide.'

'I wol,' quod she, 'myn uncle lief and dere ;  
Sin that you list, it skile is to be so ;  
I am right glad with you to dwellen here ;  
I seidé but a-game, I woldé go.' — 648  
'Y-wis, graunt mercy, necé !' quod he tho ;  
'Were it a-game or no, soth for to telle,  
Now am I glad, sin that you list to dwelle.'

Thus al is wel. But tho began aright  
The newé joye and al the feste agayn ;

623. *The, y<sup>e</sup> At the.*

634. *For, nece, this (is), so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S ; a<sup>2</sup>*

*y<sup>e</sup> For why this is.*

636. *Now, H<sub>3</sub> And ; y<sup>e</sup> For.*

But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,  
He wolde han hyéd her to beddè fayn ;  
And seidé, 'Lord, this is a hugé rayn !  
This were a wedder for to slepen inne !  
And that I rede us soné to beginne ! 658

'And, necé, wot ye wher I shal you leye ?  
For that we shal not ligen fer asonder,  
And for ye neither shullen, dar I seye,  
Heré no noise of reynés nor of thonder,  
By God, right in my lité closet yonder ;  
And I wol in that outer hous allone  
Ben wardein of your wommen everychone.

'And in this middel chaumbré that ye see  
Shul alle your wommen slepen wel and  
softe,

And al withinné shal your-selven be ;  
And if ye ligen wel to-night come ofte,  
And careth not what wedder is a-lofte ! 670  
The wynanon ; and whan so that you leste,  
Than is it timé for to gon to reste.'

Ther n'is no moré ; but her-after sone,  
The voidé dronke, and travers drawe anon,  
Gan every wight that haddé naught to done  
More in the place out of the chaumbré gon.  
And alwey in this mené while it ron,  
And blew ther-with so wonderliché loudé,  
That wel nigh no man herén other coude.

Tho Pandarus, herem, right as him oughte,  
With wommen swiche as were her most  
abouté, 682

Ful glad unto her beddés side her broughte,  
And took his leve, and gan ful lowé loute,  
And seide her, 'At this closet dore withoute,  
Right overthwart, your wommen ligen  
alle,

That whom you list of hem ye may her calle.'

So whan that she was in the closet leyde,  
And alle her wommen forth by ordinancee

662. *Here no (y), all Here(n).*

667. *alle, so H<sub>3</sub> S Cx. ; rest omit. (Read ? Shullen ; see l. 661.)*

668. *at withinné, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S ; a<sup>2</sup> y<sup>e</sup> ther I seide ; G<sup>2</sup> ther beyden.*

672. *So J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S H<sub>3</sub> (var.) ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y<sup>e</sup> So go we slepe, I trowe it be the beste (var.)*

677. *So J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S ; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y<sup>e</sup> And evere me so sternliche it rom.*

A-beddè werén ther-as I have seyð, 689  
 Ther was no more to skippen ne to traunce,  
 But boden gon to beddè, with mischaunce,  
 If any man was stering any-where,  
 And lat hem slepen that a-beddè were.

But Pandarus, that wel coude ech a del  
 The oldé daunce, and every point ther-inne,  
 When that he saw that allé thing was wel,  
 He thoughte he wolde upon his werk  
 biginne,

And gan the stewé dore al softe unpinne;  
 And stille as stoon, withouten lenger lette,  
 By Troilus adoun right he him sette. 700

And, shortly to the point right for to gon,  
 Of al this thing he tolde him word and  
 ende,

And seiddé, 'Mak thee redy right anon,  
 For thou shalt into hevené blissé wende!'  
 'Now, seinté Venus, thou megracé sende,'  
 Quod Troilus, 'for neveré yit no nede  
 Hadde ich or now, ne halvendel the drede!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Ne dred thee nevere a del,  
 For it shal ben right as thou wolt desire:  
 So thrive I, this night shal I make it wel,  
 Or casten al the griel in the fire!— 711  
 'Yit, blisful Venus, this night thou mi'  
 enspire,'

Quod Troilus, 'as wis as I thee serve,  
 And everé bet and bet shal til I sterve.

'And if ich hadde, O Venus ful of mirthe,  
 Aspects badde of Mars or of Saturne,  
 Or thou combust or let were in my birthe,  
 Thy fader prey al th'ilké harm disturne  
 Of grace, and that I glad ayein may turne,  
 For love of him thou lovedest in the shawe,  
 I mene Adón, that with the boor was slawe.

'O Jove ek, for the love of faire Europé  
 The whiche in forme of boles awei thou fette,  
 Now help! O Mars, thou with thy bloody  
 cope,

For love of Cipriá thou menaught né lette!

692. man, so J H<sub>4</sub> Cx. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>3</sup>; R S <sup>7</sup> might.

694. man, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>3</sup> wiste.

703. Cipriá, Venus; see v. 208.

O Phebus, thenk whan Dane her-selven  
 shette

Under the barke, and laurer wex for drede;  
 Yit for her love, O help now at this nede!

'Mercúrie, for the love of Hiersé eke, 729  
 For which Pallás was with Aglauros wroth,  
 Now help! And ek Diane, I thee biseke  
 That this viágé be not to thee loth!  
 O fatal sustren, whiche, or any cloth  
 Me shapen was, my destiné me sponne,  
 So helpeth to this werk that is begonne!'

Quod Pandarus, 'Thou wrecched mouses  
 herte!

Art thou agast so that she wol thee bite?  
 Why, don this furréd cloke upon thy sherte,  
 And folwé me, for I wol han the wite! 730  
 But bid, and lat me gon biforn a lite.—  
 And with that word he gan undo a trappe,  
 And Troilus he broughte in by the lappe.

The sterné wind so loudé gan to route  
 That no wight other noisé mighté here;  
 And they that layén at the dore withoute  
 Ful sikerly they slepten alle i-feré;  
 And Pandarus, with a ful sobré chere,  
 Go'th to the dore anon withouten lette  
 Ther-as they laye, and softélích it shette

And, as he com ayeinwaft prively, 735  
 His nece awook, and asked, 'Who go'th  
 there?'

'My deré necé,' quod he, 'it am I!  
 Ne wondreth not, ne have of it no fere.—  
 And ner he com, and seyde her in her ere  
 'No word, for love of God, I you biseche!  
 Lat no wight rise and herén of our  
 speche!'

'What! which way be ye comén, ben-  
 disté?'

Quod she, 'and how thus unwist of her  
 alle?'

726. Dane, Daphne; see C. T. 206a-2064.  
 729. Hiersé, Hérse, daughter of Cecrops, is  
 loved by Mercury.

732. Aglauros, Hérse's sister; see Ovid, *Mét.*  
 ii. 708-822.

733. fatal sustren, the three Fates.

737. bendisté, so J; others benedicté.

738. thus, R <sup>7</sup> omit.

'Here at this lite trappè-dore,' quod he.—  
Quod tho Criseyde,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Lat me som wight  
calle !'—

'Ey ! God forbedè that it sholdè falle,'  
Quod Pandarus, 'that ye swich folg  
wroughte !

They mightè demen that they neverè er  
thoughte !

'It n'is not good a sleping hound to wàke,  
Ne yeve a wight a causè to devine :  
Your wommen slepen alle, I undertake,  
So that for hem the hous men mightè mine,  
And slepen wollen til the sonnè shine !  
And whan my tale y-brought is to an ende,  
Unwist, right as I com, so wol I wende. 770

'Now, necè myn, ye shal wel understonde,'  
Quod he, 'so as ye wommen demen alle,  
That for to holden longe a man in honde  
And him her lief and derè hertè calle,  
And maken him an howve above a calle,  
I mene, as love another in this while,—  
She doth herself a shame and him a gile.

'Now, wher-by that I tellè you al this :  
Ye wot your-self as wel as any wight  
How that your love al fully graunted is 780  
To Troilus, the worthiest knight  
Oon of this world, and therto trouthe  
y-plight,

That, but it were on him along, ye n'olde  
Him neverè falsen whil ye livèn sholde.

'Nowstant it thus : that sin I froyou wente,  
This Troilus, right platly for to seyn,  
Is thorough a goter by a privé wente  
Into my chaumbrè come in al this reyn,  
Unwist of every maner wight, certeyn,  
Save of myself, as wisly have I joye, 790  
Add by that feith I shal Priám of Troye !

'And he is come in swich peyne and distresse  
That, but he be al fully wood by this,  
He sodeinly mot falle into woodnesse  
But-if God helpe. And causè why this is,—  
He seith him told is of a frend of his,

772. *holden longe*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub>; others  
*holds in love*.

How that ye sholden love oon, hatte  
Horaste,  
For sorwe of which this night shal ben  
his laste !'

Criseyde, which that al this wonder herde,  
Gan therwithal aboute her hertè colde, 800  
And with a silk she sodeinly answerde,  
'Allas, I wen'dè, who-so talès tolde,  
My derè hertè woldè me not holde  
So lightly fals ! Allas, conceitès wronge,  
What harm they don, for now live I too  
longe !

'Horaste ! allas, and falsen Troilus !  
I knowe him not, God help me-so !'  
quod she.

'Allas, what wikked spirit tolde him thus ?  
Now certès, em, to-morwe, and I him see,  
I shal of that as ful excusen me 810  
As everè didè womman, if him like.'  
And with that word she gan ful sorè aike.

'O God !' quod she, 'so worldly selinesse,  
Which clerkès callèn fals felicitè,  
Y-medled is with many a bitternesse !  
Ful anguissous than is, God wot,' quod  
she,

'Condicioun of veyn prosperité !  
For either joyès comen not i-fere,  
Or ellès no wight hath hem alwey here.

'O brotel wele ! O worldly joye un-  
stable ! 820  
With what wight so thou be or how thou  
pleye,

Either he wot that thou, joye, art muable,  
Or wot it not ; it mot be oon of tweye.  
Now, if he wot it not, how may he seye  
That he hath verray joye and selinesse,  
That is of ignoraunce ay in derknesse ?

'Now, if he wot that joye is transitorie,  
As every joye of worldly thing mot flee,

797. *oon*, G y *oon that*.

800. *therwithal*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y *sodeinly*.

802. *sodeinly*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y *sorewfully*.

810. *of that*, S y *thereof*.

813-828. Adapted from *Beethius II. prosa 4*.

820. *O worldly*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx; a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y *o*  
*manne*.

Than every time he that hath in memorie,  
The drede of leisingmaketh him that he 830  
May in no parfit selinessé be;  
And if to lese his joye he set a mite,  
Than semeth it that joye is worth ful lite.

'Wherfor I wol define in this manére,  
That trewely, for aught I can espye,  
Ther is no verray wele in this world here.  
But O thou wikked serpent jalouslye!  
Thou misbelevéd envious folýe!  
Why hastow Troilus maad to me untriste,  
That neveré yit agilte him that I  
wiste?'— 840

Quod Pandarus, 'Thus fallen is this cas—'  
'Why! uncle myn,' quod she, 'who tolde  
him this?  
Why doth my deré herté thus, allas?'—  
'Ye wot, ye necé myn,' quod he, 'what is.  
I hope al shal be wel that is amis,  
For ye mayquenche al this if that you leste.  
And doth right so: I holde it for the  
beste.'—

'So shal I don to-morwe, y-wis,' quod she,  
'And God to-forn, so that it shal suffice.'—  
'To-morwe? allas, that were a fair!'  
\* quod he. 850  
'Nay, nay, it may not stonden in this wise;  
For, necé myn, thus writen clerkés wise,  
That peril is with drecching in y-drawe:  
Nay, such abodés ben not worth a hawe!

'Necé, allé thing hath time, I dar avowe;  
For when a chaumbre a-fire is, or au halle,  
Wel more nede is, it sodeinly rescowe  
Than to dispute and axe amongés alle  
"How is this candel in the straw y-falle?"  
A! bendisté! for al among this fare. 860  
The harm is don, and far-wel feldéfare!

'And, necé myn, ne take it not a-grief:  
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,  
God help me so, ye had him neveré lief!  
That dar I seyn, now ther is but we two.  
But wel I wot that ye wol not do so;

Ye ben too wis to don so gret folýe  
To putte his lif al night in jupartýe.'—

'Had ich him neveré lief? By God, I wene  
Ye haddé neveré thing so lief!' quod  
she.— 870  
'Now, by my thrift,' quod he, 'that shal  
be sene!  
For, sin ye maken this ensaumple of me,  
If ich al night wolde him in sorwé see  
For al the tresour in the town of Troye,  
I biddé God I neveré mote have joye!

'Now, loké than, if ye that ben his love  
Shal putte his lif al night in jupartýe  
For thing of naught, now by that God above  
Not only this delay com'th of folýe  
But of malíce, if that I shal not lye! 880  
What! platly, and yesuffre him in distresse,  
Ye neither wisdom don ne gentillesse!'

Quod tho Criseydé, 'Wol ye don oo thing,  
And ye therwith shal stinten his disese:  
Have here and bereth him this blewé ring,  
For ther is no thing mighte him bettré plese  
Save I my-self, ne more his herte apese;  
And seye my deré herté, that his sorwe  
Is causéles: that shal he seen to-morwe!'

'A ring?' quod he, 'ye, haselwodés  
shaken! 890  
Ye, necé myn, that ring moste have a ston  
That mighté dedé men a-livé maken;  
And swich a ring trowe I that ye have non!  
Discrecioun out of your hed is gon:  
That fele I now,' quod he, 'and that is  
routhe.  
O time y-lost! wel maystow corsen  
slouthe!

'Wot ye not wel that noble and heigh corage  
Ne sorweth not ne stinteth ek for lite?  
But, if a fool were in a jealous rage,  
I n'oldé setten at his sorwe a mite, 900  
But fesse him with a fewé wordés white  
Another day whan that I mighte him finde!  
But this thing stant al in another kinde.

880. *wisdom*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ *bonete*.

889. *causéles*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> *no déles*.

890. *he seen*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ *he seen* (*seyn*).

838. *envious*, J<sup>4</sup> and *envious*.  
850. *ne*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> J<sup>4</sup> omit.

'This is so gentil and so tendre of herte  
That with the deth he wol his sorwes wreke;  
For, trusteth wel, how soré that him  
smerte,

He wol to you no jalous wordés speke,  
And for-thy, nece, or ye his herté breke,  
So spek yourself to him of this matére;  
For withoo word ye may his herté sterte. 910

'Now have I told what peril he is inne;  
And his cominge unwist is t' every wight;  
And, pardé, harm may ther be non ne  
sinne;

I wol my-self ben with you al this night.  
Ye knowe ek how it is your owné knight,  
And that by right ye moste upon him triste,  
And I al prest to fecche him whan you  
liste.'—

This accident so pitous was to here,  
And ek so lik a soth at primé face,  
And Troilus her knight to her so dere, 920  
His privé coming, and the siker place,  
That, though that she dide him as tho a  
grace,  
Considered allé thingés as they stode,  
No wonder is, sin she dide al for gode.

Criseyde answerde, 'As wisly God at reste  
My soulé bringe, as me is for him wo!  
Andem, y-wis, fayn wolde I don the beste,  
If that ich haddé gracé to do so.  
But whether that ye dwelle or for him go,  
I am, til God me bettre mindé sende, 930  
At Dulcarnon, right at my wittés ende.'—

Quod Pandarus, 'Ye, necé, wol ye here?  
Dulcarnon calléd is "fleemingé of  
wrecches":

It semeth hard, for wrecches wol not lere  
For verray slouthé and othré wilful  
tecches:

This' seid by hem that ben not worth  
two fecches!

913. *And, y Ne.*

925. *Dulcarnon* (from Arab. two-horned), applied to Euclid i. 47. Here in the general sense of difficulty or perplexity.

933. *Fleemings of wrecches*; a translation of *pagi miserorum*, or *Eleusine*, applied to Euclid i. 5, which Pandarus, perhaps purposely confuses with the 47th proposition.

But ye ben wis; and this matére on  
honde  
N'is neither hard, ne skilful to with-  
stonde.'—

'Than, em,' quod she, 'Both her-of as  
you list!

But, or he come, I wol up first arise. 940  
And, for the love of God, sin al my trist  
Is on you two, and ye ben bothé wise,  
So werketh now in so discreet a wise  
That ich honouir may have, and he ples-  
aunce,

For I am here as in your governaunce.'

'That is wel seid,' quod he, 'my necé  
dere;

Ther good thrift on that wisé gentil herté!  
But liggeth stille and taketh him right  
here;

It nedeth not no farther for him sterte.  
And ech of you ese othres sorwes smerte. 950  
For love of God! And, Venus, I thee  
herie,

For sone hope I weshul ben allé merie!'

This Troilus ful sone on knees him sette  
Ful sobrély, right by her beddés hed,  
And in his besté wex his lady grette. 960  
But, Lord, so she wex sodeinliché red!  
Ne, though men sholden smiten off her  
hed,

She coude not a word a-right out-bringe  
So sodeinly, for his sodein cominge!

But Pandarus, that so wel coude fele 960  
In every thing, to pleye anon bigan,  
And seidé, 'Necce, see how this lord can  
knele

Now for your trouthe! Y-see this gentil  
man!'

And with that word he for a quisahin ran,  
And seidé, 'Kneleth now whil that you  
leste!

Ther God your hertés bringé sone at  
reste!'

Can I not seyn, for she bad him not rise,  
If sorwe it putte out of her rémembrance,

937. *this matre, as G<sup>3</sup> y that we han.*

Or ellés that she took it in the wise  
Of dueté as for his observaunce ; 970  
But wel wot I she dide him this plesaunce,  
That she him kiste, although she sighté  
sore,

And bad him sitte a-doun withouten more.

Quod Pandarus, ' Now wol ye wel biginne!  
Now doth him sitté, godé necé dere,  
Upon your beddés side al ther withinne,  
That ech of you the bet may other  
here !'—

And with that word he drow him to the fere,  
And took a light, and fond his contaunce

As for to loke upon an old romaunce. 980

Criseyde, that was Troilus' lady right  
And clەر stood on a ground of sikernesse,  
Al thoughté she her servaunt and her  
knight

Ne sholde of right non untrouthe in her  
gesse,

Yet natheles, considered his distresse  
And that love is in cause of swich folýe,  
Thus to-him spak she of his jealousy :

' Lo, herté myn, as woldé th' excellenice  
Of love, ayeins the whiché no man may  
Neoughteek goodly maken résistence, 990  
And ek because I felté wel and say  
Your greté trouthe and servise every day,  
And that your herte al myn was, soth to  
seyne,

This drof me for to rewe upon your peyne.

' And your goodnéssé have I founde alwey  
yit,

Of which, my deré herte and al my knight,  
I thonke it you as fer as I have wit,  
Al can I not as muche as it were right ;  
And I emforth my conning and my might  
Have, and ~~ye~~ shal how soré that me  
smerte, 1000

Ben to you trewe and hool with al myn  
herte ;

971. *not*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx ; Cx. *rede* ; others *findé*.

978. *sighté*, so J ; others *sithé*.

979. *fond*, H<sub>4</sub> Cx. *fynde*.

980. *whiché*, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. *et* G<sup>8</sup> ; J. *whiché that*.

' And dredéles that shal befounde at preve!  
But, herté myn, what al this is to seyne  
Shal wel be told, so that ye not you greve,  
Though I to you right on your-self com-  
pleyne ;

For ther-with mene I finally the peyne  
That halt your herte and myn in hevinessé  
Fully to slen, and every wrong redresse.

' My godé myn, n'ot I for-why ne how  
That jealousy, allas, that wikked wivere,  
So causéles is copen into you, 1011  
The harm of which I woldé fayn delivere.  
Allas, that he, al hool, or of him silvere,  
Sholde han his refut in so digne a place !  
Ther Jove him sone out of your herte arace !

' But O thou Jove, O auctour of natúre !  
Is this an honour to thy deité,  
That folk ungiltif-suffren here injúre,  
And who that giltif is, al quit go'th he ?  
O were it leveful for to pleyne on thee, 1020  
That undeservéd suffrest jealousy,  
Of that I wolde upon thee pleyne and crye !

' Ek al my wo is this, that folk now usen  
To seyn right thus, " Ye, jealousy is love,"  
And wolde a bussel venim al excusen  
For-that oo greyn of love is in it shove !  
But that wot heighé God that sit above,  
If it be liker love, or hate and grame !  
And after that it oughté bere his name !

' But certein is, som maner jealousy 1030  
Is excusáble more than som, y-wis ;  
As whan cause is, and som swich fantasye  
With piété so wel represséd is  
That it unnethé doth or seith amis,  
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse :  
And that excuse I for the gentilesse.

' And som so ful of furie is and despit  
That it surmounteth his repressioun.  
But, herté myn, ye ben not in that plit,

1011. *So*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R Cx ; others *Thus*.

1024. *Ye*, J and others *that*.

1026. *th*, J on.

1028. *and grame*, so J H<sub>4</sub> ; others *or*.

1033. *piété*, so J S Cp. H<sub>1</sub> only ; rest *pit*,  
*pete*, etc.

That thanke I God; for-which your  
passioun 1040

I wol not calle it but illusioun  
Of habundaunce of love and bisy cure,  
That doth your herté this disece endure;

'Of which I am right sory, but not wroth.  
But, for my devoir and your hertés reste,  
Whe'r so you list by ordal, or by oth,  
By sort, or in what wisé so you leste,  
For love of God, lat preve it for the beste!  
And if that I be giltif, do me deye!  
Allas, what mighte I moré don or seye?'—

With that a fewé brighté terés newe 1051  
Out of her yén fille, and thus she seyde,  
'Now God, thou wost in thought ne dede  
untrewe

To Troilus was neveré yit Crisycde!'—  
With that her hed down in the bed she  
leyde,  
And with the shete it wreigh, and sighté  
sore,  
And held her pees: not oo word spak she  
more.

But now help God to quenchenal this sorwe!  
So hope I that he shal, for he best may!  
For I have seyn of a ful misty morwe  
Folwen ful ofte a merie somer's day; 1061  
And after winter folweth grené May.  
Men sen alday, and reden ek in stories,  
That after sharpé shourés ben victóriés.

This Troilus whan hé her wordés herde,  
(Have ye no care!) him listé not to slepe;  
For it thoughte him no strokés of a yerde  
To here or sen Criseyde his lady wepe,  
But wel he felte aboute his herté crepe,  
For every tere which that Criseyde asterte,  
The crampe of deth, to streyne him by  
the herte. 1071

And in his minde he gan the time acorse  
That evere he com ther, or that he was born;  
Now in wikké turned into worse,

1073. *overe*, so H<sub>3</sub> only.

1073. *or*, y *and*.

1073. *that*, Cp. *that that*.

1073. *was*, H<sub>3</sub> *man was*.

And al the labour he hath don biforn  
He wen'de it lost: he thoughte he n'as  
but lorn.

'O Pandarus,' thoughte he, 'allas, thy wile  
Serveth of naught, so weylawey the  
while!'—

And therwithal he heng adoun the hed,  
And fil on knees, and sorwfulliche he  
sighté: 1080

What mighte he seyn? He felte he n'as  
but ded;

For wroth was she that sholdé his sorwés  
lighte.

But natheles, whan that he spoken mighte,  
Than seide he thus, 'God wot that of  
this game,

Whan al is wist, than am I not to blame!'—

Therwith the sorwé so his herté shette  
That from his yén fil ther not a tere;  
And every spirit his vigour in-knette,  
So they astonéd and oppresséd were; 1089  
The feling of his sorwe, or of his fere,  
Or of aught ellés, fled was out of towne;  
And down he fil al sodeinliche a-swowne.

This was no litel sorwé for to see;  
But al was hust, for Pandar up as faste,  
'O necé, pes, or we be lost!' quod he,  
'Beth not agast!' But certein, at the laste,  
For this or that, he into bedde him caste,  
And seide, 'O thef, is this a mannés herte?'  
And off he rente al to his baré sherte.

And seidé, 'Necé, but ye helpe us now,  
Allas, your owné Troilus is lorn!' 1101  
'Y-wis, so wolde I, and I wisté how,  
Ful fayn!' quod she: 'Allas, that  
was born!'—

'Ye, necé, wole ye pullén out the thorn  
That stiketh in his herté,' quod Pandaré;  
'Sey "al foryeve," and stint is al this  
fare!'—

'Ye, that to me,' quod she, 'ful leveré were  
Than al the good the sonne abouté go'th!  
And therwithal she swor him in his gre,

1094. *But*, J Cr. a<sup>3</sup> and others *For*.

1094. *for*, so H<sub>4</sub> G; Cr. a<sup>3</sup> *but*; J, y *and*.



'Y-wis, my deré herte, I am not wroth,  
Have here my trouthe!' and many  
another oth; 1111

'Nowspek to me, for it am I, Criseyde!'—  
But al for naught: yit mighte he not  
abreyde.

Therwith his pousand paumes of his hondes  
They gan to frote, and wete his temples  
tweyne;

And, to deliveren him fro bittré bondes,  
She ofte him kiste; and, shortly for to  
seyne, 1117

Him to revoken she dide al her peyne.  
And at the laste, he gan his breth to drawe,  
And of his swough sone after that adawe,

And gan bet minde and reson to him take;  
But wonder sore he was abayst, y-wis,  
And with a sik, when he gan bet awake,  
He seide, 'O mercy, God, what thing is  
this?'—

'Why do ye with your-selven thus amis?'  
Quod tho Criseyde, 'Is this a mannéggame?'  
'What, Troilus! wol ye do thus? For  
shame!'—

And therwithal her arm over him she leyde,  
And al foryaf, and ofte time him keste.  
He thought her, and to herspak and seyde  
As fil to purpos for his hertés reste; 1131  
And she to that answerde him as her leste,  
And with her goodly wordés him disporte  
She gan, and ofte his sorwes to confôrte.

Quod Pandarus, 'For aught I can espyen,  
I nor this candel serven here of nought;  
Light is not good for siké folkés yen!  
But for the love of God, sin ye be brought  
In thus good plit, lat now non hevty thought  
Ben hanging in the hertés of youtweye!'—  
And bar his candel to the chiméneye. 1141

Sone after this, though it no nedé were,  
Whan she swiche othés as her list devise

1115. wete, J H<sub>2</sub> R H<sub>3</sub> sh.  
1117. a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> Wol Troilus do thus! Allas, for  
shame!

1135. I nor this candel, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ This light  
nor I (vix.)

1141. his, γ sh.

Had of him take, her thoughté tho no fere,  
Ne cause ek non to bidde him themés rise.  
Yit lassé thing than othés may suffise  
In many a cas; for every wight, I gesse,  
That loveth wel, meneth but gentilese!

But in effect she woldé wite anon 1149  
Of what man, and ek wher, and also why  
He jalous was, sin ther was causé non;  
And ek the signé that he took it by,  
This bad she him to telle her bisily,  
Or ellés, certain, she bar him on honde  
That this was don for malice, her to fonde.

Withouté moré, shortly for to seyne,  
He moste obeye unto his lady heste;  
And for the lassé harm he mosté feyne.  
He seide her, 'whan she was at swich  
a feste, 1159  
She mighte on him han lokéd at the leste—'  
N'ot I not what, at dere ynough a risshe,  
As he that nedés moste a çausé fuisse!

Criseyde answerd, 'Swete, al were it so,  
What harm was that, sin I non yvel mene?  
For, by that God that wroughte us bothé  
two,

In allé thing is myn ententé clene!  
Swiche arguments neben not wortha benel  
Wol ye the childissish jalous contrefete?  
Now were it worthy that ye were y-bete!'—

Tho Troilus gan sorrowfully to sike; 1170  
Lest she be wroth, him thoughte his  
herté deyde;

And seide, 'Allas, upon my sorwés sike  
Have mercy, sweté herté myn, Criseyde!  
And if that in tho wordés that I seyde  
Be any wrong, I wol no more trespass;  
Do what you list, I am al in your grace!'—

Criseyde answerde, 'Of gilt misericorde!  
This is to seyn, that I foryeve al this. 1178  
And everé-mo on this night you recorde,  
And beth wel war ye do no more amis!'—  
'Nay, deré herté myn, quod he, 'y-wis!'—

1148. wel, a<sup>3</sup> wel and.

1163. Criseyde, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ And she.

1168. jalous; J and others jalousie.

1177. Criseyde, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>3</sup> γ And she.

'And now,' quod she, 'that I have don  
<sup>1200</sup>you smerte,  
 Foryeve it me, myn owné sweté herte!'—

This Troilus, with blisse of that supprised,  
 Putte al in Goddés hond, as he that mente  
 No thing but wel; and, sodeinly avised,  
 He her in armés fasté to him henté.  
 And Pandarus, with a ful good entente,  
 Leyde him to slepe, and seyde, 'If ye  
 ben wise,

'Swowneth not now lest moré folk  
 arise!'—  
 1200

What mighte or may the sely larké seye,  
 Whan that the sperhawk hath it in his  
 foot?—

I can no more, but of thise ilké tweye,  
 To whom this talé sucré be or soot,  
 Though that I tarie a yeer, som time I moot  
 After myn auctour tellen hir gladnése  
 As wel as I have told hir hevinesse.

Criseydé, which that felte her thus y-take,  
 As writen clerkés in hir bokés olde, 1209  
 Right as an aspen leef she gan to quake,  
 Whan she him felte her in his armés folde.  
 And Troilus, al hool of carés coldé,  
 Gan thanken tho the brighté Goddés  
 sevené.—

Thussondry peynés bringen folk in hevене.

This Troilus in armés gan her streyne,  
 And seide, 'O swete, as everé mote I gon,  
 Now be ye caught! Now is ther but  
 we tweyne!

Now yeldeth you, for other bote is non!'—  
 To that Criseydé answérdé thus anon,  
 'N' had I or now, my sweté herté dere,  
 Ben yolde, y-wis I weré now not here!'—

O, soth is seid, that heléd for to be 1212  
 As of a fevere, or other gret siknése,  
 Men mosté drinke, as men may alday see,  
 Ful bittre drinke; and forto hangladnése,

1200. *And, y But.*  
 1203. *brighte, y blisful.*  
 1211. *I wery now not here, R Cx. H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> I n'*  
*had not now ben here.*  
 1214. *alday, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y gfd(n).*

Men drinken ofté peyne and gret distresse:  
 I mene it here, as for this aventure  
 That thorough a peyne hath founden al  
 his cure.

And now swetnéssé semeth moré swete  
 That bitternesse assayed was biforn; 1220  
 For out of wo in blissé now they flete;  
 Non swich they felten sin they weré born.  
 Now is this bet than bothé two be lorn!  
 For love of God, take every womman hede  
 To werken thus, whan it com' th to the nede!

Criseyde, alquit from every drede and tene,  
 As she that justé cause had him to triste,  
 Made him swich feste, it joyé was to sene,  
 Whan she his trouthe and clene ententé  
 wiste;  
 1229

And as aboute a tree with many a twisté  
 Bitrent and wryth the swoté wodébinde,  
 Gan ech of hem in armés other winde.

And as the newe abayséd nightingale  
 That stinteth first whan she biginneth singe,  
 Whan that she hereth any herdé tale,  
 Or in the hegges any wight sterlinge,  
 And after siker doth her vois out-ringe;  
 Right so Criseydé, whan her dredé stente,  
 Opned her herte, and tolde al her entente.

And right as he that saw his deth y-shapen,  
 And deyen moste, in aught that he may  
 gcsse, 1241  
 And sodeinly rescous doth him escapen,  
 And from his deth is brought in sikernesne;  
 For al this world, in swich présent glad-  
 nése

Is Troilus, and hath his lady swete.—  
 With worsé hap God lat us neveré mete!

Her armés smale, her streighté bak and  
 softe,

Hersidés longé, fleschly, smothe, and white  
 He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad ful  
 ofte

Her snowissh throte, her brestes rounde  
 and lite:  
 1250

1222. *sin, H<sub>4</sub> and others sin that.*  
 1240. *seen, J astik; a<sup>2</sup> y astik.*  
 1241. *moete, a<sup>2</sup> G y met.*  
 1245. *Is, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y Was.*

Thus in this hevne he gan him to delite,  
And therewithal a thousand time her kiste,  
That what to don for joye unnethe he  
wiste.

Than seide he thus, 'O Love, O Charité!  
Thy moder ek, Citherea the swete,  
After thy-self next heriéd be she,  
Venus mene I, the wel-willy planéte!  
And next you, Imenéus, I thee grete!  
For neveré man was to you Goddés holde  
As I, that ye han brought fro carés colde.

'Benigné Love, thou holy bond of thinges,  
Who-so wol grace, and list thee not hon-  
ouren, 1262  
Lo, his desir wol fle withouten winges!  
For n'oldestow of bounté hem socourcn  
That serven best and most alwéy labouren,  
Yit were al lost, that dar I wel seyn, certes,  
But-if thy gracie passéd our desertes.

'And, for thou me, that couldé leest deserve  
Of hem that noumbred ben unto thy grace,  
Hast holpen ther I likly was to sterve, 1270  
And me bestowed in so heigh a place  
That th' ilke boundés may no blissé pace,  
I can no more, but laude and revrence  
Be to thy bounté and thyn excellence!'

And therewithal Criseyde anon he kiste,  
Of which, certein, she felté no disese!  
And thus seide hé, 'Now woldé God I  
wikte,  
Myn herté swete, how I you mighté plesé!  
Whatman,' quod he, 'was everé thus at ese  
As I on whom the fairest and the beste 1280  
That everé I say, deyneth her herté reste?'

'Here may men see that mercy passeth  
right:  
Th' experience of this is felt in me,  
That am unworthy to you, lady bright.  
But, herté myn, of your benigneté  
So thinketh, though that I unworthy be,

1258. *Invenius, Hymen.*  
1268. *coude leest, H<sub>1</sub> y leest coude.*  
1272. *this, a<sup>1</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y that.*  
1280. *to you, lady bright, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y to so sweet  
a sight.*

Yit mot I nede amenden in som wise  
Right thorough the vertu of your<sup>4</sup> heighe  
service.

'And for the love of God, my lady dere,  
Sin God hath wrought me for I shal you  
serve, 1290  
As thus he wol how that ye ben my sterve  
To do me live, if that you list, or sterve,  
So techeth me how that I may deserve  
Your thonk, so that I thorough myn ignor-  
aunce  
Ne do no thing that be you displeaunce.

'For certés, fressshé wommanliché wif,  
This dar I seye, that trouthe and diligence,  
That shal ye finden in me al my lif;  
N' I wol not, certein, breken your defence;  
And if I do, présént or in abséncé, 1300  
For love of God lat slee me with the dede,  
If that it like unto your wommanhede!'

'Y-wis,' quod she, 'myn owné hertés list,  
My ground of ese, and al myn herté dere,  
Gramercy, for on that is al my trist!  
But lat us falle away fro this matère,  
For this suffiseth which that seyde is here:  
And at oo word, withouten répentance,  
Welcome, my knight, my pees, my  
suffisaunce!'

Of hir delit or joyés oon the leste 1310  
Were impossiblé to my wit to seye;  
But juggeth ye that han ben at the feste  
Of swich gladnése, if that hem listé pleye!  
I can no more, but thus thise ilke tweye  
That night betwixen drede and sikernesse,  
They felte in love the grété worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so longe y-sought,  
How blithe unto hem bothé two thou were!  
Why n'had I swich oon with my soule  
y-bought,  
Ye, or the leesté joyé that was there? 1320  
Away, thou foulé daunger and thou fere,

1291. *how, so H<sub>1</sub> H<sub>2</sub>; J R Cx. omk.*  
1292. *a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y read (var.) As thus I mene, he  
wol ye ben my sterve.*  
1307. *this, suffiseth which that; a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y it  
suffiseth, this that.*

And lat hem in this hevené blissé dwelle,  
That is so heigh that no man can it telle!

But how al-though I can not tellen al  
As can myn auctour of his excellence,  
Yit have I seid, and God to-for, and shal  
In every thing the gret of his sentence;  
And if that I, at lovés reverence,  
Have anything in echéd for the beste,  
Doth therwithal right as your-selven leste.

For miné wordés, here and every part, 1331  
I speke hem alle under correcioun  
Of you, that feeling han in lovés art,  
And putte hem hool in your discrecioun  
T'encrese or maké diminucioun  
Of my langage; and that I you biseche.—  
But now to purpos of my rather speche.

Thise ilké two that ben in armés laft,  
So loth to hem asonder gon it were,  
That ech from other wen'dé ben biraft, 1340  
Or ellés, lo, this was hir mosté fere,  
Lest al this thing but nicé dremés were:  
For-which ful ofte ech of hem seide, 'O  
swete,  
Clippe ich you thus, or ellés ich-it mete?'

And Lord! so he gan goodly on her see  
That nevere his look ne bleynté from her  
face,

And seide, 'O deré herté, may it be  
That this be soth, that ye ben in this  
place?'

'Ye, herté myn, God thanke I of his grace!'  
Quod tho Criseyde, and therwithal him  
kiste, 1350  
That wher his spirit was, for joye he n'iste.

This Troilus ful ofte her yén two  
Gan for to kisse, and seide, 'O yén clere,  
It weré ye that wroughten me this wo,  
Ye humblé nettés of my lady dere!

1333. *no man can it*, so J P H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S;  
others *al ne can I*.

1334. J R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> S have the two following  
stanza (ll. 1334-1337) after l. 1314; H<sub>4</sub> has them  
in both places.

1334. *But how al-though*, P G γ *But soth is*,  
*though*; S H<sub>3</sub> (var.)

1337. *the gret of*, P G γ *al hoonly*.

Though ther be mercy writen in your chere,  
God wot, the text ful hard is, soth, to finde!  
How coude ye withouten bond me  
binde?'

Therwith he gan her faste in armés take,  
And wel a thousand times gan he sike, 1360  
Not swiché sorwful sikés as men make  
For wo, or ellés whan that folk ben sike,  
But esy sikés, swiché as ben to like,  
That shewéd his affeccioun withinne;  
Of swiché sikés coude he nothing blinne.

Sone after this they spake of sondry thinges  
As fil to purpos of hir aventure,  
And pleyng entrechaungeden hir ringes,  
Of which I can not tellen no scriptüre;  
But wel I wot a broche of gold azure,  
In which a ruby set was lik an herte, 1371  
Criseyde him yaf, and stak it on his sherte.

Lord, trowén ye a coveitouse wrecche,  
That blameth love and halt of it despit,  
That of the pens that he can mokre and  
keche

Was everé yit y-yeve him swich delit  
As is in love in oo point in som plit?  
Nay, doutéles! for al-so God me save,  
So parfit joyé may no nigard have!

They wol seye 'yis,' but; Lord, so that  
they lye, 1380

Tho bisy wrecchés, ful of wo and drede!  
They clepen love a woodnesse or folye,

But it shal falle hem as I shal you rede:  
They shal forgon the white and ek the  
rede,

And live in wo. Ther God yeve hem  
mischaunce,

And every lover in his trouthe avaunce!

As woldé God, thise wrecches that despise  
Servise of love hadde erés al-so longe

As haddé Mida, ful of coveitise,  
And therto dronken hadde as hote and  
stronge 1390

1360. *thousand* (Boc.), P G γ *hundred*.

1365. *nothing*, so R<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> A *never*; I and  
others *not, nought*. H<sub>1</sub> (only) *biyenne* (for *blinne*).

1389. *Mida*, *Midas*. See C. T. D 951.

As Crassus dide for his affectés wronge,  
To techen hem that coveitise is vice,  
And love is vertu, though men holde it  
nice !

Thise ilké two of whiche that I you seye,  
Whan that hir hertés ful assuréd were,  
Tho gonné they to speken and to pleye,  
And ek rehersen how and whan and where  
They knewe hem first, and every wo and  
fere <sup>1398</sup>

That passéd was ; but al that hevinesse,  
Y-thankéd God, was tornéd to gladnése.

And everé mo, whan that hem fil to speke  
Of any wo of swich a time a-gon,  
With kissing al that talé sholdé breke,  
And fallen in a newé joye anon,  
And didné al hir might, sin they were oon,  
For to recoverén blisse and ben at ese,  
And passéd wo with joyé countrepese.

Reson wol not now that I speke of sleep,  
For it acordeth not to my matére :  
God wot, theytote of that fullitel keep ! <sup>1410</sup>  
But lest this night that was to hem so dere  
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manére,  
It was biset in joye and bisinesse  
Of al that souneth into gentillesse.

Whan that the cok, comúné astrologer,  
Gan on his brest to bete and after crowe,  
And Lucifer, the dayés messenger,  
Gan for to rise and out her stremés throwe,  
And estward roos, to him that coude it  
knowe,

Fortúna maior, that anon Criseyde <sup>1420</sup>  
With herté soor to Troilus thus seyde :

'Myn hertés lif, my trist, and my plesáunce,  
That I was born, alas ! what me is wo,

<sup>1391.</sup> *Crassus*, M. Crassus, the triumvir, sur-named *Dives*. When slain in battle (53 a.c.), molten gold was poured into his mouth, by order of Orodes, king of Parthia.

<sup>1392.</sup> *1393.* *coveitise*, etc., P G  $\gamma$  *they ben in the vice, And lovers sought, al-though they holde hem nice.*

<sup>1394.</sup> *whiche, y whom.*

<sup>1402.</sup> *me, y thing.*

<sup>1408.</sup> *not now, so S; Ck I now; rest omit now.*

<sup>1412.</sup> *Whan that, so J R Cx. H, S (see note, 1324); others But when.*

That day of us mot maké disseveraunce !  
For time it is to rise and hennés go,  
Or ellés I am lost for everémo !  
O night, alas, why n'iltow over us hove  
As longe as whan Almena lay by Jove ?

'O blaké night, as folk in bokés rede,  
That shapen art by God this world to  
hide <sup>1430</sup>

At certain tims with thy blaké wede,  
That under thatmen mighte in reste abide,  
Wel oughten beestés pleyne and folk thee  
chide,

That ther-as day with labour wolde us  
breste,  
That thou thus fleest, and deynest us not  
reste !

'Thou dost, alas, too shortly thyn office,  
Thou rakel night ! Ther God, makére of  
kinde,

For thou so downward hastest of malice,  
Thee corse, and to our hemisperé binde,  
That neverémo under the grounde thou  
winde ! <sup>1440</sup>

For, thorough thy rakel hying out of Troye,  
Have I forgon thus hastily my joye !'

This Troilus, that with tho wordés felte  
As thoughte him tho, for pietous distresse,  
The bloody terés from his herté melte,  
As he that neveré yit swich hevinesse  
Assayéd had out of so gret gladnesse,  
Gan therewithal Criseyde, his lady dere,  
In armés streyne, and seyde in this manére :

'O cruel day, accusour of the joye <sup>1450</sup>  
That love and night han stole and faste  
y-wryen,

Acorséd be thy coming into Troye,  
For every bore hath oon of thy brighte  
yen !

Envious day, what list thee so t'espyen ?

<sup>1428.</sup> *Almena*, Alcmena, mother of Hercules by Jupiter.

<sup>1431.</sup> *blake, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>3</sup>  $\gamma$  derke.*

<sup>1438-1441.</sup> *a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>3</sup>  $\gamma$  read :*

*Thes for thyn haste and thyn unklide vice*

*So faste ay to our hemisperé binde,*

*That nevere more under the grounde thou winde!*

*For now, for thou so hyest out of Troye,*

What hastow lost? What sek'st thou in  
this place?

'her God thy light so quenched for his grace!

Allas, what han thise lovers thee agilt,  
despitous day? Thyn be the pine of helle!  
For many a lover hastow slayn, and wilt;  
Thy pouring in wol no-where lete hem  
dwelle!

What profrestow thy light here for to selle?  
To selle it hem that smale selés grave!  
We wol thee not! us nedeth no day have!

And ek the sonnè, Titan, wolde he chide,  
and seide, 'O fool, wel may men thee  
despise,

That hast al night the Dawing by thy side  
and suffrest her so sone up fro thee rise,  
For to disesen lovers in this wise!

What! hold thy bed ther, thou, and ek  
thy Morwe!

preye to God, so yeve you bothé  
sorwe!

Therwith ful sore he sighte, and thus he  
seyde,

My lady right, and of my welc and wo  
The verray rote, O goodly myn, Criseyde,  
and shal I rise? Allas, and shal I so?  
Now fele I that myn herté mot a-two!  
For how sholde I my lif an houré save,  
in that with you is al the joye ich have?

What shal I don? For certés I n'ot how,  
We whan, allas, I may the timé see  
That in this plit I may be eft with you!  
And of my lif, God wot how that shal be!  
in that desir right now so streyneth me,  
That I am ded anon but I retorne,  
How sholde I longe, allas, fro you sojorne?

But natheles, myn owné lady bright,  
it were it so that I wiste outrely

1455. *in*, so H<sub>1</sub> R Cx H<sub>2</sub>; J and others omit.

1462. *wolde*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *yeve*.

1462. *showing*, wife of Tithonus, whom Chaucer  
here confuses with Titan.

1473. *verray*, a<sup>3</sup> G<sup>2</sup> *y welles* and (*of*).

1474. *so*, Cl. D G *so*.

1477. *joye* (Boc.), so R H<sub>2</sub>; J and others *lif*.

1482. *streyneth* (Boc.), *y biteth*, *biteth*,  
*streyneth*.

1486. *Yit*, *y omit*.

That I, your owné servant and your knight,  
Were in your herte y-shet as fermely  
As ye in myn, (the whiche thing trewely  
Me leveré weré than thise worldés  
tweyne),

Yit sholde I bet enduren al my payne.

To that Criseyde answerdè thus anon,  
And with a sik she seyde, 'O herté dere,  
The game, y-wis, so ferforth now is gon,  
That erst shal Phebus fallen fro his spere,  
And everich eglé ben the dowvès fere,  
And every roche out of his placé sterte,  
Or Troilus out of Criseydes herté!

'Ye ben so depe in-with my herte y-grave,  
That, though I wolde it torne out of my  
thought,

As wisly verray God my soulé save,  
To deyen in the payne I couldé nought!  
And, for the love of God that us hath  
wrought,

Lat in your brayn non other fantasfe  
So crepé, that it causé me to dye!

'And that yem wolde han as faste in minde  
As I have you, that wolde I you biseche;  
And if I wisté sothly that to finde,  
God mighté not a point my joyés eche!  
But herté myn, withouté moré speche,  
Beth to me trewe, or ellés were it routhe;  
For I am thyn, by God and by my trouthe!

'Beth glad for-thy, and live in sikernesse;  
Thus seide I nevere or now, ne shal to mo!  
And if to you it were a gret gladnesse  
To torne ayein sone after that ye go,  
As fayn wolde I as ye that it were so,  
As wisly God myn herté bringe at reste!  
And him in armés took and ofté kiste.

Ayein his wil, sin it mot nedés be,  
This Troilus up ros, and faste him cledde,  
And in his armés took his lady free  
An hundred time, and on his wey him  
spedde;

1487. *owne*, a<sup>3</sup> *y humble*.

1488. *y-shet*, a<sup>3</sup> *y (y)ust*. (See l. 1519.)

1492. *thus*, a<sup>3</sup> *y right*; G<sup>2</sup> and *that*.

1496. *dowvès*, J H<sub>1</sub> R Cx H<sub>2</sub> *humbles*.

1517. *that*, J *y omit*.

And, with swich vois as though his herté  
bledde,  
He seide, 'Far-wel, deré herté sweté !  
Ther God us graunte sounde and soné  
mete !'—

To which no word for sorwé shé answérde,  
So soré gan his parting her distreyné ;  
And Troilus unto his paleys ferde  
As wo-bigon asshe was, soth to seyne ; 1530  
So harde him wrong of sharp desir the  
peyne  
For to ben eft ther he was in plesaunce,  
That it may nevere out of his rémem-  
braunce.

Retornéd to his réal paleys sone,  
He softe into his bed gan for to slinke,  
To alepé longe as he was wont to done.  
But al for naught ; he may wel ligge and  
winke,

But slep ne may ther in his herté sinke,  
Thinking how she, for whom desir him  
brende,

A thousand fold was worth more than he  
wen'de. 1540

And in his thought gan up and down to  
winde

Her wordés alle and every countenance,  
And ferméliche inpressen in his minde  
The lesté point that to him was plesaunce ;  
And verrayliche of th' ilké rémembraunce  
Desir al newe him brende, and lust to brede  
Gan more than erst, and yit took he non  
hede.

Criseyde also, right in the selvé wise,  
Of Troilus gan in her herté shette  
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedés  
wise, 1550

His gentillesse, and how she with him  
mette,

Thankingé Love, he so wel her bisette ;  
Desiring eft to han her herté dere

In swich split, she dorsté make him chere.

1524. *vois as though, y wordes as.*

1525. *deré, H<sub>2</sub> y my dere.*

1540. *seyn, so J R H<sub>2</sub> Cx. ; rest samp.*

1550. *he, B that he.*

Pandaré, a-morwé which that comen was  
Unto his nece and gan *her fairé grete*,  
Seide, 'Al this night so reynéd it, allas,  
That al my drede is that ye, necé swete,  
Han litel leiser had to slepe and mete :  
Al night,' quod he, 'hath reyn so don me  
wake, 1560  
That som of us for gode his hed may ake !'

And ner he com, and seide, 'How stant  
it now  
This brighté morwé ? Nece, how can ye  
fare ?'

Criseyde answérdé, 'Nevere the bet for  
you,

Fox that ye ben ! God yeve your herté care !  
God help me so, ye causéd al this fare,  
Trowe I,' quod she, 'for al your wordés  
white !

O, who-so seeth you knowéth you ful  
lite !'—

With that she gan her facé for to wrye  
Al with the shete, and wex for shamé  
red ; 1570

And Pandarus gan under for to pryé,  
And seidé, 'Nece, if that I shal be ded,  
Have here a sward, and smiteth off myn  
hed !'

With that his arm al sodeinly he threste  
Under her nekke, and at the laste herkeste.

I passe al that which nedeth not to seye.  
What ! God foryaf his deth, and she also  
Foryaf, and with her unclé gan to pleye,  
For other causé was ther non than so. 1579  
But of this thing right to th'effect to go,  
Whan timé was, hom til her hous she wenté ;  
And Pandarus hath hoolly his entente.

Now torné we ayein to Troilus,  
That restéles ful longe a-beddé lay,  
And prively sente after Pandarus  
To him to come in al the haste he may.  
He com anon, not onys seide he nay ;

1561. *his, so H<sub>2</sub> ; J his ; H<sub>2</sub> R our. a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> ;  
That some of us, I trowe, his hede ake !*

1563. *brighte, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y merle.*

1570. *Al with (?) all with.*

1570. *red, so a<sup>2</sup> ; rest al red.*

1576. *nedeth, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> y charygh.*

nd Troilus ful sobrelliche he grette,  
nd down upon his beddés side him sette.

his Troilus, with al th'affeccoun <sup>1590</sup>  
f frendés love, that herté may devise,  
o Pandarus on knowés fil adoun;  
nd, or that he wolde off the place arise,  
le gan him thonken in his besté wise.  
thousand time, and gan the day to blesse  
hat he was born to bringe him fro dis-  
tresse.

nd seide, 'O frend of frendés alder-  
beste  
hat everé was, the sothé for to telle,  
hou hast in hevene y-brought my soule  
at reste  
ro Flegitoun, the fery flood of helle; <sup>1600</sup>  
hat, though I mighte a thousand timés selle  
pon a day my lif in thy servise,  
mighté not a mote in that suffise.

Thesonné, which that al the world may see,  
aw neveré yit, my lif that dar I leye,  
o inly fair and goodly as is she,  
whos I am al and shal til that I deye;  
nd that I thus am hirés, dar I seye,  
hat thonkéd be the heighé worthinesse  
of Love, and ek thy kindé businesse! <sup>1610</sup>

Thus hastow me no litel thing y-yive,  
or which to thee obligéd be for ay  
fylif. And why? For thorough thy help  
I live,

er ellés ded had I ben mony a day! —  
nd with that word down in his bed he lay;  
nd Pandarus ful sobrelliche him herde  
il al was seyde, and than he thus answerde:

My deré frend, if I have don for thee  
n any cas, God wot, it is me lief;  
nd am as glad as man may of it be, <sup>1620</sup>  
od help mé so! But tak it not a-grief:  
or love of God, be war of this mischlef,

<sup>1595.</sup> thousand, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ hundred (γ sithe for ime).

<sup>1595.</sup> day to, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ time.

<sup>1600.</sup> Flegitoun, Phlegethon.

<sup>1617.</sup> thus, γ him.

<sup>1620.</sup> For love of God, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ That I shal scyn.

That, ther-as now thou brought art in thy  
blisse,  
That thou thy-self ne cause it not to misse.

'For of fortunés sharp advemité  
The worsté kinde of infortune is this:  
A man to han ben in prosperité,  
And it remembren whan it passéd is. <sup>1608</sup>  
Thou'rt wis y-nough, for-thy do not amis:  
Be not too rakel, though thou sitté warme,  
For if thou be, certain, it wol thee harme.

'Thou art at ease, and hold thee wel ther-inne;  
For also seur as red is every fir,  
As gret a craft is kepé wel as winne.  
Bridle alwey wel thy speche and thy desir,  
For worldly joye halt not but by a wir:  
That preveth wel, it brest alday so ofte;  
For-thy nede is to werken with it softe! —

Quod Troilus, 'I hope, and God to-form,  
My deré frend, that I shal so me bere, <sup>1640</sup>  
That in my gilt ther shal no thing be lorn,  
N'I wol not rakle as for to greven here.  
It nedeth not this mater ofté stere;  
For, wistestow myn herté wel, Pandaré,  
By God of this thou woldest litel care!'

Tho gan he telle him of his gladé night,  
And wher-offrist his hertédredde, and how;  
And seide, 'Frend, as I am trewe knight,  
And by that feith I shal to God and you,  
I hadde it neveré half so hote as now;  
And ay the moré that desir me biteth <sup>1651</sup>  
To love her best, the more it me deliteth.

'I n'ot myself not wisly what it is;  
But now I fele a newé qualité,  
Ye, al another than I dide or this.' —  
Pandaré answerde, and seide thus, that 'he  
That onés may in hevené bliissé be,  
He feleth other-weyés, dar I leye,  
Than th' ilké time he first herde of it seye.

This is oo word for al: this Troilus <sup>1660</sup>  
Was neveré ful to speke of this matére,

<sup>1643.</sup> this mater, etc., a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> (var.) al day this thing to tere.

<sup>1643.</sup> stere, so R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> (see iv. 1451); J and others tere.

<sup>1643.</sup> By God, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ God wot.



And for to preisen unto Pandarus  
The bounté of his right lady dere,  
And Pandarus to thanke and maken chere.  
This tale ay was span-newé to biginne,  
Til that the night departed hem a-  
twinne.—

Sone after this, for-that Fortune it wolde,  
Y-comen was the blisful timé sweté, 1668  
That Troilus was warnéd that he sholdé,  
Ther he was erst, Criseyde his lady mete ;  
For which he felte his herte in joyé flete,  
And feithfully gan alle the Goddés herie.  
And lat see now, if that he can be merie !

And holden was the forme and al the wise  
Of her cominge, and eek of his also,  
As it was erst, which nedeth not devise.  
But plainly to th'effect right for to go,  
In joye and seurté Pandarus hem two 1678  
A-beddé broughté, whan hem bothé leste ;  
And thus they ben in quiete and in reste.

Not nedeth it to you, sin they ben met,  
To axe at me if that they blithé were ;  
For if it erst was wel, tho was it bet  
A thousand fold : this nedeth not t'en-  
quere.  
Agon was every sorwe and every fere ;  
And bothe, y-wis, they hadde, and so they  
wen'de,  
As muché joye as herté may comprende.

This n'is no litel thing of for to seye :  
This passeth every wit for to devise ; 1689  
For ech of hem gan othres lust obeye :  
Felicité, which that thise clerkés wise  
Commenden so, ne may not here suffice :  
This joye not writen be with inké :  
This passeth al that herté may bi-thinke !

But cruel day (so weylawey the stounde !) <sup>1</sup>  
Gan for t'aproehe as they by signés knewe,  
For which hem thoughté felen dethés  
wounde.

So wo was hem, that chaungen gan hir  
hewe ;

And day they gonnen to despise al newe,  
Calling it traitour, envions, and worse ; 1700  
And bitterly the dayés light they corse.

Quod Troilus, ' Allas, now am I war,  
That Pireis and the swifté stedés three,  
Whiché that drawn forth the sonnés char,  
Han gon som by-path in dispit of me :  
That makéth it so soné day to be ;  
And, for the sonne him hasteth thus to rise,  
Ne shal I neveré don him sacrificé ! '

But nedés day departe hem mosté sone ;  
And whan hir speche y-don was and hir  
chere, 1710  
Theytwinneanonas they ben wont to done,  
And setten time of meting eft i-fere.  
And many a night they wroughte in this  
manére,  
And thus Fortune a timé ledde in joye  
Criseyde and eek this kingés sone of Troye.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges  
This Troilus gan al his lif to lede. 1717  
I Ispendeth, jousteth, maketh festeynges ;  
He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,  
And held aboute him ay, withouten drede,  
A world of folk, as com him wel of kinde,  
The freshest and the beste he coudé finde ;

That swich a vois of him was, and a  
stevne,  
Throughout the world, of honour and  
largesse,  
That it up-rong unto the yate of hevene.  
And, as in love, he was in swich gladnesse,  
That in his herte he deméd, as I gesse,  
That ther n'is lover in this world at ese  
So wel as he ; and thus gan love him plesé.

The goodlihedé or bounté which that  
kinde 1730  
In any other lady hadde y-set  
Can not the mountaunce of a knotte  
unbinde,  
About his herte, of al Criseydes net.

1703. *Pireis*, H<sub>1</sub> *Pireys*; H<sub>4</sub> Cx. *Pirers*; others  
*Pirous Pirus, Pirora*, etc. *Pirocia*, one of the  
four horses of the Chariot of the Sun; see Ovid,  
*Met.* II. 153.

1718. *festeynges*, so S; others *festynges*,  
*festynnynges*, etc.

1720. *ay, withouten*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>3</sup> *y alway out of*  
1723. *of him was, y was of him*.

1730. *bounté*, so J G<sup>3</sup> A; rest *beaute*.

e was so narwe y-maskéd and y-knet,  
 at it undon on any maner side,  
 atn'il not ben, for aught that may bitide !

nd by the hond ful ofte he woldé take,  
 is Pandarus, and into gardin lede,  
 nd swich a feste and swich a proces  
 make 1739

im of Criseyde, and of her wommanhede,  
 nd of her beauté, that withouten drede  
 was an hevene his wordés for to here ;  
 nd than he woldé singe in this manére :

Love, that of erthe and see hath  
 governaunce,  
 ove, that his hestés hath in hevenés hye,  
 ove, which that with an holsom álliaunce  
 alt peples joinéd as him list hem gye,  
 ove, that enditeth lawe of companye,  
 nd couplés doth in vertu for to dwelle,  
 nd this acord that I have told and telle.

That that the world, with feith which  
 that is stable, 1751

iverseth so his stoundés concordinge ;  
 hat elements that ben so discordable  
 olden a bond perpetuely duringe ;  
 hat Phebus mot his rosy day forth bringe ;  
 nd that the mone hath lordship over  
 the nightes :—

! this doth Love, ay heried be his mightes !

That that the see, that gredy is to flowen,  
 onstreineth to a certain endé so 1759  
 is flodés, that so fiersly they ne growen  
 o drenchen erthe and al for everé-mo ;  
 nd if that Love aught lete his bridel go,  
 l that now lov'th asonder sholdé lepe,  
 nd lost were al, that Love halt now to-  
 hepe.

so woldé God, that auctour is of kinde,  
 at with his bond Love of his vertu liste

1744. Troilus' Song of Love is taken from  
*vitinus* ii. metre 8. This song (1744-1771) is  
 sitted in H<sub>2</sub>, and inserted later in P.

1746. *which that*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R ; H<sub>2</sub> *that which* ;  
*it that*.

1748. *enditeth*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R G ; H<sub>2</sub> *endith* ; Cx.  
*dweth* ; rest *kneth*, *henneth*, etc. (Boethius,  
 125).

1754. *Hollen*, J and others *Holds* in.

1760. *herely*, R Cx. H<sub>2</sub> Cl. D *freshly*.

To cerclen hertés alle, and fasté binde,  
 That from his bond no wight the wey  
 out wiste !

And hertéscolde, hem wolde I that hetwiste  
 To make hem love, and that hem liste  
 ay rewe 1770

On hertés sore, and kepe hem that ben  
 trewe !—

In allé nedès for the townés werre  
 He was, and ay the firste in armés dight,  
 And certainly, but-if that bokés erre,  
 Save Ector, most y-drad of any wight ;  
 And this encre of hardinesse and might  
 Com him of love, his lady thank to winne,  
 That alteréd his spirit so withinne.

In time of trewe, on hawking wolde he ride,  
 Or ellés hunté boor, bere or lion ; 1780  
 The smalé bestés leet he gon biside.  
 And, whan that he com riding to the toun,  
 Ful ofte his lady from her window don,  
 As fresh as faucon comén out of muwe,  
 Ful redy was him goodly to saluwe.

And most of love and vertu was his speche,  
 And in despit hadde allé wrecchednesse ;  
 And doutéles, no nede was him biseche  
 Thonouren hem that hadden worthinesse,  
 And esen hem that werén in distresse ;  
 And glad was he, if any wight wel ferde  
 That lover was, whan he it wiste or herde.

For, soth to seyn, he lost held every wight  
 But-if he were in Lovés heigh servise,  
 I mené folk that oughte it ben of right.  
 And over al this, so wel coude he devise  
 Of sement, and in so uncouth wise  
 Al his array, that every lover thoughte  
 That al was wel, what-so he seide or  
 wroughte.

And though that he be come of blood  
 royal, 1800

Him liste of pride al no wight for to chace :  
 Benigne he was to ech in general,  
 For which he gat him thank in every place.  
 Thus woldé Love, y-heried be his grace,

1780. *to the*, so a<sup>2</sup> Cx ; H<sub>2</sub> *into the* ; A *to* ;  
 J and others *in to*.

That pride, envye, and ire, and avarice  
He gan to flee, and everich other vice.

Thou Lady bright, the daughter to Dione,  
Thy blinde and winged sone eek, daun  
Cupide,

Ye sustren nine eek, that by Elicone  
In hil Parnaso listen for t'abide,— 1810  
That ye thus fer han deyned me to gide,

1805. *envye, and ire, so J; a<sup>2</sup> R H<sub>3</sub> G<sup>3</sup> Cl.*  
omit *and*; Cx. Cp. H *and ire, envye.*

I can no more but, sin that ye wol wende,  
Ye heried ben for ay, withouten ende!

Thorough you have I seid fully in my song  
Th'effect and joye of Troilus' servise,  
Al be that ther was som disese among,  
As to myn auctour listeth to devise.  
My thriddé book now ende ich in this  
wise;

And Troilus in lust and in quieté 1819  
Is with Criseyde, his owné herté swete.

## BOOK IV

BUT al too litel, weylawey the while,  
Lasteth such joye, y-thanked be Fortune,  
That semeth trewest whan she wil bigile  
And can to folés so her song entune  
That she hem hent and bleat, traitour  
comune!

And whan a wight is from her wheel y-  
throwe,  
Than laugheth she, and maketh him a  
mowe.

From Troilus she gan her brighté face  
Awey to writhe, and took of him non  
hede, 9

But caste him clene out of his lady grace,  
And on hir wheel she sette up Diomedé;  
For-which right now myn herté ginneth  
blede,

And now my penne, allas, with which I  
write,  
Quaketh for drede of that I moste endite.

For how Criseyde Troilus forsook,  
Or at the leeste, how that she was un-  
kinde,

Mot hennés-forth ben mater of my book,  
As writen folk thorough which it is in  
minde.

Allas! that they sholde everé causé finde  
To speke her harm; and, if they on her  
lye, 20

Y-wis, hem-self sholde han the vilanye!

2. R omits ll. 1-28.  
7. a, a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>3</sub> y *the*.

O ye Herinés, Nightés doughtren three,  
That endéles compleinen evere in peyne,  
Megera, Alete, and eek Thesiphone!  
Thou cruel Mars eek, fader to Quirine,  
This ilké ferthé book me helpeth fine,  
So that the los of lif and love i-fere  
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.

—Ligging in ost, as I have seid or this,  
The Grekés stronge abouté Troyé toun, 3  
Bifel that, whan that Phēbus shining is  
Upon the brest of Hercules' Lioun,  
That Ector with ful many a bold baroun  
Caste on a day with Grekés for to fighte  
As he was wont, to greve hem what he  
mighte.

N'ot I how long or short it was bitwene  
This purpos and that day they issen  
mente;

But on a day wel arméd, brighte and  
shene,

With spere in honde and biggè bowés  
bente,

Ector and many a worthy wight out-  
wente; 40

And in the berd anon withouten lette  
Hir fo-men in the feld hem fasté mette.

22. *Herinés*; the Three Furies, Megera, Aleto, and Tisiphone. (See l. 6.)

26. *This ilke ferthe*, a<sup>2</sup> *This ferthe*; H<sub>3</sub> *This fyfte and laste*; H<sub>4</sub> *This fynde and laste*.

29. *aris*, H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. H<sub>3</sub> *fold*.

37. *issen*, so J; P *isw*; H<sub>3</sub> *thus*; others *fighten, fowken*. (Boc. usci.) \*

39, 40. H<sub>3</sub> S y transpose ll. 39, 40.

se longé day, with sperés sharpe y-  
grounde,  
ith arwés, dartés, swerdés, maces felle,  
ey fighte, and bringen hors and man to  
grounde,  
d with hir axes out the brainés quelle.  
it in the lasté shour, soth for to telle,  
efolk of Troye hem-selven somis-ledden  
at with the wors at night homward they  
fledde.

tte whiché day was taken Antenore 50  
augré Polydamas or Monestéo,  
untippé, Sarpedon, Polynestore,  
lyte, or eek the Trojan daun Riphéo  
nd othré lassé folk as Phebuséo ;  
) that for harm that day the folk of Troye  
redde to lese a gret part of hir joye.

it nathéles a trewé was ther take  
t gret requeste, and tho they gonnen  
trete  
f prisoneres a chaungé for to make, 59  
nd for the surplus yeven sommés grete.  
his thing anon was couth in every strete  
the in th'assege, in towne, and every  
where,  
nd with the firste it com to Calcas' ere.

Then Calcas knew this tretis sholdé holde,  
consistórie among the Grekés sone  
e gan in-thringé forth with lordés olde,  
nd sette him ther-as he was wont to  
done ;

nd with a chaungéd face hem bad a bone,  
or love of God to don that reverence  
o stinté noise and yeve him audience. 70

han seide he thus, 'Lo, lordés mine, ich  
was

50. *Atte*, so H<sub>2</sub> A; others *At*.

51. *Maugré Polydamas or*; H<sub>2</sub> *Palidomas*  
*ad alio* (Boc.)

53. *or*, H<sub>2</sub> and (Boc.)

54. *And*, a<sup>2</sup> *Or*.

55. *So that for harm that day*, H<sub>2</sub> *For al*  
*ctor*; so *that* (Boc.)

57, 58, 59. So J H<sub>2</sub> R Cx. S (var.); H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> a<sup>2</sup> y  
nd (var.)

60. (of) Priamus was yeve at his (gret, Grek, Grekes)  
requeste

time of trewe, and tho they gonnen tretre  
in prisoneres to chaungre, most and leste.  
(Boc. Chiese Priamo triagus, a figliu data, etc.)

Trojan, as it is knowen out of drede ;  
And, if that you remembre, I am Calcas  
That alderfirst yaf confort to your nede,  
And toldé wel how that ye sholden spede :  
For dreddes thorough you shal in a stounde  
Ben Troye y-brent and beten doun to  
grounde.

'And in what forme and in what maner  
wise

This toun to shende, and al your list  
t'acheve, 79

Ye han or this wel herd me you devise :  
This knowé ye, my lordés, as I leve.  
And, for the Grekés werén me so leve,  
I com my-self in my propre persóne,  
To teche in this how you was best to done,

'Having unto my tresour ne my rente  
Right no resport, to réspect of your ese.  
Thus al my good I lefte, and to you wente,  
Wening in this, my lordés, you to plesse.  
But al this los ne doth me no disese :  
I vouché-sauf, as wisly have I joye, 90  
For you to lese al that I have in Troye,

'Save of a doughter that I lefte, allas,  
Sleping at home, whan out of Troye I sterte.  
O sterne and cruel fader that ich was !  
How mighte I have in that so hardan herte?  
Allas, In'hadde y-brought her in hersherte !  
Forsorwe of which I wil not live to morwe,  
But-if ye lordés rewe upon my sorwe.

'For, by that cause I say no time or now  
Her to deliver, ich holden have my pes ;  
But now or neveré, yif it liké yow, 101  
I may her have right soné doutéles.  
O help and grace ! amongés al this pres  
Rewe on this oldé caitif in distresse,  
Sin I thorugh you have al this hevinesse !

'Ye have now caught and fetred in prison  
Trojans y-nowe ; and if your willeés be  
My child with oon may have redempcioun,

80. *me you, y if me*.

87. *lefte*, so J H<sub>2</sub> Cx. A D; others *leste*, *loste*  
(Boc. lasciai)

89. *this*, so J H<sub>2</sub> Cx.; a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> *my*; others *that*.

93. *Troye*, a<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> *tenne*.

101. *yif*, so J H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>2</sub>; D Cp. Cl. *if that*.

Now for the love of God and of bounté,  
Oon of so fele, alas, so yeve him me ! 110  
What nede were it this prayr for to werne,  
Sinyshal bothe han folk and toun as yerne?

'On peril of my lif I shal not lye,  
Appollo hath me told it feithfully ;  
I have eek founde it by astronomye,  
By sort and by augúris eek trewely,  
And dar wel seyn the time is faste by  
That fir and flaumbe on al the toun shal  
sprede ;

And thus shal Troye torne in asshen dede.

'For, certein, Phebus and Neptúnus bothe  
That makeden the wallés of the toun 121  
Ben with the folk of Troye alwéy so wrothe,  
They wol eft bringe it to confusioun  
Right for despit of King Laméadoun :  
Bi-cause he n'oldé payén hem hir hire,  
The toun shal yit be set upon a fire.'

Telling his tale alwey, this oldé greye,  
Humble in his speche, and in his lokinge ke,  
The salté terés from his yén tweye  
Ful faste ronnen down by either cheke. 130  
So longe he gan of socour hem biseke  
That, for to hele him of his sikés sore,  
They yave him Antenor withouten more.

But who was glad y-nough but Calcas tho !  
And of this thing ful sone his nedés leyde  
On hem that sholden for the tretis go,  
And hem for Antenor ful ofté preyde  
To bringen hom King Thoas and Criseyde :  
And whan Priám his savé gardé sente,  
Th'embassadours to Troye streight they  
wente. 140

The cause y-told of hir cominge, the olde  
Priam, the king, ful sone in general  
Let her-upon his parlément to holde,  
Of which th'effect rehersen you I shal :

121. *makeden*, so J R γ (exc. A Cl.); a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> S  
*maden alle*; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. A Cl. *maden*.  
123. *They wol eft*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; others  
*That they wol*.

130. *sikas*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; others *sorrows*.  
137, 138. H<sub>3</sub> reads:

And hem ful ofté specially preyde  
For Antenor to bringe home Criseide.

139. *save garde*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> a<sup>2</sup> *conduit* hem.

Th'embassadours ben answer'd for final,  
Th'exchaunge of prisoneres and al this nede  
Hem liketh wel; and forth in they procede.

This Troilus was present in the place,  
Whan axéd was for Antenor Criseyde; 149  
For-which ful soné chaungen gan his face  
As he that with tho wordés wel neigh deyde,  
But nathéles he no word to it seyde;  
Lest men sholde his affeccioun espye,  
With mannés herte he gan his sorwé drye.

And ful of anguiss and of grisly drede  
Abood what other lordés woldé seye;  
And if they woldé graunte, as God forbede,  
Th'exchaunge of her, than thoughte he  
thingés tweye :

First how to save her honour, and what weye  
He mighté best th'eschaunge of her with-  
stonde; 150

Ful faste he caste howal this mighté stonde.

Lové made him al prest to don her bide,  
Or rather dyen than she sholdé go;  
But Reson seide him on that other side,  
'Withoute assent of her ne do not so,  
If thou debate it, lest she be thy fo,  
And seyn that thorough thy medling is  
y-blowe  
Your bother love, ther it was erst unknowe.'

For-which he gan deliberén for the beste,  
That, though the lordés woldé that she  
wente, 170

He woldé lete hem graunté what hem leste,  
And telle his lady first what that they mente;  
And whan that she had seid him her entente,  
Therafter wolde he werken al-so blive,  
Theigh al the world ayein it woldé strive.

Ector which that right wel the Grekés herde,  
For Antenor how they wolde han Criseyde,  
Gan it withstonde and sobreliche answerde:

156. *other lordes wolde*, a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *lordes wolde*  
(un)to it.

162. *made him*, so H<sub>3</sub> A; rest *him made*  
(read ? *Lo, Love*; see i. 603).

163. *Or, γ And*.

165. *If thou debate (it) lest she*, so J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R;  
a<sup>2</sup> G<sup>2</sup> γ *lest for thy work she wolde be*.

176. *right wel*, so Cx. S; rest *wel*.

Sirés, she n'is no prisoner,' he seyde; 179  
I n'ot on you who that this charge leyde;  
But on my part ye may eft-some hem telle,  
Ne usen here no wommen for to selle.'

The noise of peple up-stertè than at ones  
As breme as blase of straw y-set on fire;  
For Infortune it woldè for the nones,  
They sholden hir confusioun desire.

Ector! 'quod they, 'What gost may you  
enspire

This woman thus to shilde, and don us lese  
Jaun Antenor—a wrong wey now ye  
chese— 189

That is so wis and eek so bold baroun?  
And we han nede of folk as men may se.  
He is eek oon the grettest of this toun!  
O Ector, lat tho fantasys be!

O King Priam! 'quod they, 'thus siggen  
we,

That al our vois is to forgon Criseyde.  
And to deliveren Antenor they preyde.

O Juvenal, lord, soth is thy sentence:  
That litel witen folk what is to yerne,  
That they ne finde in hir desir offence;  
For cloude of errour letteth hem discerne  
What best is. And lo, here ensauple as  
yerne! 201

This folk desiren now deliverance  
Of Antenor, that broughte hem to  
mischance;

For he was after traitour to the toun  
Of Troye. Alas, they quitte him out too  
rathe!

O nicè world, lo, thy discrecioun!  
Criseyde which that neverè dide hem scathe  
Shal now no lenger in her blissè bathe;  
But Antenor, he shal come hom to toun,  
And she shal out: thus seiden here and  
hounè. 210

For-which deliverèd was by parlèment  
For Antenor to yelden out Criseyde,  
And it pronouncèd by the president,

197. *sodè, y trowe.*

200. *letteth hem, so R; H<sub>2</sub> Cx. let hem to;*  
*thens let hem, no let hem, let hem not, etc.*

Altheigh that Ector nay ful oftè preyde;  
That finally, what wight that it withseyde,  
It was for naught: it mostè benand sholde,  
For substance of the parlèment it wolde.

Departed out of parlèment echone,  
This Troilus withoutè wordes mo  
Into his chambrè spedde him faste, allone  
But-if it were a man of his or two, 221  
The whiche he bad out fastè for to go,  
Because he woldè slepen, as he seyde;  
And hastily upon his bed him leyde.

And as in winter levès ben biraft,  
Ech after other, til the tree be bare,  
So that ther n'is but bark and braunche  
y-lafte,

Li'th Troilus biraft of ech welfare,  
Y-bounden in the blakè bark of care, 229  
Disposèd wood out of his wit to breyde,  
So sore him sat the chaunging of Criseyde.

He rist him up, and every dore he shette  
And window eek; and tho this sorwful  
man

Upon his beddès side adoun him sette,  
Ful lik a ded imagé pale and wan;  
And in his brest the heped wo began  
Outbreste, and he to werken in this wise  
In his woodnèsse, as I shal you devise. 239

Right as the wildè bolè ginneth springe  
Nowhere, now there, y-darted to the herte,  
And of his deth roreth in còmpleinige,  
Right so gan he aboute the chambrè sterte,  
Smiting his brest ay with his fistès smerte;  
His hed to walle, his body to the grounde  
Ful oftè heswapte, himselfen to confounde.

His yen two for pieté of herte,  
Out stremèden as swiftè wellès tweye;  
The heighè sobbès of his sorwes smerte  
His speche him rafte: unnethès mighte  
he seye, 249

239. *ginneth, so G<sup>2</sup>; P H<sub>2</sub> ginneth to; J and  
others biginneth.*

244. *to walle, so R; Cx. to wallys; J and  
others to the walle.*

246. *fieth, so J H<sub>2</sub> S; others pite, pite.*

247. *Out stremeden as swift, P G<sup>2</sup> So wep(f)ren  
that they semen.*

'O deth, allas! why n'lt thou do me deye?  
A-corséd be that day which that Nature  
Shoop me to be a livés créature!'

But after, whan the furie, and al this rage  
Which that his herté twisté and fasté  
threste,

By lengthe of timé somewhat gan aswage,  
Upon his bed he leide him down to reste.  
But tho bigonne his terés more out-breste,  
That wonder is the body may suffise  
To half this wo which that I you devise.

Than seide he thus: 'Fortúne, allas the  
while! 260

What have I don? What have I thus  
a-gilt?

How mightestow for routhe me bigile?  
Is ther no grace? And shal I thus be  
spilt?

Shal thus Criseyde away, for-that thou  
wilt?

Allas, how mayst thou in thyn herté finde  
To be to me thus cruel and unkinde?

'Have I thee not honouréd al my live,  
As thou wel wost, above the Goddés alle?  
Why wiltow me fro joyé thus deprive?  
O Troilus, what may men now thee calle  
But wrecche of wrecches, out of honour  
falle 271

Into miserie, in which I wol biwaile  
Criseyde, allas, til that the breth me faile.

'Allas, Fortúne! if that my lif in joye  
Displeaséd hadde unto thy foule envye,  
Why n'haddestow my fader king of Troye  
Braft the lif, or don my brethren dye,  
Or slain myself that thus compleine and  
crye?

I, combré-world, that may of nothings serve,  
But alwey dye and neveré fully sterve!

'If that Criseyde alloné were me laft 282  
Nought roughte I whiderward thou woldest  
stere;

282. *wonder is, P G<sup>2</sup> woi unnathe* (Boc. appena).

280. *away, 7 over*.

282. *whiderward, 7 whider*.

282. *quidest, so H<sup>4</sup> R: J and others woldest me*.

And her, allas, than hast thou me braft!  
But everemo, lo, this is thy manére  
To reve a wight that most is to him dere,  
To preve in that thy gerful violence!  
Thus am I lost: ther helpeth no defence!

'O verray Lord, O Love! O God, allas!  
That knowest best myn herte and al my  
thought! 289

What shal my sorwful lif don in this cas  
If I forgo that I so dere have bought?  
Sin ye Criseyde and me han fully brought  
Into your grace, and bothe our hertés  
seled,

How may ye suffice, allas, it be repeled?

'What shal I don? I shal, whil I may dure  
On live, in torment and in cruel payne  
This infortune or this disaventure  
Allone as I was born, y-wis, compleyne;  
Ne neveré wol I sen it shine or reyne;  
But ende I wol, as Edippe in derknésse,  
My sorwful lif, and deyen for distresse.

'O wery gost, that errest to and fro, 302  
Why n'ltow fien out of the wofulléste  
Body that everé mighte on groundé go?  
O soulé, lurking in this wo, unreste!  
Fle forth out of myn herte and lat it  
breste,

And folwe alwey Criseyde thy lady dere  
Thy righté place is now no lenger here.

'O woful yén two, sin your disport  
Was al to seen Criseydes yén brighte, 310  
What shal ye don, but for my disconfort  
Stonden for naught and wepen out your  
sighte?

Sin she is queynt that wont was you to  
lighte,

In veyn fro this forth have ich yén tweye  
I-forméd, sin your vertu is aweye,

295. 7 read: *What I may don, I shal, whil I may dure*. Boc. *Che faro io . . .* Io piar gerò . . .

300, 302. P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> read:

*Ne hevenes light (His Ne see no light); and thus I b derknésse*

*My woful (His sorwful) lif wol enden for (His) distresse*

306. P G<sup>2</sup> read:

*Fle forth anon, and do myn herte happy*.

O my Criseyde, O lady sovereyne  
 f th' ilke woful soule that thus cryeth,  
 Tho shal now yevé confort to my payne?  
 llas, no wight! But whan myn herté  
 dyeth,  
 319  
 y spirit which that so unto you hyeth  
 eceive in gre, for that shal ay you serve!  
 or-ty no fors is though the body sterve!

O ye lovères that heighe upon the wheel  
 en set of Fortune, in good aventure,  
 od levé that ye finde ay love of steel,  
 nd longé mote your lif in joye endure!  
 ut whan ye comen by my sepulture,  
 emembreth that your felaw resteth there;  
 or I lovede eek, though I unworthy were.

O olde, unholsom and mislived man,—  
 alcas I mene,—allas, what aileth thee  
 o ben a Grek, sin thou art born Troján?  
 Calcas, which that wilt my bané be,  
 cursed timé was thou born for me!  
 s woldé blisful Jové for his joye  
 bat I thee haddé wher I wolde in Troye!

thousand sikés botter than the glede  
 ut of his brest, ech after other, wente,  
 edled with pleintés newe his wo to fede,  
 r which his woful terés neveré stente; 340  
 nd shortly so his peiné him to-rente,  
 nd wex so maat, that joyé nor penaunce  
 e feleth non, but li'th forth in a trounce.

undaré, which that at the parlément  
 ad herd what every lord and burgesseyde,  
 nd how ful graunted was by oon assent  
 r Antenor to yelden so Criseyde,  
 an wel neigh wood out of his wit to breyde;  
 ut that for wo he n'isté what he mente,  
 ut in a rees to Troilus he wente. 350

certain knight, that for the timé kepte  
 he chambré dore, undide it him anon;  
 nd Pandar, that ful tendreliché wepte,  
 to his derké chambré stille as ston  
 ward the bed gan softly to gon,

So cónfus that he n'iste what to seye:  
 For verray wo his wit was neigh awaye.

And with his chere and loking al to-torn  
 Forsorwe of this, and with his armés folden,  
 He stood this woful Troilus biforn, 360  
 And on his pitous face he gan biholden;  
 But, Lord, so ofté gan his herté colden,  
 Seing his frend in wo, whos heviness  
 His herté slough, as thoughte him, for  
 distresse.

This woful wight, this Troilus, that fêlté  
 His frend Pandaré y-comen him to see,  
 Gan as the snow ayein the sonnè melte;  
 For-which this sorwful Pandar, of pité,  
 Gan for to wepe as tendreliche as he;  
 And spechèles thus ben thise ilke tweye,  
 That neither mighte oo word forsorwéseye.

But at the laste this woful Troilus, 375  
 Neigh ded for smert, gan bresten out to  
 rore,

And with a sorwful noise he seidé thus,  
 Among his sobbés and his sighés sore,  
 'Lo, Pandar, I am ded, withouté more!  
 Hastow not herd at parlément,' he seyde,  
 'For Antenor how lost is my Criseyde?'

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,  
 Ful pitously answerde and seidé, 'Yis! 380  
 As wisly were it fals as it is trewe  
 That I have herd, and wot al how it is.  
 O mercy, God, who wolde han trowéd this!  
 Who wolde have wen'd that, in so litel  
 throwe,

Fortúne our joyé wolde han over-throwe!

'For in this world ther n'is no créature,  
 As to my doom, that everé saw ruine  
 Straunger than this, thorough cas or  
 aventure.

But who may al eschewe or al devine?

357. *neigh*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> S Cx. *al*; A *now*; D *om*.

358. *And*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> *But*.

359. *For sorwe of this*, P G<sup>2</sup> Ny *ded for my*,  
 (H<sup>2</sup> omits l. 359.)

360. *But*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> *And*.

375. *Neigh ded for smert*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> *Neigh*  
*herde* (G<sup>2</sup> *smert*).

384. *litel*, R. *litte*.

317. *My*, H<sup>2</sup> Cx. *that*; y *this*.

318. *to*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> A D; *rest the, thy, your*.

319. *Whan*, P G<sup>2</sup> H<sup>2</sup> *chaungyn*.



Swich is the world! For-thy I thus define:  
 Ne trust no wight to finden in fortune 391  
 Ay proprete; her giftes ben commune.

'But tel me this; why thou art now so mad  
 To sorwen thus. Why li'stow in this wise,  
 Sin thy desir al hoolly hastow had,  
 So that by right it oughte y-nough suffice?  
 But I, that neveré felte in my servise  
 A frendly chere or looking of an ye,  
 Lat me thus wepe and wailen til I dye!

'And over al this, as thou wel wost thy-  
 selfe,

This town is ful of ladies al aboute; 401  
 And, to mydoom, fairer than swiché twelve  
 As evere she was, shal I finde in som route,  
 Ye, oon or two, withouten any doute.  
 For-thy be glad, myn owné deré brother!  
 If she be lost, we shal recovere another!

'What! God forbede alwey that ech  
 plesáunce

In oo thing were, and in non other wight!  
 If oon can singe, another can wel daunce;  
 If this be goodly, that is glad and light;  
 And this is fair, and that can good a-right.  
 Ech for his vertu holden is for dere, 412  
 Bothe heroner and faucon for rivére!

'And ek, as writ Zanzis that was ful wis,  
 "The newé love out-chaseth ofte the olde,"  
 And upon newé cas li'th newe avis.

Thenk ek thy lif to savén artow holde!  
 Swich fir by proces mot of kindé colde;  
 For sin it n'is but casuel plesáunce, 419  
 Som cas shal putte it out of rémembraunce.

'For al-so seur as day com'th after night,  
 The newé love, labour or other wo,  
 Or ellés seldé seing of a wight;  
 Doni olde affecciouns alle over-go.  
 And, for thy part, thou shalt han oon of tho  
 T'abreggè with thy bittré peinés smerte:  
 Absence of her shal drive her out of  
 herte!—

Thise wordes seide he for the nonés alle,  
 To helpe his frend, lest he for sorwé deyde;

400. *that y she.*

412. *as is, so H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.; J and others in.*

For doutéles, to don his wo to falle, 420  
 He roughté not what unthrift that héseyde.  
 But Troilus, that neigh for sorwé deyde,  
 Took litel hede of al that evere he mente;  
 Oon ere it herde, att'other out it wente.

But at the laste answeerde and seide, 'Frend.  
 This lechecraft, or heléd thus to be,  
 Were wel sittinge, if that I were a fend.  
 To traysen her that trewe is unto me!  
 I preye God, lat this conseil neveré thé;  
 But do me rather sterve anon right here  
 Or I so do as thou me woldest lere! 44.

'She that I serve, y-wis, what-so thou seye,  
 To whom myn herte enhabit is by right,  
 Shal han me hoolly heres til that I deyde.  
 What! Pandarus, sin I have her bihight,  
 I wol not ben untrewé for no wight;  
 But as her man I wol ay live and sterve,  
 And neveré other créature serve!

'And ther thou seyst thou shalt as faire finde  
 As she, lat be, mak no comparisoun 430  
 To créature y-formed here by kinde!  
 O levé Pandar, in conclusioun,  
 I wol not ben of thyn opinioun  
 Touching al this; for-thy, I thee biseche,  
 So hold thy pees: thou sleest me with  
 thy speche!

'Thou biddest me I sholdé love another  
 Al freschly newe, and lat Criseyde go!  
 It li'th not in my power, levé brother;  
 And though I mighte, I woldé not do so  
 But canstow pleyen raket, to and fro, 440  
 Netle in, dokke out, now this, now that  
 Pandaré,  
 Now foulé falle her for thy wo that care!

'Thou farest ek by me, thou Pandarus,  
 As he that, whan a man is wo-bigon,  
 He com'th to him a pas and seith right thus

434. *att'other, so F H<sub>1</sub>; rest at the other, 'that other, at other.*

435. *laste, so H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>1</sub>; others last(e) he.*

436. *her, so J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub> A D Cl.; rest a wigh*

443. *What, so J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub>; rest Nay.*

445. *her bihight, so J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub>; rest trowl*

*her bihight (bihight).*

464. *man, so a (= J P G<sup>2</sup> H<sub>2</sub>); rest wight.*

Thank not on smert, and thou shalt  
felé non !"

hou most me first transmuwén in a ston,  
nd revé me my passiounés alle,  
r thou so lightly do my wo to falle ! 469

The deth may wel out of my brest departe  
he lif, so longé may this sorwé mine ;  
ut fro my soulé shal Criseyde's darte  
ut neveré mo ; but doun with Proserpine,  
/han I am ded, I wol go wone in pine ;  
nd ther I wol eternally compleyne  
his wo, and how that twinnéd be we  
tweyne !

Thou hast here maad an argument, for fyn,  
ow that it sholde a lassé peiné be  
riseydé to forgon, for she was myn,  
nd livede in ese and in felicité ! 480  
/hy gabbestow ? that seidest thus to me,  
hat "him is wors that is fro weley-throwe,  
han he had erst non of that wele y-  
knowe !"

But sey me this : sin that thee think'th  
so light

o chaungé so in love ay to and fro,  
/hy hastow not don bisily thy might  
o chaungen her that doth thee al thy wo ?  
/hy n'iltow lete her from thy herté go ?  
/hy n'iltow love another lady swete,  
hat may thyn herté setten in quiéte ? 490

f thou hast had in love ayyit mischaunce,  
nd canst it not yit fro thyn herté drive,  
that have lived in lust and in plesunce  
/ith her as muche as créature on-live,  
ow sholde I that foryete, and that so blive ?  
where hastow ben hld so longe in muwe,  
hat canst so wel and formaly arguwe !

Nay, Pandarus, naught worth is al thy red ;  
at douteles, for aught that may bifalle,

480. *Hoede*, G<sup>2</sup> R Cx. Cl. *Hoed*(s).

484. *sey me this*, so a ; rest *tel me now, tel me*

is.

492. *yit fro*, so a (H<sub>2</sub> om. *yit*) ; rest *out of*.  
493. *have hoed* (H<sub>2</sub> *have had* ; G *have* ;  
H *hoed*)(read ? *Hoede ay*, Boc.).

498. *Nay, Pandarus*, so a ; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx. S

49. *Nay, God dost* ; y *Nay, God wol*.

499. So a ; rest read *For which, for what that*

172 *may bifalle*.

Withouten wordés mo, I wol be ded ! 500  
O deth, that ender art of sorwés alle,  
Com now, sin I so ofte after thee calle ;  
For sely is that deth, soth for to seyne,  
That, ofte y-cleped, com'th and endeth  
peyne !

'Wel wot I, whil my lif was in quiéte,  
Or deth me slowe I wolde han yiven hire ;  
But now his coming is to me so swete  
That in this world I no thing so desire.  
O deth, sin with this sorwe I am on fire,  
Thou outhur do m' anon in terés drenche,  
Or with thy coldé strok myn heté quenche !

'Sin that thou sleest so fele in sondry wise  
Ayeins hir wil, unpreyéd, day and night,  
Do me at my requesté this servise : 514  
Deliveré now the world, than dostow right,  
Of me that am the wofullesté wight  
That everé was ; for time is that I sterve,  
Sin in this world of right naught may I  
serve !'—

This Troilus in terés gan distille,  
As licour out of alambic, ful faste ; 520  
And Pandarus gan holde his tongé stille,  
And to the grounde his yén doun he caste.  
But natheles thus thoughte he at the laste,  
'What, pardé, rather than my felaw deye,  
Yit shal I somewhat more unto him seye !'

And seidé, 'Frend, sin thou hast swich  
distresse,

And sin thee list myn arguments to blame,  
Why n'ilt thy-selven helpé to redresse,  
And with thy manhod letten al this grame ?  
To ravishe her ne canstow not ? for shame !  
And outhur lat her out of touné fare 532  
Or hold her stille, and lef this nicé care !

'Artow in Troye, and hast non hardiment  
To take a womman which that loveth thee  
And wolde her-selven ben of thyn assent ?

506. *deth*, so a ; rest *thou*.

507. *his*, so a (H<sub>2</sub> omits) ; rest *thy*.

511. *hete*, so J H<sub>4</sub> R H<sub>1</sub> Cl. (Boc.) ; H<sub>2</sub> *herte*

*hete* ; rest *herte*.

515. *tham*, so a A D ; rest *so*.

530. *To*, so J H<sub>2</sub> D Cx. Cl. ; rest *Go*.

532. *this nice care*, Cx. y *thy nice fare*.

Now is not this a nicé vanité?  
Ris up anon, and lat thy weping be,  
And kith thou art a man; for in this houre  
I wol be ded, or she shal bleven oure!'

To this answerde him Troilus ful softe,  
And seide, 'Pardé, levé brother dere, 547  
Al this have I my-selve y-thought ful ofte,  
And more thing than thou devisest here.  
But why this thing is left, thou shalt wel  
here;  
And whan thou me hast yiven audience,  
Ther-after maystow telle al thy sentence.

'First, sin thou wost this town hath al this  
werre

For ravishing of women so by might,  
It sholdé not be suffred me to erre, 549  
As it stant now, ne don so gret unright.  
I sholde han also blame of every wight,  
My fadres graunt if that I so withstood,  
Sin she is chaunged for the townés good.

'I have ek thought, so it were her assent,  
To axe her at my fader of his grace;  
Than thanke I, this were her accusé-  
ment,

Sin wel I wot I may her not purchace.  
For sin my fader in so heigh a place  
As parlément hath her eschaunge enseld  
He n'il for me his honour he repeled. 560

'Yit drede I most her herté to perturbe  
With violence, if I do swich a game;  
For, if I wolde it openly disturbe,  
It mosté be disclaundré to her name,  
And me were leveré ded than her defame.  
As n'oldé God but-if I sholdé have  
Her honour leveré than my lif to save!

'Thus am I lost, for aught that I may see;  
For certain is, sin that I am her knight,  
I have her honour leveré yit than me 570  
In every cas, as lover oughte of right.  
Thus am I with desir and reson twight:  
Desir for to disturben her me redeth,  
And reson n'il not, so myn herté dredeth.'

560. honour, so a; rest letter.

571. In, J H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>3</sub> And in.

Thus weping that he couldé neveré cesse,  
He seide, 'Allas, how shal I, wrecché,  
fare?

For wel fele I alwéy my love encresse,  
And hope is lasse and lasse alwéy, Pandaré;  
Encressen ek the causes of my care; 579  
So weylawey, why n'il myn herté breste?  
For-why in love is litel hertés reste!'

Pandaré answerd, 'Frend, thou mayst for  
me

Don as thee list. But hadde ich it so hote,  
And thyn estat, she sholdé go with me!  
Though al this town cri'de on this thing  
by note,

I n'olde sette at al the noise a grote!  
For whan men han wel cried, than lat  
hem rouné!

For wonder last but nine night nevere in  
touné!

'Deviné not in reson ay so depe  
Ne preciously, but help thy-selve anon! 599  
Bet is that other than thy-selvé wepe,  
And namely sin ye two ben al oon!  
Ris up, for by myn hed she shal not gon  
And rather be a lite in blame y-founde  
Than sterve here as a gnat without  
wounde!

'It is no rape in my dom, ne no vice,  
Her to with-holden that thee loveth most!  
Paraunter she may holden thee for nice  
To lete her go thus to the Grekés oost. 59  
Thenk ek Fortúne, as wel thy-selven wos  
Helpeth an hardy man to his emprise,  
And fleeth fro wrecches for hir cowardise!

'And though thy lady wolde a lite her greve,  
Thou shalt thy pees ful wel her-after make;

581. For-why in love, so J P G; H<sub>3</sub> H<sub>3</sub> For  
whil I live; rest read For as in love ther is but  
litel reste.

587. lat hem rouné, so a; rest wol they rouné.

588. For, so a D; Cl. A; rest Ek.

590. preciously, so a; R. preciently; Cx.  
curiously; rest curtesy. (Boc. sottilmento.)

596. rage in my dom, so a; rest no shame  
(write you (thee)).

597. thee loveth, J then lovest; others var.

601. an, so R Cx. S; rest omit.

602. fleeth fro, so a Cx; rest waymeth.

but as for me, certein, I can not leve  
that she wolde it as now for yvel take.  
Why sholdé thanne of-fér'd thyn herte  
quake?

henk how that Paris hath, that is thy  
brother,  
love; and why shaltow nothave another?

And Troilus, oo thing I dar thee swere:  
that if Criseyde, which that is thy lief, 611  
low loveth thee as wel as thou dost here,  
god help me so, she n'il not take a-grief  
heigh thou do bote anon in this mischief,  
and if she wilneth fro thee forth to passe,  
than is she fals: so love her wel the lasse!

For-thy tak herte, and thenk thus as a  
knight:

thorough love is broken alday every lawe.  
With now somwhat thy corage and thy  
might,

have mercy on thy-self for any awe. 620  
at not this wrecched wothyn hertégnawe,  
but manlyset the world on sixe and sevene,  
and if thou deye a martir, go to hevene!

I wol my-self ben with thee at this dede,  
though ich and al my kin upon a stounde  
hulle in a strete as doggés liggen dede,  
thorough-girt with many a wide and bloody  
wounde.

in every cas I wol a frend be found. 628  
and if thee list here sterven as a wrecche,  
adieu, the devil have him that it recche!"

his Troilus gan with tho wordés quiken,  
and seide, 'Frend, gramercy, ich assente.  
but certainly thou mayst not so me priken,  
for peyné non ne may me so tormente,  
that for no cas it is not myn entente,  
at shorté wordés, though I deyen sholde,  
to ravishe her, but-if herselfe it wolde.'

And answérde, 'Of that be as be may!  
but tel me thanne, hastow her wil assayed,  
that sorwest thus?' And he answérde,  
'Nay.'

640

630. *have*, so a; rest *spede*.630. *is*, *f* and others omit.638. So a; rest read 'Why so mena I,' quod  
Andar, 'at this day.'

'Wher-of artow,' quod Pandar, 'than  
amayed,

That n'ost not that she wol ben yvele payed  
To ravishe her, sin thou hast not ben there,  
But any angel tolde it in thyn ere?

'For-thy ris up, as naught ne were, anon,  
And wassh thy face, and to the king thou  
wende,

Or he may wondren why thou art thus gon.  
Thou most with wisdom him and othré  
blende,

Or upon cas he may after thee sende 649  
Or thou be war. And, shortly, brother dere,  
Be glad, and lat me werke in this matére.

'For I shal shape it so, that sikerly  
Thou shalt this night, som time in som  
manére,

Come speken with thy lady prively;  
And by her wordés ek and by her chere  
Thou shalt ful sone aparceive and wel here  
Al her entente, and of this cas the beste.  
And far now wel, for in this point I reste.'

The swifté Famé, which that falsé thinges  
Egál reporteth lik the thingés trewe, 660  
Was thorough-out Troye y-fled with presté  
wings

From man to man, and made this tale al newe,  
How Calcas' daughter with her brighté  
hewe,

At parlément, withouté wordés more,  
Y-graunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

The whiché tale anon right as Criseyde  
Had herd, she, which that of her father  
roughte

As in this cas right naught, ne whan he  
deyde,

Ful bisily to Jupiter bisoughte  
Yeve him mischauncé that this tretis  
broughte; 670

But, shortly, lest thise tales sothé were,  
She dorste at no wight axen it for fere,

644. *But any angel*, so a; rest *But if that  
Jove*.647. *why thou art thus*, so a (*Of wheder thou  
art thus*); rest *whider thou art*.657. *of*, *S y in*.

Asshe that hadde her herte and al her minde  
On Troilus biset so wonder faste,  
That al this world ne mighte her love  
unbinde,  
Ne Troilus out of her herte caste,  
She wol ben his, whil that her lif may laste:  
And thus she brenneth bothe in love and  
drede,  
So that she n'istē what was best to rede.

But, as men sen in tounes al aboute, 680  
That wommen usen frendes to visite,  
So to Criseyde of wommen com a route  
For pitous joye, and wen'den her delite,  
And with hir talēs, dere y-nough a mite,  
Thise wommen whiche that in the cité  
dwelle,  
They sette hem down, and seide as I shal  
telle.

Quod first that oon, 'I am glad, trewely,  
Bicause of you that shal your fader see.'  
Another seide, 'Y-wis, so n'am not I;  
For al too litel hath she with us be.' 690  
The thridde answerde, 'I hope, y-wis,  
that she  
Shal bringen us the pees on every side;  
That, when she go'th, almighty God her  
gide!'

The wordes and the womanisshē thinges  
She herd right as though she thennēs were,  
For al this while her herte on other thing is,  
Although the body sat among hem there;  
God wot her advertence is ellēwhere,  
For Troilus ful faste her soulē soughte: 699  
Withoutē word alwēy on him she thoughte.

Thise wommen, that so wen'den her to plesē,  
Aboutē naught thus gonne hir talēs spende:  
Swich vanité ne can don her non ese,  
As she that al this menē whilē brende  
Of other passioun than that they wen'de,  
So that she felte almost her herte dye  
For wo, and wery of that companye.

692. *The thridde answerde*, so α; rest *Quod*  
(*the*) *the thridde*.

696. *al this while*, so α; rest *God it wot*.  
698. *So*; rest *Her advertence* (R Cx. audience)  
*is alway ellēwhere*.

For-which no lenger mightē she restreynē  
Her terēs, so they gonnen up to welle,  
That yaven signēs of the bittrē payne 710  
In which her spirit was and mostē dwelle,  
Remembring her from hevēne into which  
helle  
She fallen was, sin she forgo'th the sighte  
Of Troilus; and sorwfully she sighte.

And th' ilkē foolēs, sitting her aboute,  
Wen'den that she so wepte and sightēsore,  
Bicausē that she sholdē from that route  
Departē, and neverē playē with hem more.  
And they that haddē knowēn her of yore  
Saye her so wepe, and thoughte it kindē-  
nesse; 720  
And ech of hem wep ek for her distresse.

And bisily they gonnen her confortē  
Of thing, God wot, on which she litel  
thoughtē,  
And with hir wordēs wen'den her disportē,  
And to be glad they often her bisoughtē.  
But swich an esē therwith they her  
wroughtē,  
Right as a man is esēd for to fele,  
For ache of hed to clawen him on his hele!

But after al this nicē vanité'  
They toke hir leve, and hom they wenten  
alle. 730

Criseyde, ful of sorwful piété  
Into the chaumbre up wente out of the halle,  
And on her bed for ded she gan to falle,  
In purpos neverē thennēs for to rise;  
And thus she wroughte as I shal you devise.

The saltē terēs from her yēn tweyne  
Out-ronne as shour in Aperil ful swithe:  
Her whitē brest she bet, and for the payne

708. ll. 708-714 are omitted in γ (= A D Cp  
H<sub>1</sub> Cl. S<sub>2</sub>).

716. *so wepte*, so Cx.; rest *wepte*.

731. *piete*, so S Cp.; others *piety*, *piety*, etc.

736. α (J P G H<sub>2</sub>) have this stanza here  
(Boccaccio's order); β (H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R Cx.) and γ (S A  
D Cp. H<sub>1</sub> Cl. S<sub>2</sub>) have it after l. 736.

736. β γ read:

Therwith the teres from hir yēn two  
Down alle . . .

737. *ful*, so G R; Cx. *doth*; rest omit. H<sub>4</sub>  
*shour* in *Aperil swithe*.

--2. *payne*, β γ 200.

ter the dethahe cri'de a thousand sithe,  
he that wont her wo was for to lithe 740  
e mot forgon; for which disaventure  
e held herself a forlost creature.

rrounded heer, that sonniss was of hewe  
e rente, and ek her fingres longe and  
smale

e wrong ful ofte, and bad God on her  
rewe

id with the deth do bote upon her bale.  
r hewe, whilom bright that tho was pale,  
r witnesse of her wo and her constreynte;  
thus she spak, sobbing in her com-  
pleynte :

llas !' quod she, 'out of this regioun 750  
woful wrecche and infortunéd wight,  
id born in curséd constellacioun,  
st gon, and thus departen fro my knight !  
worth that day, and namely that night,  
which I saw him first with yen tweyne,  
at causeth me, and ich him, al this peyne !

That shal he don? What shal I don also?  
ow shal I live, if that I from him twinne?  
deré herte ek, that I lovè so,  
ho shal that sorwè slee that ye ben  
inne? 760

Calcas fader, thyn be al this sinne !  
id curséd be that day which that Argive  
of her body bar to ben on-live !

o what fin sholde I live and sorwè thus ?  
ow sholde a fish withouté water dure ?  
hat is Criseydé worth from Troilus ?  
ow sholde a plaunte or other créature  
vén withoute his kindé noriture ?  
r-which ful ofte a by-word here I seye,  
at, "erthéles, mot grené soné deye." 770

shaldon thus : sin nother swerd ne darte  
r I non handlé for the cruelté,

34.  $\beta$   $\gamma$  read :

Wo worth, alas, that like dayes light.

37.  $\beta$   $\gamma$  read :

She sayde, 'How shal he don, and I also?

6a, 763.  $\beta$   $\gamma$  read :

O moder myn, that cleped were Argive,  
Wo worth that day that thou me bare on lyve.

70. *orthelpe*,  $\beta$   $\gamma$  *retolde*.

That ilké day, I shal from you départe,  
If sorwe of that n'il not my hané be,  
Ther shal no mete or drinké come in me,  
Til I my soule out of my brest unshethe;  
And thus myselven wol I do to dethé.

'And Troilus, my clothés everychon  
Shal blaké ben, in tokening, herté swete,  
That I am as out of this world agon, 780  
That wont was you to holden in quité;  
And of myn ordre, til that deth me mete,  
The observances evere in your absence  
Shal sorwé be, compleynte, and abstinence.

'Myn herte and ek the woful goost therianne  
Biquethe I, with your spirit to compleyne  
Eternaly, for they shul neveré twinne. 790  
For theigh in erthey-twinnéd be tweyne,  
Yit in the feld of pité, out of peyne,  
Ther Pluto regneth, shal we ben i-fere, 790  
As Orphéus with Euridíce, his fere.

'Thus herté myn, for Antenor, alas,  
I soné shal be yolden, as I wene !  
But how shal ye don in this woful cas ?  
How shal your tendré herté this sustene ?  
But herté myn, foryet this sorwe and tene,  
And me also; for, sothly for to seye,  
So ye wel fare, I recché not to deye !'—

How mighte it evere al red ben or y-songe  
The pleynté that she made in her  
distresse ? 800

I n'ot; but, as for me, my litel tonge,  
If I discrivé wolde her hevinesse,  
It sholdé make her sorwé semé lesse  
Than that it was, and childishly deface  
Her heighe compleynte; and therfor ich  
it pace.

Pandaré,—which that sent fro Troilus  
Was to Criseyde, as ye han herd devise  
That for the beste it was acorded thus,  
And he ful glad to don him this service,

773. *I shal*, so a;  $\beta$  *I mot*;  $\gamma$  *that I*.

783. *observances*, so  $\gamma$  only; rest *observance*.

790. *Ther Pluto regneth*,  $\beta$   $\gamma$  *That high(e)*  
*Elysee*.

793. *golden*,  $\beta$   $\gamma$  *changed*.

799. *al red*, so  $\gamma$   $\beta$  only; other ( $\alpha$ ) *red*. (Bop.  
narrate a pleynh.)

Unto Criseyde, in a ful secré wise, 820  
 Ther-as she lay in torment and in rage,  
 Com her to telle al hoolly his message.

And fond that she herselven gan to trete  
 Ful pitously; for with her salté teres  
 Her brest, her face, y-bathéd was ful wete,  
 The mighty tresses of her sonnissah heres,  
 Unbroiden, hanging al aboute her eres:  
 Which yaf him verray signal of martire  
 Of deth, which that for wo she gan desire.

Whan she him saw, she gan for shame  
 anon 820

Het tery face atwixe her armés hide;  
 For which this Pandar is so wo-bigon  
 That in the chaumbre he mighte unnethé  
 abide,  
 As he that pité felte on every side;  
 For if Criseyde had erst compleynéd sore,  
 Tho gan she pleyne a thousand times more.

And in her aspré pleynté thus she seyde,  
 'Myn em, Pandaré, of joyés mo than two  
 Was causé causing first to me Criseyde,  
 That now transwudéd ben in cruel wo: 830  
 Whe'r shal I seyn to you welcöme or no,  
 That alderfirst me broughte into servise  
 Of love, allas, that endeth in swich wise?

'Endeth than love in wo? Ye, or men  
 lieth;

And every worldly joye, as thinketh me!  
 The endé of blisse, ay sorwe it occupieth!  
 And who-so troweth not that it so be,  
 Let him upon me, woful wrecche, y-see,  
 That my-self hate, and a my burthe acorse,  
 Feling alwéy, fro wikke I go to worse! 840

'Who-someseceth, heseeth sorwe al at ones,  
 And péyné; torment, pleynté, wo, dis-  
 tresse!

819. for me she,  $\beta$  y her herte.  
 820. shame, so a:  $\beta$  y sorwe. (Boc. per ver-  
 goma.)

823. chaumbre,  $\beta$  y houe.

828, 829.  $\beta$  y read:

'Pandaré first of joyes mo than two  
 Was cause causing unto me, Criseyde.

835. every worldly joye,  $\beta$  y all (le) worldly blisse.

841. And trowe (y) all y-see.

842. F G Cx. R Cl. and before distresse.

Out of my sorwful body harm ther non is,  
 As anguissah, langour, cruel bitternease,  
 Anoy, smert, dredé, furie, and ek siknesse!  
 I trowe, y-wis, from hevené terés reyne  
 For pité of myn aspre and cruel payne!—

'And thou, my suster, ful of discomfort,  
 Quod Pandarus, 'what thenkestow to do?  
 Whyn'hastow to thyselfensom resport? 850  
 Why wiltow thus thyselfe, allas, fordo?  
 Leve al this werk, and tak now hedé to  
 What I shal seyn, and herkne of good  
 entente  
 This that by me thy Troilus thee seate.'

Tornéd her tho Criseyde, a wo makinge  
 So gret that it a deth was for to see.  
 'Allas!' quod she, 'what wordés may ye  
 bringe?  
 What wil my deré herté seyn to me,  
 Which that I dredé neveré-mo to see?  
 Wil he han pleynte of terés or I wende? 860  
 I have y-nowe, if he ther-after sende!'

She was right swich to sen in her visagé  
 As is that wight that men on beré binde;  
 Her facté, lik of Paradis th'ímagé,  
 Was al y-chaungéd in another kinde;  
 The pley, the laughter, men was wont to  
 finde  
 In her, and othré joyés everychone  
 Ben fled; and thus for hem she li'th allone.

Aboute her yén two a purpré ring 869  
 Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her peyne,  
 That to beholde it was a dedly thing;  
 For which Pandaré mighté not restreyne  
 The terés from his yén for to reyne.  
 But nathéles, as he best mighte, he seyde  
 From Troilus thise wordes to Criseyde:

'Lo, nece, I trowe wel ye han herd al how  
 The king with othré lordés for the beste  
 Hath maad th'eschange of Antenor and  
 you, 878  
 That cause is of this wo and this unreste.  
 But how this cas doth Troilus moleste,

867. othre, a  $\beta$  sh her.

868. for hem she li'th, a  $\beta$  li'th (now) Criseyde.

that may no worldly mannés tongéseye,—  
; he that shortly shapeth him to deye.

For which we han so sorwed, he and I,  
at into litel bothe it hadde us slawe,  
it thorough my conseil this day finally  
e somewhat hath fro weping him with-  
drawe ;

id semeth me that he desireth fawe  
ith you to ben al night, for to devise  
medie in this, if ther were any wise.

This', short and pleyn, th'effect of my  
message, <sup>890</sup>  
id ek the beste as my wit can comprende ;  
r ye, that ben of torment in swich rage,  
y to no long prológe as now entende.  
id her-upon ye may answe're him sende ;  
d, for the love of God, my necé dere,  
lef this wo or Troilus be here !'

ret is my wo,' quod she, and sightésore,  
she that feleth dedly sharp distresse ;  
ut yit to me his sorwe is muché more,  
at love him bet than he himself, I gesse.  
as ! for me hath he swich hevynesse ?  
a he for me so pitously compleyne ?  
w, wis, his sorwé doubleth al my payne !

revous to me, God wot, is for to twinne,'  
od she, 'but yit it harder is to me  
sen him in that wo that he is inne ;  
wel I wot, it wil my bané be,  
id deye I wol in certein !'—Tho quod  
she,  
it bid him come, or deth, that thus  
me threteth,  
ve out that goost which in myn herté  
beteth.' <sup>920</sup>

se wordés seid, she on her armés two  
gruf, and gan to wepen pitously.—  
id Pandarus, 'Allas ! why do ye so,  
wel ye wot the time is fasté by

2. y read :

For verray wo his wit is al aways.  
30c.) Il qual del tutto si duol no vuol morire.

3. B y read :

As furth as my wit can (may) comprehende.

3. Now, ends, his, B y Y-wis, this.

That he shal come? Aris up softly,  
That he you not biwopen thus y-finde,  
But ye wol han him wood out of his minde !

'For wiste he that ye ferde in this manére,  
He wolde himselven slee ; and if I wen'de  
To han this fare, he sholdé not come here  
For al the good that Priam may dispende ;  
For to what fin he wolde anon pretende,  
That wot I wel ! And therfor yit I seye,  
Lat be this sorwe, or platly he wol deye !

'And shapeth you his sorwé for t'abregge  
And not encresse, O levé necé swete !  
Beth rather to him cause of flat than egge,  
And with som wisdom ye his sorwé beté.  
What helpeth it to wepen ful a strete, <sup>900</sup>  
Or though ye bothe in salté terés dreynthe ?  
Bet is a time of cure ay than of pleynte !

'I mené thus : whan ich him hider bringe,  
Sin ye ben wise and bothe of oon assent,  
So shapeth, how distorté this goynge,  
Or come ayein sone after ye be went.  
Wommen ben wise of short avisement.  
And lat sen how your wit shal now availle ;  
And that that I can helpe, it shal not  
faile !'

'Go,' quod Criseyde, 'and unclé, trewely,  
I shal don al my might, me to restreyné  
Fro weping in his sighte ; and bisily, <sup>910</sup>  
Him for to glade, I shal don al my payne,  
And in my herté seken every veyne.  
If to this soor ther may be founden salve,  
It shal not lakké, certein, on myn halve !'

Go'th Pandarus, and Troilus he soughte,  
Til in a temple he fond him al allone,  
As he that of his lif no lenger roughté ;  
But to the pitous Goddés everychone  
Ful tendrely he prey'de and made. his  
mone, <sup>920</sup>  
To don him sone out of this world to pace ;  
For wel he thoughte ther n'as non other  
grace.

947. *at allone*, so J H<sub>3</sub> Cx. S Cp. ; *rest allone*,  
950-952. P H<sub>3</sub> read :

He faste made his compleyns and his mone,  
Beseking hem to sende him other grace,  
Or fro this world to don him some pace.



And, shortly, al the sothé for to seye,  
He was so fallen in despair that day,  
That outrély he shoop him for to deye;  
For right thus was his argument alwey:—  
He seide 'I n'am but lorn, so weylawey!  
For al that com'th, com'th by necessité:  
Thus, to be lorn, it is my destiné!

'For certainly, this wot I wel,' he seide,  
'That for-sight of diviné Púrveyaunce 961  
Hath seyn alwey me to forgon Criseyde,  
Sin God seeth every thing, out of dountaunce,  
And hem dispoñeth thorough his ordinaunce,  
In hir merités sothly for to be,  
As they shul comén by predestiné.

'But natheles, allas, whom shal I leve?  
For ther ben greté clerkés many oon,  
That destiné thorough argumentés preve;  
And some men seyn that nedly ther is  
noon, 970  
But that free choís is given us everychoon.  
O, weylawey! So sleighe am clerkés  
olde,  
That I n'ot whos opinioun I may holde.

'For somemen seyn, if God seeth al biforn,  
(Ne God may not deceivéd ben, parde!)  
Than mot it fallen, though men hadde it  
sworn,  
That Púrveyaunce hath seyn biforn to be.  
Wherfor I seye that from eterne if he  
Hath wist bifore our thought ek as our  
dede, 979  
We han no free choís, as this clerkés rede.

'For other thought nor other dede also  
Mighte neveré be, but swich as Púrvey-  
aunce,  
Which may not ben deceivéd neveré mo,  
Hath fel'd biforn withouten ignoraunce.  
For, if ther mighte ben a variaunce  
To writen out fro Goddés púrveyinge,  
Ther n'ere no prescience of thing cominge,

953. H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>4</sub> omit ll. 953-1085; P inserts them later. G omits ll. 953-1078. This passage (not in Boccaccio) is taken for the most part from *Deutung*, 32. v.

957. I n'am, J Cx. S D I am; P H<sub>2</sub> y he n'am.

957. so, J R Cx. S D; P H<sub>2</sub> y omit.

964. J R Cx. J R Cx. J R Cx. J R Cx.

'But it were rather an opinioun  
Unstedfast, and no certein forseinge;  
And certés that were an abusoun, 990  
That God sholde han no parfit cleerwitinge  
More than we men that han doutous  
weninge.  
But swich an errour upon God to geese  
Were fals and foul, and wikked corsednesse.

'Ek this is an opinioun of some  
That han hir top ful heighe and smothe  
y-shore:  
They seyn right thus, that thing is not to  
come  
For that the Prescience hath seyn bifore  
That it shal come; but they seyn that,  
therfore  
That it shal come, therefore the Púrvey-  
aunce 1000  
Wot it biforn withouten ignoraunce.

'And in this maner this necessité  
Retorneth in his part contrarie ageyn.  
For nedfully bihov'th it not to be  
That th'ilke thingés fallen in certeyn  
That ber purvey'd; but needly, as they  
seyn,  
Bihoveth it that thingés whiche that falle  
That they in certein ben purveyéd alle.

'I mene as though I labour'd me in this  
T'enqueren which thing cause of whic  
thing be: 101  
As whether that the prescience of God  
The certein cause of the necessité  
Of thingés that to comén ben, pardé;  
Or if necessité of thing cominge  
Be causé certein of the púrveyinge.

'But now n'enforce I me not in shewing  
How th'ordre of causes stant. But w  
wot I  
That it bihoveth, that the bifallinge  
Of thingés wisté biforn certeinly  
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby 11  
That prescience put falling necessarie  
To thing to come, al falle it foule or fail

980. Unstedfast, so J P Cx. D; rest Uncertain  
980. certein, so J P Cx. (D omit); rest stedfast

For if ther sit a man yond on a see,  
 man by necessité bihoveth it  
 at certès thyn opinioun soth be,  
 at wenest or coniectest that he sit;  
 and further over now ayeinward yit,  
 right so is it of the part contrarie,  
 thus:—now herkné, for I wol not  
 tarie.—

seye, that if th'opinioun of thee 1030  
 soth for—that he sit, than seye I this,  
 at he mot sitten by necessité,  
 and thus necessité in either is.  
 in him nede of sitting is, y-wis,  
 and in thee nede of soth; and thus, for-  
 sothe,  
 her mot necessité ben in you bothe.

but thou mayst seyn: the man sit not  
 therfore  
 at thyn opinioun of sitting soth is,  
 rather, for the man sit ther bfore,  
 herfor is thyn opinioun soth, y-wis. 1040  
 and I seye, though the cause of soth of this  
 m'th of his sitting, yit necessité  
 entrechaungéd bothe in him and thee.

hus in this samé wise, out of doutaunce,  
 may wel maken, as it semeth me,  
 resoninge of Goddés purveyaunce  
 of the thingés that to comén be:  
 whiché resons men may wel y-see  
 at th'ilké thingés that in'erthé falle,  
 at by necessité they comen alle. 1050

or although that, for thing shal come,  
 y-wis,  
 herfore is it purveyéd, certainly,  
 that it cometh for it purvey'd is,—  
 natheles bihov'th it nedfully  
 at thing to come be purvey'd trewely:  
 ellés, thingés that purveyéd be,  
 at they bitiden by necessité.

and this suffiseth right ynough, certeyn,  
 to destroye our free chois every del!  
 now is this abusioun, to seyn 1060

130. *that*, Cx. omits.

138. *of sitting*, so P only; rest *of his sitting*.

148. *reasons*, all *reason*.

That falling of the thingés temporel  
 Is cause of Goddés prescience éternel.  
 Now trewely that is a fals sentence,  
 That thing to come shul cause his pre-  
 science!

'What mighte I wene, and I had swich a  
 thought,  
 But that God purvey'th thing that is to  
 come  
 For that it is to come, and ellés nought?  
 So mighte I wene that thingés alle and  
 some,  
 That whilom ben bifalle and overcome,  
 Ben cause of th'ilké sovereign Purveyaunce  
 That forwot al withouten ignoraunce! 1075

'And over al this, yit seye I more therto:  
 That, right as whan I wot ther is a thing,  
 Y-wis that thing mot needfully be so,—  
 Ek right so, whan I wot a thing coming,  
 So mot it come. And thus the bifalling  
 Of thingés that ben wist biforn the tide,  
 They mowe not ben eschuwéd on no  
 side.'

Thanseide he thus, 'Almighty Jove in trone,  
 That wost of al this thing the sothfastnesse,  
 Rewe on my sorwe, and do me deyen sone,  
 Or bring Criseyde and me from this dis-  
 tresse!'

And whil he was in al this heviness,  
 Disputing with himself in this matere,  
 Com Pandar in, and seide as ye may here.

'O mighty God,' quod Pandarus, 'in trone!  
 Ey! who say evere a wis-man faren so?  
 Why, Troilus, what thenkestow to done?  
 Hastow swich list to ben thyn owné fo?  
 What, pardé, yit is not Criseyde ago! 1090  
 Why list thee so thyself foredon for drede,  
 That in thyn hed thine yen semen dede?

'Hastow not livéd of thy lif biforn  
 Withouten her, and ferd ful wel at ese?  
 Artow for her and for non other born?

1064. *shal*, so R Cx.; P *shal*; J and others  
*shalde*, *sholde*.

1065. P omits ll. 1064-1072.

1093. *of thy lf*, so J (P H<sub>2</sub> at *thy lf*); G *of thy*  
*in thy lf*; B y many a yer.

Hath Kinde y-wrought thee only her to  
plese?

Canstow not thenken thus in thy disese,  
That, on the dees right as thee fallen  
chaunces,

In love alsó ther come and gon plesaunces?

'And yit this is my wonder most of alle;  
Why thou thus sorwest, sin thou n'ost not  
yit,

Touching her going, how that it shal falle,  
Ne, if she can herself disturben it,  
Thou hast not yet assayéd al her wit.  
A man may al by-time his nekké bede  
Whan it shal off, and sorwen at the nede!

'For-thy tak hedé what I shal thee seye:  
I have with her y-spoke and longe y-be,  
So as acorded was bitwixe us tweye;  
And everémo me thinketh thus, that she  
Hath somwhat in her hertés priveté,  
Wher-with she can, if I shal right arede,  
Stinte al this thing of which thou art in  
drede.

'For-which my conseil is, whan it is night,  
Thou to her go and make of this an ende;  
And blisful Juno, thorough her greté might,  
Shal, as I hope, her grace unto us sende.  
Myn herté seith, "certein, she shal not  
wende";

And for-ty put thyn herte a while in reste,  
And hold thy purpos, for it is the beste.'

This Troilus answérde, and sighté sore,  
'Thou sey'st right wel, and I wil don  
right so.'

And what him list he seide to him more.  
But whan that it was timé for to go,  
Ful prively himself, withouten mo,  
Unto her com, as he was wont to done;  
And how they wroughte, I shal you tellen  
sone.

1107. *Canstow not thenken*, β γ *Let be, and  
thenk right (var.)*.

1109. *In love also*, β γ *Right so in love*.

1100. *my*, S γ a.

1113. *Stinte al this thing*, β γ *Disturbs al  
this*: (See L. 1103.)

1124. *But, so a β (Boc.)*; S γ *And*.

Soth is, that whan they gonnen first to metc,  
So gan the sorwe hir hertés for to twiste,  
That neither of hem other mighté grete,  
But hem in armés hente and softé kiste;  
The lassé woful of hem bōthé n'iste  
What for to don, ne mighte a word out-  
bringe,

As I seide erst, for wo and for sobbinge.

The woful terés that they leten falle  
As bittré weren, out of terés kinde,  
For payne, as is ligne aloés or galle:  
So bittré terés wep not thorough the rinde  
The woful Mirra, written as I finde  
That in this world ther n'is so hard an hette,  
That n'olde han rewéd on hir peynéssmerte.

But whan hir woful wery goostés tweyne  
Retornéd ben ther-as hem oughté dwelle,  
And that somwhat to weykeng gan the payne  
By lengthe of pleynte, and ebben gan the  
welle

Of bittré terés, and the herte unswelle,  
With broken vois, al hoors for-shright,  
Criseyde

To Troilus thise ilké wordés seyde: 1148

'O Jove, I deye, and mercy I beseche!  
Help, Troilus!'—And therewithal her face  
Upon his brest she leyde, and losté speche,  
Her woful spirit from his propré place,  
Right with the word, alwey o-point to pace.  
And thus she li'th with hewés pale and  
grene,

That whilom fresch and fairest was to sene.

This Troilus, that on her gan biholde,  
Cleping her name,—and she layas for ded.  
Withoute answére, and felte her limé  
colde,

Her yē throwén upward to her hed,—  
This sorwful man can now no maner red

1133. *What for to don, as a Cx.*; β γ *Why  
that he was*.

1138, 1139. β γ read:

So bittré terés wep not, as I finde,  
The woful Mirra through the bark and rinde.

1146. *bittré* (γ). *He the*; H<sub>2</sub> om. 1; J and oth:  
*hit(e)*. (Boc. *Gli occhi dolenti per gli aspri disiri*  
See ll. 1136-1138 (Boc. *Ch'amare farer oltre li  
natura*).

it ofte time her coldé mouth he kiste :  
 'he'r him was wo, God and himself it  
 wiste !

e rist him up, and long streight he her  
 leyde ;  
 or signe of lif, for aught he can or may,  
 an he non finde in no cas on Criseyde,  
 or which his song ful ofte is 'weylawey !'  
 and whan he saw that spechèles she lay,  
 'ith sorwful vois and herte of blisse al  
 bare,

e seide how she was fro this world y-fare.

after that he longe had her compleyned,  
 is hondes wrong, and seid that was to  
 seye,

1171

nd with his terés salte his brest bi-reyned,  
 e gan the terés wipen off ful dreye,  
 nd pitously gan for the soulé preye,  
 nd seide, 'Lord, that set art in thy trone,  
 ewe ek on me, for I shal folwe her sone !'

ie cold was, and withouten sentément  
 or aught he wiste, and breth ne felte  
 he non ;

nd that was him a pregnant argument  
 at she was forth out of this world agon.  
 nd whan he saw ther was non other won,  
 e gan her limés dresse in swich manére,  
 men don folk that shul ben laid on bere.

nd after this, with sterne and cruel herte,  
 isswerd anon out of the shethe the twichte,  
 imself to sleen, how soré that him smerte,  
 that his soule her soulé folwé mighte  
 er-as the doom of Minos wolde it dighte ;  
 n Love and cruel Fortune it ne wolde  
 at in this world he lenger liven sholde.

an seide he thus, fulfil'd of heigh desdayn,  
 cruel Jove, and thou Fortune adverse,  
 is' al and som : that falsly han ye slayn  
 iseyde, and sin ye can do me no werse,  
 on your might and werkés so diverse !  
 us cowardly ye shal me neveré winne :  
 er shal no deth me fro my lady twinne !

1167. And, B y But.

1173. ful, so P B y ; J H<sub>2</sub> G and.

1183. folk, B y hem (him).

'For I this world, sin ye han slain her  
 thus,

Wol lete, and folwe her spirit forth in hyc :  
 Shal neveré lover seyn that Troilus 1200  
 Dar not for feré with his lady dye ;  
 For, certain, I wol bere her companye.  
 But sin ye n'il not suffre us liven here,  
 Yit suffreth that our soulés ben i-feré !

'And thou cité, which that I leve in wo,  
 And thou Priám, and brethren alle i-feré,  
 And thou, my moder, far-wel, for I go !  
 And Attropos, mak redy thou my bere !  
 And thou, Criseyde, sweté herté dere,  
 Receivé now my spirit !'—wolde he seye,  
 With swerd at herte, al redy for to deye,

But, as God wolde, of swough therwith  
 she breyde,

1212

And gan to sike, and 'Troilus !' she cride,  
 And he answéréd, 'Herté myn, Criseyde,  
 Livé ye yit ?' and let his swerd down glide.  
 'Ye, herté myn, y-thanked be Cipride !'  
 Quod she ; and therewithal she soré sighte,  
 And he bigan conforté her as he mighte ;

Took her in armes two, and kiste her ofte,  
 And her to glade he dide al his entente :  
 For which her goost, that flikeréd ay on  
 lofte,

1221

Ayein into her herte al softé wente.  
 So at the laste, as that her ye glente  
 Aside, anon she gan his swerd espyce,  
 As it lay bare, and gan for feré crye,

And axéd him, why he it hadde out-drawe.  
 And Troilus anon the causé tolde,  
 And how himself therwith he wolde han  
 slawe :

For which Criseyde upon him gan biholde,  
 And gan him in her armés fasté folde, 1230

1199. forth in hys, B y lows or (and) hys.

1208. So P H<sub>2</sub> B y ; J G read Thou Attropos  
 that is (G art) ful redy here (read ? for I go To  
 Attropos that is ful redy here. Boc. ch'io me  
 ne vo sotterra).

1214. Herte ; B y Lady (Boc. dolce mio diletto).

1218. conforté, B y to glade (see L. 1220).

Boc. La conforto.

1222. B y read :

Into her woful herte ayein it wente.

1223. So, B y But.

And seide, 'O mercy, God, lo, which a dede!

Allas! how neigh we weré bothé dede!

'Than if I n'haddé spoke, as gracé was,  
Ye wolde han slain yourself anon?' quod she.—

'Ye, douteles!'—And she answärde,  
'Allas!

For by that ilké Lord that madé me,  
I n'olde a forlong wey on-live han be  
After your deth, to han ben crownéd quene  
Of al the lond the sonne on-shineth shene;

'But with this selven sward, which that here  
is, 1240

My-selve I wolde han slawé!'—Quod she  
tho,

'But ho! for we han right ynough of this,  
And lat us rise and streight to beddè go,  
And theré lat us speken of our wo;  
For, by the morder which that I see brenne,  
Knowe I ful wel that day is not fer henne.'

Whan they were in hir bed in armés folden,  
Nought was it lik the nightés her-bifrom;  
For pitously ech other gan biholden,  
As they that hadde hir joyés allé lorn, 1250  
Seyng, 'allas, that everé they were born!'  
Til at the laste this woful wight, Criseyde,  
To Troilus thise ilké wordés seyde:

'Lo, herté myn, wel wot ye this,' quod she,  
'That, if a wight alwéy his wo compleyne  
And seketh nought how holpen for to be,  
It n'is but foly and encrees of peyne.  
And sin that here assembled be we tweyne  
'To findé bote of wo that we ben inne,  
It were al timé soné to biginne. 1260

'I am a woman, as ful wel ye wot;  
And as I am aviséd sodeinly,  
So wol I telle it you whil it is hot.  
Me thinketh thus: that nouthér ye nor I  
Oughte half this wo to maken skilfully;

1242. *slawe*, so G R; rest *slain*.

1252.  $\beta$   $\gamma$  read:

Billowing as the day that they were born.

1252. *woful*, so  $\alpha$   $\beta$  S;  $\gamma$  *sorrowful*.

For ther is art y-nough for to redresse  
That yit is mis, and sleen this hevinesse.

'Soth is, that wo the whiche that we ben  
'inne,

For aught I wot, for nothing ellés is 1269  
But for the causé that we shullen twinne:  
Consideréd al, ther n'is no more amis.  
But what is thanne a rémedie unto this,  
But that we shape us soné for to mete!  
This' al and som, my deré herté swete!

'Now, that I shal wel bringen it aboute  
To come ayein sone after that I go, 1273  
Therof am I no maner thing in doute.  
For, dredéles, withinne a wowke or two  
I shal ben here; and that it may be so,  
By allé right, and in a wordés fewe, 1280  
I shal you wel an hep of weyés shewe

'For-which I n'il not maken long sermoun,  
For time y-lost may not recovered be;  
But I wol go right to conclusioun,  
And to the beste, in aught that I can see.  
And for the love of God, foryive it me  
If I speke aught ayeins your hertés reste,  
For trewely I speke it for the beste;

'Making alwey a protestacioun,  
That in effect this thing that I shal seye 1290  
N'is but to shewén you my mocioun,  
To finde unto our help the besté weye.  
And taketh it non other wise, I preye;  
For finally what-so ye me comaunde,  
That wol I don, for that is no-demaunde.

'Now herkneth this: ye han wel under-  
stonde  
My going graunted is by parlément  
So ferforth that it may not ben withstonde  
For al this world, as by my jugément.  
And sin ther helpeth non avisément 1300  
To letten it, lat it passe out of minde,  
And lat us shape a bettré wey to finde.

1284. *right to conclusioun*,  $\beta$   $\gamma$  to my con-  
clusioun.

1288. *speke*, J says; P *men*.

1290. *in effect this thing*,  $\beta$   $\gamma$  *now thise wordés*  
*whiche*.

1294. *finally*, H $\alpha$   $\beta$   $\gamma$  *in effect*.

ne soth is this, that twinning of ustweyne  
 us disce and cruëliche anye,  
 him bihoveth somtime han a peyne,  
 at serveth Love, if that he wol have joye.  
 d sin I shal no further out of Troye  
 an I may ride ayein on half a morwe,  
 nighte lassé causen us to sorwe :

as I shal not so ben hid in muwe, 1310  
 at day by day, myn owné herté dere,  
 n wel ye wot that it is now a truwe,  
 shal ful wel al myn estat y-herc.  
 d, or that trewe is don, I shall ben here,  
 thus have ye bothe Antenor y-wonne  
 d me also. Beth glad now, if ye conne,

nd thenk right thus : " Criseyde is now  
 agon,  
 what! sheshal come hastily ayein!"—  
 nd whanne, allas !—" By God, lo, right  
 anon,

dayes ten, that dar I saufly seyn ! 1320  
 d thanne atte ersté shal ye ben so feyn  
 at shul everé-mo togederé dwelle,  
 at al this world ne mighte our joyé telle.

see that often, ther-as we ben now,  
 at for the beste, our conseil for to hide,  
 speken not with me, nor I with yow  
 fourtenight, ne see you go ne ride.  
 wén ye not ten dayes thanne abide  
 r myn honoúr in swich an aventure?  
 wis, ye mowén ellés lite endure ! 1330

e knowe ek how that al my kin is here,  
 ly but-if that it myn fader be,  
 d ek mine othrè thingés alle i-fere,  
 d namely, my deré herté, ye,  
 hom that I n'oldé leven for to see  
 ral this world, as muche as it hath space;  
 ellés see ich neveré Jovés face !

Why ! trowé ye my fader in this wise  
 veiteth so to see me, but for drede  
 st in this town that folkés me despise 1340  
 cause of him, for his unhappy dede?  
 hat wot my fader what lif that I lédé ?

1312. thus, ß y than(ne).

1322. Mowen (Wall May) (see 1330).

1332. muche, Hg. Arde; ß y wile.

For if he wiste in Troye how wel I fare,  
 Us nedeth for may going naught to care.

' Ye sen that every day ek more and more  
 Men trete of pees, and it supposéd is  
 That men the quene Eleyne shal restore,  
 And Grekés us restoren that is mis;  
 So, though ther n'eré confort non but this,  
 That men purpösen pees on every side, 1350  
 Ye may the better at ese of herte abide.

' For if that it be pees, myn herté dere,  
 The nature of the pees mot nedés drive  
 That men moste entrecomunen i-fere,  
 And to and fro ek ride and go as blive,  
 Alday as thikke as been fien from a hive,  
 And every wight han liberté to bleve  
 Wher-as him list the bet, withouten leve.

' And though so be that pees ther may be  
 non,

Yit hider, though ther neveré pees ne were,  
 I mosté come: for whidersholde I gon, 1361  
 Or how mischauncé sholde I dwellen there  
 Among tho men of armés evere in fere?  
 For which, so wisly God my soulé rede,  
 I can not sen wherof ye sholden drede.

' Have here another wey, if it so be  
 That al this thing ne may you not suffice.  
 My fader, as ye knowén wel, pardé,  
 Is old, and elde is ful of covetise; 1369  
 And I right now have founden al the gise,  
 Withouten net wherwith I shal him hente.  
 And herkneth how, if that ye wol assente !

' Lo, Troilus, men seith that hard it is,  
 The wof ful and the wether hool to have;  
 This is to seyn, that men ful ofte, y-wis,  
 Motspenden part the remenaunt for to have.  
 For ay with gold men may the herté grave  
 Of him that set is upon covetise.  
 And how I mene, I shal it you devise.

' The moeblé which that I have in this  
 town 1375

Unto my fader shal I take, and seye,  
 That right for trust and for savacioun  
 It sent is from a frend of his or twéye,  
 The whiché frendés servently him preye

To senden after more, and that in hye,  
Whil-that this town stant thus in jupartye;

'And that shal ben a hugé quantité,—  
Thus shal I seyn;—but leat it folk espide,  
This may be sent by no wight but by me.  
I shal ek shewen him, if pees bitide 1390  
What frendes that I have on every side  
Toward the court, to don the wrathé pace  
Of Priamus, and don him stonde in grace.

'So, what for oo thing and for other, swete,  
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes,  
That right in hevене his soulé shal he  
mete!

For al Appollo, or his clerkes lawes  
Or calculinge availleth not three hawes!  
Desir of gold shal so his soulé blende, 1399  
That, as me list, I shal wel make an ende!

'And if he wolde aught by his sort it preve  
If that I lye, in certain I shal fonde  
Distorben him and plukke him by the sleve  
Making his sort, or beren him on honde  
He hath not wel the Goddés understonde:  
For Goddes speke in amphibologies,  
And for a soth they tellen twenty lyes!

'Ek dredé fond first Goddés, I suppose,—  
Thusschal I seyn,—and ek his coward herte  
Made him amis the Goddés text to glose  
Whan he for-feréd out of Delphos sterte.  
And, but I make him soné to converte,  
And don my red withinne a day or tweye,  
I wol to you obligé me to deye!

And trewélliche as writen wel I finde,  
That al this thing was sejd of good entente,  
And that her herté trewé was and kinde  
Towardés him, and spak right as she mente,  
And that she starf for wo neigh, whan she  
wente, 1419

And was in purpos everé to ben trewe:  
Thus writen they that of her werkés knewe.

This Troilus with herte and erès spradde  
Herde al this thing devisen to and fro;

1396. *soule*, H<sub>4</sub> S D H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *soule* in.

1409. *oh*, H<sub>4</sub> B y. *that*

And verrayliché him seméd that he hadde  
The selvé wit; but yit to lete her go  
His herté mis-foryaf him everé-mo.  
But finally he gan his herté wreste  
To tristen her, and took it for the beste.

For which the greté furie of his penáunce  
Was queynt with hope; and therewith hem  
bitwene 1430

Bigan for joyé th'amoroué daunce.  
And as the briddés, whan the sonne is shene,  
Deliten in hir song in levés grene,  
Right so the wordés that they spake i-fere  
Delited hem, and made hir hertés ~~obsc~~.

But natheles the wending of Criseyde,  
For al this world; ne may out of his minde:  
For-which ful ofte he pitousliche her  
prey'de

That of her herte he mighte her trewé  
finde,

And seyde her,—'Certés, if ye ben un-  
kinde, 1440

And but ye come at day set into Tróye,  
Ne shal I nevere have hele, honour, ne  
joye.

'For al-so soth as sonne uprist a-morwe,  
And God! so wisly thou me, woful  
wrecche,

To resté bringe out of this cruel sorwe,  
I wil myselfen slee if that ye wrecche!  
But of my deth though litel be to recche,  
Yit, or that ye me causen so to smerte,  
Dwel rather here, myn owné dere herte!

'For trewély, myn owné lady dere, 1450  
Tho sleightés yit that I you heré stere  
Ful shaply ben to failen alle i-fere;  
And thus men seith, that "oon thenketh  
the bere,

But al another thenketh his ledére!"  
Your sire is wis: and seid is, out of drede;  
"Men may the wise at-renne, and not  
at-rede!"

'It is ful hard to halten unespyed.  
Bifore a crepil, for he can the craft:  
Your fader is in sleightés as Argus yed. 1459

1450. *dere*, y. *swete*.

al be that his moeble is him biraft,  
oldé sleighte is yit so with him laft,  
hal not blende him for your womman-  
hede,  
eyne aright : and that is al my drede.

ot if pees shal everè-mo bitide ;  
pees or no, for ernest ne for game,  
st, sin Calcas on the Grekés side  
h onés ben and lost so foule his name,  
dar no more come here ayein for  
shame :

which that wey, for aught I can espye,  
Fasten on, n'is but a fantasye. 1470

shal eeksen, your fader shal you glose  
ben a wif, and as he can wel preche,  
shal som Grek so preyse and wel alose,  
travisschen he shal you with his speche,  
fo you don by force as he shal teche ;  
Troilus, of whom he n'il have routhé,  
causéles so sterven in his trouthe !

nd over al this, your fader shal despise  
alle, and seyn this cité n'is but lorn,  
that the segé neveré shal arise, 1480  
why the Grekés han it allé sworn  
we be slayn and doun our walles torn ;  
thus he shal you with his wordés fere,  
t ay drede I that ye wol bleven there.

shal ek sen so many a lusty knight  
ong the Grekés, ful of worthinesse,  
ech of hem with herté, wit, and might  
plesen you don al his bisnesse,  
t ye shul duller of the rudénesse  
is sely Trojanes, but-if routhé 1490  
ordé you, or vertu of your trouthe.

nd this to me so grevous is to thinke  
t fro my brest it wol the soulé rende ;  
dredéles, in me ther can not sinke  
ood opinioun, if that ye wende ;  
why your fadresleighté wol usshende :  
if ye gon, as I have told you yore,  
henk I n'am but ded, withouté more !

' For-which, with humblé, trewe and  
pitous herte, 1499

A thousand timés mercy I you preye :  
So reweth on mine aspré peynés smerte,  
And doth somwhat as that I shal you seye,  
And lat us stele away bitwixe us tweye ;  
And think that folý is, whan man may  
chese,

For accident his substaunce ay to lese.

' I mené thus : that sin we mowe or day  
Wel stele away and ben togedré so,  
What wit were it to putten in assay,  
In cas ye sholden to your fader go,  
If that ye mighten come aycin or no ? 1510  
Thus mene I, that it were a gret folýe  
To putte that sikernesse in jupartye.

' And, vulgarly to speken of substaunce  
Of tresour, may we bothé with us lede  
Y-nough to live in honour and plesáunce ;  
Til into timé that we shal be dede ;  
And thus we may eschewén al this drede :  
For everich other wey ye can recorde,  
Myn herte, y-wis, may therewith not acorde.

' And hardily ne dredeth no povérté, 1520  
For I have kin and frendés elléwhere  
That, though we comén in our baré sherte,  
Us sholdé neither lakken gold ne gere,  
But ben honouréd whil we dwelten there :  
And go w' anon : for, as in myn entente,  
This is the beste, if that ye wol assente. 1530

Criseyde him, with a sik, right in this wise  
Answérde, ' Y-wis, my deré herté trewe,  
We may wel stele away, as ye devise, 1539  
Or finden swiche unthrifty weyés newe ;  
But afterward ful sóre it wol us rewe.  
And, help me God so at my mosté nedé,  
As causéles ye suffren al this drede !

' For th'ilké day that I for cherishinge,  
Or drede of fader, or for other wight,  
Or for estat, delit, or for weddinge  
Be fals to you, my Troilus, my knight,  
Satúrnés daughter, Juno, thorough her  
might,

20. *Trojanés (T)*, all *Trojans* (read ? *As of us Trojanés*).  
23. *the, B y my.*

1527. *him, H<sub>2</sub> y omit.*  
1530. *Or, y and.*



As wood as Athamanté do me dwelle  
Eternaliche in Stix, the put of helle ! 1540

' And this on every God celestial  
I swere it you, and ek on ech Goddésse,  
On every Nympe and Deité infernal,  
On Satiry and Fauny more and lesse,  
That halvé Goddés ben of wildernesse ;  
And Atropos my thred of lif to-breste  
If I be fals ! Now trowe me if you leste !

' And thou, Simoys, that as an arwé clere  
Thorough Troye ay rennest downward to  
the see, 1549

Ber witness of this word that seid is here,  
That th'ilke day that ich untrewé be  
To Troilus, myn owné herté free,  
That thou retorné backward to thy welle,  
And I with body and soulé sinke in helle !

' But that ye speke, away thus for to go  
And leten alle your frendés, God forbede  
For any womman that ye sholdé so !  
And namely, sin Troye hath now swich  
nede

Of help. And ek of oo thing taketh hede :  
If this were wist, my lif laye in balaunce,  
And your honour : God shilde us fro  
mischaunce ! 1561

' And if so be, hereafter pees be take, —  
As alday happeth, after anger, game, —  
Why, Lord, the sorwe and wo ye wolden  
make,

That ye ne dorsté come ayein for shame !  
And, or that ye juparten so your name,  
Beth not too hastif in this hoté fare :  
For hastif man ne wanteth neveré care !

' What trowén ye the peple ek al aboute  
Wolde of it seye ? It is ful light t'arede !  
They wolden seyn, and swere it out of  
doute, 1571

That love ne drof you not to do this  
dede,

But lust voluptuous and coward drede :

1549. *ay rennest*, so J H<sub>3</sub> A D; *rennest* P G  
R C<sub>2</sub>; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> S C<sub>2</sub> P. H<sub>1</sub> C<sub>1</sub> S<sub>2</sub> *rennest* ay.

1561. *hereafter pees be take*, so P; *rest that*  
*pees hereafter take*.

Thus were al lost, y-wis, myn herté dere,  
Your honour, which that shineth now so  
clere.

' And also thenketh on myn honesté  
That floureth yit : how foule I sholde. it  
shende,

And with what filthe it spotted sholdé be,  
If in this forme I sholdé with you wende.  
Ne though I livede unto the worldés ende,  
Mynamé sholde I nevere ayeinward winne :  
Thus were I lost, and that were routhe  
and sinne.

' And for-thy slee with reson al this hete!  
Men seyn "the suffrant overcom'th,"  
pardé ;

Ek, "who-so wol han lief, he lief mot lete." I  
Thus maketh vertu of necessité !

Be pacient, and think that lord is he  
Of Fortune ay, that naught wol of her  
recche,

And she ne daunteth no wight but a  
wrecche ! 1589

' And trusteth this : that certés, hertés weté,  
Or Phebus' suster, Lúcina the shene,  
The Lioun passe out of this Ariete,  
I wil ben here, withouten any wene.  
I mene, as help me Juno, hevenés quene,  
The tenthé day, but-if that deth m'assaile,  
I wil you sen, withouten any faille.' —

' And now, so this be soth,' quod Troilus,  
I shal wel suffre unto the tenthé day,  
Sin that I see that nede it mot be thus.  
But for the love of God, if it be may, 1600  
So lat us stelen privéliche away !

For evere in oon, as for to live in reste,  
Myn herté seith that it wol be the beste.' —

' O mercy, God, what lif is this !' quod she.  
' Allas, ye slee me thus for verray tene !  
I see wel now that ye mistrusten me,  
For by your wordés it is wel y-sene !  
Now, for the love of Cynthes the shene,

1575. *shineth now*, so P H<sub>2</sub>; *rest now shineth*.  
1587. *Be pacient*, so P G H<sub>2</sub> R; J and others  
*By patience*.

Mistrust me not thus causéles, for routhe,  
Sin to be trewe I have you plight my  
trouthe ! 1610

'And thenketh wel, that sometime it is wit  
To spende a time, a time for to winne.  
Ne, pardé, lorn am I not fro you yit,  
Though that we ben a day or two a-twinne.  
Drif out the fantasys you withinne,  
And trusteth me, and levethek yoursorwe,  
Or, her my trouthe, I wil not live til morwe !

'For if ye wiste how sore it doth mesmerte,  
Ye woldé cesse of this : for God, thou wost  
The puré strif wepeth in myn herte 1620  
To sen you wepen that I lové most,  
And that I mot gon to the Grekés ost !  
Ye, n'ere it that I wisté remedye  
To come ayein, right here I woldé dye !

'But, certés, I am not so nice a wight  
That I ne can imaginen a wey  
To com ayein that day that I have hight.  
For who may holde a thing that wol away ?  
My fader nought, for al his queynté pley !  
And by my thrift, my wending out of  
Troye 1630  
Another day shal torne us al to joye !

'For-thy with al myn herte I you biseke,  
If that you list don aught for my preyére  
And for that love which that I love you eke,  
That, or that I departé fro you here,  
That of so good a confort and a chere  
I may you sen, that ye may bringe at reste  
Myn herté which that is o-point to breste.

'And over al this I preye you,' quod she tho,  
'Myn owné hertés sothast suffisaunce, 1640  
Sin I am thyn al hool, withouten mo,  
That whil that I am absent, no plesaunce  
Of other do me fro your remembrance ;  
For I am evere a-gast, for-why men rede  
That "love is thing ay ful of bisy drede."

'For in this world ther liveth lady non,  
If that ye were untrewé (as God defende!),  
That so betrayed were or wo-bigon  
As I, that allé trouthe in you entende.

And doutéles, if-that I other wen'de, 1650  
I n'ere but ded. And, or ye causé finde,  
For Goddés love, so beth me not un-  
kinde !—

To this answerd Troilus, and seyde,  
'Now God, to whom ther n'is no thought  
y-wrye,

Me glade, as wis I nevere unto Criseyde,  
Sin th'ilke day I saw her first with ye,  
Was fals, ne neveré shal til that I dye !  
At shorté wordés, wel ye may me leve :  
I can no more, it shal be founde at  
preve !— 1659

'Gramercy, goodé myn, y-wis !' quod she,  
'And blisful Venus, lat me neveré sterve  
Or I may stonde of plesaunce in degree  
To quite him wel, that so wel can deserve !  
And whil that God my wit wil me con-  
serve,

I shal so don, so trewe I have you founde,  
That ay honour to me-ward shal rebounde !

'For trusteth wel, that your estat réfil,  
Ne veyn delit, nor only worthinesse  
Of you in werre or torney marcial, 1660  
Ne pompe, array, nobléye, or ek richesse  
Ne madé me to rewe on your distresse,  
But moral vertu, groundé upon trouthe :  
That was the cause I first had on you  
routhe !

'Ek gentil herte and manhod that ye hadde,  
And that ye hadde, as me thoughte, in  
despit  
Evéry thing that sounéd into badde,  
As rudénesse and poeplish appetit,  
And that 'your reson bridleth you delit :  
This made, aboven every créature  
That I was youre, and shal whil I may  
dure. 1670

'And this may lengthe of yerés not fordo,  
Ne rémuable Fortune it deface,  
But Jupiter, that of his might may do  
The sorful to be glad, so give us grace,  
Or nightés ten, to meten in this place,

1654. thought, þ y causet.  
1682. it. no S: rest com.

So that it may your herte and myn  
suffise!  
And far now wel, for time is that ye  
rise!—

But after that they longe y-pleyned  
hadde;

And ofte kist, and streite in armès folde,  
The day gan rise, and Troilus him  
cladde, 1690

And rewfully his lady gan biholde  
As he that felté dethes carés colde,

1688. *But, S y And.*

And to her grace he gan him recomaunde,  
Whe'r him was wo, this holde I no de-  
maunde!

For mannès hed imaginen ne can,  
N'entendement considere, or tongé telle  
The cruel peynés of this woful man,  
That passen every torment down in helle.  
For whan he saw that shene mighté dwelle,  
Which that his soule out of his herté rente,  
Withouté more out of the chaumbre he  
wente. 1701

1696. *or, so J H<sub>3</sub>; P B y ne.*  
1697. *woful, y sorrowful.*

## BOOK V

APROCHEN gan the fatal destiné  
That Jovés hath in disposicioun,  
And to you, angry Parcas, sustren three,  
Committeth to don execucioun:  
For which Criseyde moste out of the toun,  
And Troilus shal dwellen forth in pine  
Til Lachesis his thred no lenger twine.

The gold-ytresséd Phebus heighe on-lofte  
Thryés hadde allé, with his bemés shene,  
The snowés molte, and Zephirus as ofte 10  
Y-brought ayein the tendré levés grene,  
Sin that the sone of Ecuba the quene  
Bigan to love her first for whom his sorwe  
Was al, that she departé sholde a-morwe.

Ful redy was at primé Diomede,  
Criseyde unto the Grekés ost to lede,  
Forsorweof which she felte her herté blede,  
As she that n'isté what was best to rede. 19  
And trewely, as men in bokés rede,  
Men wisté neveré womman han the care,  
Ne was so loth out of a town to fare.

This Troilus, withouten reed or lore,  
As man that hath his joyés ek forlore,  
Was wayting on his lady everé more

3. *Parcas, Fates.*  
7. *Lachesis, one of the Fates.*  
8. *gold-ytresséd (?), all goldé-ytresséd.*  
9. *shene, so H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> R S; J F cleme; Cx. H<sub>3</sub> y cleme.*

As she that was the sothfast crop and more  
Of al his lust or joyés her-bifore.  
But Troilus! now far-wel al thy joye,  
For shaltow neveré sen her eft in Troye!

Soth is, that whil he bood in this manére;  
He gan his wo ful manly for to hide, 30  
That wel unnethe it sene was in his chere;  
But at the yaté ther she sholde out-ride,  
With certein folk he hovéd her t'abide,  
So wo-bigon, al wolde he naught him  
pleyne,  
That on his hors unnethe he sat for peyne

For ire he quok, so gan his herté gnawe,  
Whan Diomede on horsé gan him dresse,  
And seide unto himself this ilké sawe,  
'Allas!' quod he, 'thus foul a wrecched-  
nesse,  
Why suffre ich it? Why n'il ich it re-  
dresse? 40  
Were it not bet at onés for to dye  
Than everé more in langour thus to drye?

'Why n'il I make at onés riche and pore  
To have y-nough to do or that she go?  
Why n'il I bringe al Troye upon a rore?  
Why n'il I sleen this Diomede also?  
Why n'il I rather with a man or two  
Stele her away? Why wol I this endure?  
Why n'il I helpen to myn owné cure?'

But why he n'oldé don so fel a dede, 50  
That shal I seyn, and why him liste it spare:  
He hadde in herte alweyes a maner drede  
Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare,  
Sholde han ben slayn: lo, this was al  
his care.

And ellés, certain, as I seide yore,  
He hadde it don, withouten wordés more.

Criseyde, whan she redy was to ride,  
Ful sorwfully she sighte, and seide, 'Allas!'  
But forth she mot, for aught that may bitide:  
Ther n'is non other rémedie in this cas;  
And forth she rit ful sorwfulliche a pas. 61  
What wonder is though that hersorésmerte,  
Whan she forgo'th her owné deré herte?

This Troilus, in wise of curteisye,  
With hauke on honde, and with a huge  
route

Of knightés, rod and dide her companye,  
Passing al the valéy fer withoute;  
And fether wolde han rilen, out of doute,  
Ful fayn; and wo was him to gon so sone:  
But torne he moste, and it was ek to done.

And right with that was Antenor y-come 71  
Out of the Grekés ost; and every wight  
Was of it glad, and seide he was welcôme.  
And Troilus, al n'ere his herté light,  
He peynéd him with al his fullé might  
Him to with-holde of weping at the leste;  
And Antenor he kiste, and madé feste.

And therwithal he moste his levé take,  
And caste his ye upon her pitously, 79  
And near he rod, his causé for to make,  
To take her by the hond al sobrely;  
And, Lord, so she gan wepen tendrely!  
And he ful softe and sleighly gan her seye,  
Now hold your day, and do me not to deye!

With that his coursér tornéd he aboute  
Nith facé pale, and unto Diomedé  
No word he spak, ne non of al his route;  
At which the sone of Tydés took hede,

60, 61. So. a β S; H<sub>2</sub> γ transpose ll. 60, 61.

62. *deré*, γ *sweets*. (See iv. 1449.)

67. *valleys*; R *walys* (read? *The walles alle*).

67. *alle* is a mistranslation of Boc. *vallé*, 'rampart.'

88. *sone of Tydés*, Diomedé.

As he that couldé more than the crede 89  
In swich a craft, and by the reyne her hente;  
And Troilus to Troye homwárde he wente.

This Diomedé that led her by the bridel,  
Whan that he saw the folk of Troye aweye,  
Thoughte, 'Al my labour shal not ben  
on ydel

If that I may, for somewhat shal I seye;  
For at the worsté it may yit shorte our weye.  
I have herd seyde ek, timés twyés twelve,  
'He is a fool that wol foryete himselve.'"

But natheles thus thoughte he wel y-nough,  
That 'certeinliche I am abouté nought 100  
If that I speke of love, or make it tough;  
For doutéles, if she have in her thought  
Him that I gesse, he may not ben y-brought  
So sone away; but I shal finde a mene,  
That she not wite as yit shal, what I mene.'

This Diomedé, as he that coude his good,  
Whan time was, gan fallen forth in speche  
Of this and that, and axéd why she stood  
In swich dise, and gan her ek biseche 109  
That if that he encessé mighte or eche  
With any thing her esé, that she sholde  
Comaunde it him, and seide he don it wolde.

For trewélliche he swor her, as a knight,  
That ther n'as thing with which he mighte  
her plese

That he n'il don his herte and al his might  
To don it, for to don her herte an ese;  
And preyéd her, she wolde her sorwé  
apese,

And seide, 'Y-wis, we Grekés can have  
joye  
T'honduren you, as wel as folk of Troye.'

He seide ek thus, 'I wot you thinketh  
straunge,— 120

No wonder is, for it is to you newe,—  
Th'aqueyntaunce of thise Trojans for to  
change

For folk of Grece, that ye neveré knewe.

107. *When time was*, γ *When this was don*.

115. *n'il*, H<sub>4</sub> R S γ *n'olds*.

122. *Trojans*; H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> D *Trojanas*.

122. *for to*, so G Cx.; J and others *to*.

But woldé neveré God but-if as trewe  
A Grek ye sholde amonge us allé finde  
As any Trojan is, and ek as kinde.

'And by the cause I swor you right lo now  
To be your frend, and helply to my might,  
And for-that more acqueyntaunce ek of  
yow

Haveich had than anotherstraunger wight,  
So fro this forth, I preye you, day and night,  
Comaundeth me, how soré that me smerte,  
To don al that may like unto your herte ;

'And that ye me wolde as your brother  
trete,  
And taketh not my frendship in despit ;  
And, though your sorwes ben for thingés  
grete,  
N'ot I not why, but out of more respit  
Myn herte bath for t'amende it gret delit ;  
And if I may your harmés not redresse,  
I am right sory for your hevinesse.

'For though ye Trojans with us Grekés  
wrothe

Han many a day ben, alwey yit, pardé,  
Oo God of love in soth we serven bothe.  
And, for the love of God, my lady free,  
Whomso ye hate, as beth not wroth with me;  
For trewely ther can' no wight you serve,  
That half so loth your wratthé wolde  
deserve.

'And n'ereit that we ben soneigh the tente  
Of Calcas, which that sen us bothé may,  
I wolde of this you telle al myn entente ;  
But this' enseléd til another day.  
Yif me your hond : I am, and shal be ay,  
God help me so, whil that my lif may dure,  
Your owne, aboven every créature !

'Thus seide I nevere or now to womman  
born ;

For, God myn herte as wisly gladdé so,  
I lovedé neveré womman her-biforn  
As paramours, ne neveré shal no mo :  
And for the love of God beth not my fo,  
Al can I not to you, my lady dere,  
Compleyne aright, for I am yit to lere.

'And wondreth not, myn owné lady bright  
Though that I speke of love to you thur  
blive ;

For I have herd or this of many a wigh  
Hath lovéd thing he neveré say his live  
Nor I am not of powér for to strive  
Ayeins the God of Love, but him obeye  
I wol alwéy ; and mercy I you preye.

'Ther ben so worthy knightés in this place  
And ye so fair, that everich of them alle ;  
Wol peynen him to stonden in your grace  
But mighté me so fair a graccé falle,  
That ye me for your servant woldé callé  
So lowly ne so trewely you serve  
N'il non of hem, as I shal, til I sterve.'

Criseyde unto that purpos lite answerde  
As she that was with sorwe oppresséd ;  
That in effect she nought his talés herde  
But here and there, now here a word or two  
Her thoughte hersorwful herté brasta-two  
For whan she gan her fader fer espye, if  
Wel neigh down off her hors she gan to sye

But nathéles she thankéd Diomedé  
Of al his travaille and his goodé chere,  
And that him liste his frendship her t  
bede ;

And she accepteth it in good manére,  
And wol do fayn that is him lief and dere  
And trusten him she wolde, and wel sh  
mighte,  
As seidé she. And from her hors sh  
alighte.

Her fader hath her in his armés nome,  
And twenty time he kiste his dought  
swete,  
And seide, 'O deré doughter myn, we  
cómé !'

She seide ek, she was fayn with him to mett  
And stood forth muwet, milde, and ma  
suete.—

But here I leve her with her fader dwell  
And forth I wol of Troilus you telle.

To Troye is come this woful Troilus  
In sprwe aboven allé sorwes smerte,  
166<sup>1</sup> Nor, J H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>3</sub> ; S y Ek ; rest Nor, Ne.

With felon look, and filcé dispitous. 199  
 Tho sodeinly down from his hors he sterte,  
 And thorough his paleis with a swollen herte  
 To chaumbre wente : of no wight took he  
 hede,  
 Ne non to him dar speke a word for drede.

And there his sorwes that he sparéd hadde  
 He yaf an issue large, and Deth he cri'de ;  
 And in his throwés frenetik and madde  
 He corseth Jove, Appollo, and ek Cupide,  
 He corseth Ceres, Bacus, and Cipride,  
 His burthe, himself, his fate, and ek nature,  
 And save his lady, every créature. 210

To bedde he go'th, and walweth there and  
 torneth  
 In furie, as doth he, Ixion, in helle ;  
 And in this wise he neigh til day sojorneth.  
 But tho bigan his herte a lite unswelle  
 Thorough terés, whiche that gonnun up to  
 welle ;

And pitously he cri'de upon Criseyde,  
 And to himself right thus he spak and seyde :

'Where is myn owné lady, lief and dere ?  
 Where is her whitte brest ? Where is it,  
 where ? 219

Where ben her armés and her yén clere,  
 That yesternight this timé with me were ?  
 Now may I wepe alloné many a tere,  
 And gaspe aboute I may ; but in this place,  
 Saving a pilwe, I findé naught t'enbrace.

How shal I don ? Whan shal she come  
 ayeyn ?

I n'ot, alas ! Why let ich her to go ?  
 As woldé God, ich hadde as tho ben slayn !  
 O herté myn, Criseyde ! O sweté fo !  
 O lady myn, that I love and no mo, 229  
 To whom for everé mo myn herte I dowe !  
 See how I deye, ye n'il me not rescowe !

'Whoseeth you now, my righte lodé-sterre ?  
 Whos right now or stant in your présence ?

Who can conforten now your hertés werre ?  
 Now I am gon, whom yeve ye audience ?  
 Who spek'th for me right now in myn  
 absénce ?

Allas, no wight : and that is al my care ;  
 For wel I wot, as yvele as I ye fare !

'Howsholde I thusten dayés ful endure, 239  
 Whan I the firsté night have al this tene ?  
 How shal she don ek, sorwful créature ?  
 For tendrenesse how shal she ek sustene  
 Swich wo for me ? O pitous, pale, and grene  
 Shal ben your fresshé, wommanliché face  
 For longing, or ye torne into this place !'

And whan he fil in any slombéringes,  
 Anon biginne he sholdé for to grone,  
 And dremen of the dredfullesté thinges  
 That mighté ben : as, mete he were allone  
 In place horribilé making ay his mone, 250  
 Or meten that he was amongés alle  
 His enemies and in hir hondés falle.

And therewithal his body sholdé sterfe,  
 And with the stert al sodeinly awake,  
 And swich a tremour fele aboute his herte,  
 That of the fere his body sholdé quake ;  
 And therewithal he sholde a noisè make,  
 And seme as though he sholdé fallé depe  
 From heighe on-lofte : and than he woldé  
 wepe,

And rewén on himself so pitously, 260  
 That wonder was to here his fantasye.  
 Another time he sholdé mightily  
 Conforté himself, and seyn it was folyé  
 So causéles swich dredé for to drye ;  
 And eft biginne his aspré peynés newe,  
 That every man mighte on his sorwes rewe.

Who couldé telle a right or ful discrive  
 His wo, his pleyné, his langour, and his  
 pine ?

Nought alle the men that han or ben on-live !  
 Thou, reder, mayst thyself ful wel devine 270  
 That swich a wo my wit can not define :

211. *maketh*, so G H4 Cx. ; J *whicheleth* ;  
*thens mayleth*.

212. *Ixion*. See *Rosid*, vi. 601.

213. *gaspe*, H4 A *grape*.

224. *Saving*, so R ; rest *Save*.

229. *ek*, R y *this*.

245. *longing*, so y *langour*.

265. *peynes*, so H2 ; J and others *sorwes*.

270. *Thou, reder* ; see L 52 (note). Chaucer  
 seems now to be writing for publication.

On ydel for to write it sholde I swinke,  
Whan that my wit is wery it to thinke !

On hevené yit the sterrés were y-sene,  
Although ful pale y-woxen was the mone,  
And whiten gan the orisonté shene  
Al estward, as it wont is for to done,  
And Phebus with his rosy carté sone  
Gan after that to dresse him up to fare,  
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandaré. 280

This Pandar,—that of al the day biforn  
Ne mighte han comén Troilus to see,  
Although he on his hed it hadde y-sworn,  
For with the king Priám alday was he,  
So that it lay not in his liberté  
No-wher to gon,—but on the morwe he  
wente

To Troilus, whan that he for him sente.

For in his herte he coudé wel devine  
That Troilus al night for sorwé wook ;  
And that he woldé telle him of his pine, 290  
This knew he wel y-nough, withouté book !  
For-which to chaumbré streight the wey  
he took,

And Troilus tho sobreliehe he grette,  
And on the bed ful sone he gan him sette.

'My Pandarus,' quod Troilus, 'the sorwe  
Which that I drye, I may not longe endure :  
I trowe I shal not liven til to-morwe ;  
For-which I wolde alweys, on aventure,  
To thee devisen of my sepulture  
The forme; and of my moeblé thou  
dispone 300

Right as thee semeth best is for to done.

'But of the fir and flaumbé funeral  
In which my body brennen shal to glede,  
And of the feste and playés palestral  
At my vigile, I preye thee, tak good hede  
That that bewel; and offré Mars mystede,  
My swerd, myn helm; and, levé brother  
dere,  
My sheld to Pallas yif, that shineth clere.

'The pou dre in which myn herte y-brend  
shal toirné.

That preye I thee thou take, and el  
conserve 310

It in a vessel, that men clep'th an urne,  
Of gold; and to my lady that I serve,  
For love of whom thus pitousliche I sterve  
So yive it her, and do me this pleasance  
To preye her kepe it for a rémembraunce

'For wel I felé, by my maladye  
And by my dremés now and yore ago,  
Al certainly that I mot nedés dye :  
The owle eek, which that hight Escaphilk  
Hath after me shrighit alle thise night  
two.

And, God Mercúrie, of me now wof  
wrecche

The soulé gide, and, whan thee list,  
fecche !'—

Pandaré answerde and seide, 'Troilus,  
My deré frend, as I have told thee yore,  
That it is foly for to sorwen thus,  
And causeles, for-which I can no more  
But who-so wol not trowén red ne lore,  
I can not sen in him no remedye  
But lete him worthen with his fantasye.

'But Troilus, I preye thee, tel me now 3  
If-that thou trowe, or this, that any wif  
Hath lovéd paramours as wel as thou ?  
Ye, God wot ! And ful many a wort  
knight

Hath his lady forgon a fourténight,  
And he not yit made halvende! the fare  
What nede is thee to maken al this care

'Sin day by day thou mayst thy-selven 34  
That from his love, or ellés from his wi  
A man mot twinnen of necessité,  
Ye, though he love her as his owné lif; 3  
Yit n'il he with himself thus maken stri  
For wel thou wost, my levé brother der  
That alwey frendés may not ben i-fere.

310. *ek*, so G; J and others *it*.

311. *It is* (7), all *in*.

319. *Escaphile*, *Ascalaphus*, whom *Proserpi*  
changed into an owl. See Ovid, *Met.* v. 539.

333. *ful*, so P R; G *as*; rest *for* (A *for*).

334. *for gon*, so P R G; Cx. *hap gon*; A *s*  
*yed*; rest *gon*.

'How don thise folk that seen hir lovës wedded

By frendës might, as it bitit ful ofte,  
And seen hem in hirs pouses bed y-bedded?  
God wot, they take it wisly, faire, and soft,  
For why good hope halt up hir herte on-  
lofte;

And, for they can a time of sorwe endure,  
As time hem hurt, a timēdoth hem cure! 350

'So sholdestow endure and leten slide  
The time, and fondē to be glad and light!  
Ten dayes n'is so longē nought t'abide!  
And in she thee to comen bath bihight,  
She n'il her hestē breken for no wight;  
For dred thee nought that she n'il finden  
weye

To come ayein, my lif that dorste I lye!

'Thy swevenēs ek and al swich fantasye  
Drif out, and lat hem faren to mischaunce;  
For they procede of thy malēcolye, 360  
That doth thee fele inslepeal this penaunce.  
A straw for allē swevenēs signefiaunce!  
God help me so, I counte hem nought a  
bene!

Ther wot no man aright what dremēs mene!

'For prestēs of the templē tellen this,  
That dremēs ben the revelaciouns  
Of Goddēs; and as wel they telle, y-wis,  
That they ben infernals illusiouns;  
And lechēs seyn, that of clepexiouns  
Proceden they, or fast, or glotonye; 370  
Who wot in soth thus what they signēfyē?

'Ek othré seyn that thorough impressiouns,  
As, if a wight hath faste a thing in minde,  
That therof comen swiche avisiouns;  
And othré seyn, as they in bookēs finde,  
That, after timēs of the yeer, by kinde  
den dreme, and that th'effect goth by  
the mone:

but lef no drem, for it is nought to done!

Wel worth of dremēs ay thise oldē wives,  
and trewēliche ek augurie of thise foules 380  
or fere of which men wenen lese hir lives,

No. *significances*, so J G A; rest *significances*.

As ravenēs qualm, or shriking of thise  
oules!

To trowen on it bothē fals and foul is:  
Allas, alas, so noble a créature  
As is a man shal dreden swich ordure!

'For which withal myn herte I thee biseche,  
Unto thyself that al this thou foryive:  
And ris now up withoutē morē speche,  
And latus caste how forth may best be drive  
This time, and ek how fresshly we may  
live 390  
Whan that she com'th, the whiche shal be  
right sone:  
God help me so, thy beste is thus to done!

'Ris, lat us speke of lusty lif in Troye  
That we han lad, and forth the timē drive,  
And eek of timē coming us rejoye,  
That bringen shal our blissē now so blive;  
And langour of thise twyēs dayes five  
We shal therwith so foryete or oppresse,  
That wel unnethe it don shal us duresse.

'This town is ful of lordēs al aboute, 400  
And trewēs lasten al this menē while:  
Go we and pleye us in som lusty route  
To Sarpedoun, not hennēs but a mile:  
And thus thou shalt the timē wel bigile,  
And drive it forth unto that blisful morwe  
That thou hersee, that cause is of thy sorwe.

'Now ris, my derē brother Troilus:  
For certēs, it non honour is to thee  
To wepe, and in thy bed to rēuken thus;  
For trewēliche of oo thing trustē me, 410  
If thou thus ligge a day or two or three,  
The folk wol seyn that thou for cowardise  
Thee feynest sik, and that thou darst  
not rise!'

This Troilus answerde, 'O brother dere,  
This knowen folk that han y-suffred payne,  
That, though he wepe and makē sorrowful  
chere

398. or, so P R H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>9</sub>; rest *our(e)*.

402. and, so R S; rest *omit.*

403. *Sarpedoun.* See iv. 52.

409. *rēuken*, so Cx. Th.; J and others *reouen*.  
(See *Cant. Tales*, A 1308.)

412. *seyn*, S y *wone*. (Boc. *dira* f *nom*.)



That feleth harmand smert in every veyne,  
No wonderis; and, though ich everé pleyne  
Or alwey wepe, I n'am no thing to blame,  
Sin I have lost the cause of al my game.

'But sin of finé force I mot arise, 421  
I shal arise as sone as evere I may;  
And God, to whom my herte I sacrificise,  
So sende us hastily the tenthé day!  
For was ther neveré fowl so fayn of May  
As I shal ben, whan that she com'th to  
Troye  
That cause is of my torment and my joye.

'But whider is thy red,' quod Troilus,  
'That we may pleye us best in al this toun?'  
'By God, my conseil is,' quod Pandarus,  
'To ride and pleye us with King  
Sarpedoun.' 432  
So longe of this they spaken up and down,  
Til Troilus gan at the laste assente  
Torise, and forth to Sarpedoun they wente.

This Sarpedoun, as he that honorable  
Was evere his live, and ful of heigh largesse,  
With al that mighte y-servéd ben on table  
That deynté was, al coste it gret richesse,  
He fedde hem day by day; that swich  
noblesse, 439  
Asseyden bothe the meste and ek the leste,  
Was neveré or that day wist at any feste.

Nor in this world ther is non instrument  
Delicious through wind, or touche of corde,  
As fer as any wight hath everé went,  
That tongé telle or herté may recorde,  
That at the feste it n'as wel herd acorde;  
N'of ladies ek so fair a companye  
Ondaunce, or tho, was neveré seyn with ye.

But what availleth this to Troilus, 449  
That for his sorwé nothing of it roughte?  
For evere in oon his herté pietus  
Ful bisily Criseyde his lady soughte:  
On her was evere al that his herté thoughte,

Now this, now that, so faste imaginige,  
That glade, y-wis, can him no feastyng.

Thise ladies ek that at the festé ben,  
Sin that he saw his lady was aweye,  
It was his sorwe upon hem for to sen,  
Or for to here on instrument so pleye: 451  
For she that of his herté ber'th the keye  
Was absent, lo, this was his fantasye,  
That no wight sholdé maken melodye.

Nor ther n'as houre of al the day or night,  
Whan he was there-as no wight mighte  
him here,  
That he ne seide, 'O lufsom lady bright,  
How have ye faren sin that ye were here?  
Welcome, y-wis, myn owné lady dere!'  
But weylawey, al this n'as but a mase:  
Fortune his howve intendeth bet to glase!

The lettres ek that she of oldé time 470  
Hadde him y-sent, he wolde alloné rede  
An hundred sithe a-twixen noon and  
prime,  
Refiguring her shap, her wommanhede,  
Withinne his herte, and every word or dede  
That passéd was. And thus he drof t'as  
ende  
The ferthé day; and thennés wolde he  
wende,

And seiddé, 'Levé brother Pandarus,  
Intendestow that we shal heré bleve  
Til Sarpedoun wil forth congéyén us? 471  
Yit were it fairer that we toke our leve.  
For Goddés love, lat us now sone at eve  
Our levé take, and homward lat us torne,  
For treweliche I n'il not thus sojorne!'

Pandare answerd, 'Be we comen hider  
To fecchen fir, and rennen hom ayeyn?  
God help me so, I can not tellen whide  
We mighté gon, if I shal sothly seyn,  
Ther any wight is of us moré fayn  
Than Sarpedoun. And if we hennés hy  
Thus sodeinly, I holde it vilanye, 49

421. *sin of fine force*; var. *sith(en), sin, of force* (read ? *sith in sin of force*). Rawl. has two leaves wanting (ll. 421-50).

432. *largesse*, S y *promesse*.

443. *of*, so P B<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> Cx. A C<sub>2</sub>; H<sub>3</sub> S H<sub>1</sub> S<sub>2</sub>.

451. *feastyngs*, so J S only; rest *feastyng* *feastyng(s)*, *feastyngs*. (See ill. 2718.)

470. *blowes wolde he*, so J P Q H<sub>2</sub>; Cx. *corrupt*; rest *seyde (S that) he wolde*.

470. *blowes*, so J S D C<sub>2</sub> H C<sub>1</sub>; rest *blowes*.

'Sin that we seiden that we woldé bleve  
With him a wowe; and now thus sodeinly  
The ferthé day to take of him our leve,  
He woldé wondren on it trewely.  
Lat us forth holde our purpos fermely,  
And sin that we bihighten him to bide,  
Told forward nów, and after lat us ride.'

Thus Pandarus with allé peyne and wo  
Made him to dwelle; and at the wikés  
Ende,

If Sarpedoun they toke hir levé tho, 500  
And on hir wey they spedden hem to wende.  
Thus Troilus, 'Now Lord me gráce sende,  
That I may finden at myn hom-cominge  
Criseyde come!' and ther-with gan he  
Singe.

'Ye, haselwodé!' thoughté this Pandaré,  
And to himself ful softéliche he seyde,  
God wot, refreyden may this hoté fare  
Or Calcas sendé Troilus Criseyde! 508  
But natheles he japéd thus, and pley'de,  
And swor, y-wis, his herte him wel bihighte  
He woldé come as sone as ever she mighte.

When they unto the paleis were y-comen  
Of Troilus, they down off horse alighte,  
And to the chaumbre hir wey than han  
They nomen;  
And into timé that it gan to nighte  
They gonné speken of Criseyde the  
Brighte;  
And after this, when that hem bothé leste,  
They spedde hem fro the soper unto resté.

On morwe, as sone as day bigan to clere,  
His Troilus gan of his slep t'abreyde, 520  
And to Pandaré, his owné brother dere,  
'For love of God,' ful pitousliche he seyde,  
As go we sen the paleis of Criseyde:  
Or sin we yit may han no moré feste,  
Lat us sen her paleis at the leste!'

92. *forth holde*, so Cx.; S y *hold(n) forth*;  
i. *hold*.

96. *we*, so J G S A; H<sub>2</sub> *he*; rest *ye*.

99. *pley de*, so H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub>; J and others *seyde*.

106. *gonne*, so J; rest *omit*.

117. *Pandarus*; J G H<sub>2</sub> *Pandarus*.

127. *As*, Cl. S<sub>2</sub>; J G P *omit*.

And therewithal, his meyné for to blende,  
A cause he fond in towné for to go,  
And to Criseydes hous they gonné wende.  
But, Lord, this sely Troilus was wo! 529  
Him thoughte his sorwful herté brasta-two;  
For, when he saw her dorés speréd alle;  
Wel nigh for sorwe adown he gan to falle.

Therwith when he was war and gan  
biholde

How shet was every window of the place,  
As frost, him thoughte, his herté gan to  
colde;

For which with chaungéd dedlich paléface,  
Withouten word he forth-by gan to pace;  
And, as God wolde, he gan so fasté ride,  
That no wight of his contenance espi'de.

Than seide he thus: 'O paleis desolat,  
O hous, of houses whilom best y-hight,  
O paleis empty and disconsolat,  
O thou lanterne of which queynt is the  
light,

O paleis, whilom day that now art night,  
Wel oughtestow to falle, and I to dye,  
Sin she is went that wont was us to gye!

'O paleis, whilom crowne of houses alle,  
Enluminéd with sonne of allé blisse!  
O ring, fro which the ruby is out-falle,  
O cause of wo, that cause haast been of  
lisse! 530

Yit, sin I may no bet, fayn wolde I kisse  
Thy coldé dorés, dorste I for this route:  
And far-wel shrine, of which the seynt is  
oute!'

Ther-with he caste on Pandarus his ye,  
With chaungéd face, and pitous to bi-  
holde;

And, when he mighte his time aright espye,  
Ay as he rod, to Pandarus he tolde  
His newé sorwe and ek his joyés olde  
So pitously, and with so ded an hewe,  
That every wight mighte on his sorwe  
rewe. 560

Fro thennésforth he rideth up and down,  
And everything com him to remembrance

530. *haast*, J G *hath*.

530. *lisse*, so J Cx. S Cp.; H<sub>2</sub> *lisse*; rest *lisse*.

As he rod for-by places of the town  
In which he whilom hadde al his ples-  
aunce.

'Lo, yonder saw I last my lady daunce!  
And in that temple with her yen clere  
Me caughte first my righte lady dere!

'And yonder have ich herd ful lustily  
My deré herté laughe! And yonder pleye  
Saw I her onés ek ful bisilly!<sup>570</sup>  
And yonder onés to me gan she seye,  
"Now goodé sweté, love me wel, I  
preye!"

And yond so goodly gan she me biholde,  
• That to the deth myn herte is to her holde!

'And at that corner in the yonder hous  
Herde I myn alderlevest lady dere  
So wommanly with vois melodious  
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere,  
That in my soulé yit me think'th ich here  
The blisful soun! And in that yonder  
place<sup>580</sup>  
My lady first me took unto her grace!'

Than thoughte he thus: 'O blisful Lord  
Cupide,  
Whan I the proces have in my mémorie,  
How thou me hast werréy'd on every  
side,  
Men mighte a book make of it, lik a  
storie!  
What nede is thee to seke on me victorie,  
Sin I am thyn, and hoolly at thy wille?  
What joye hast thou thine owné folk to  
spille?

'Wel hastow, Lord, y-wroke on me thyn  
ire,  
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to  
grave!<sup>590</sup>  
Now mercy, Lord! Thou wost wel I desire  
Thy grace most of allé lustés leve,  
And live and deye I wol in thy bileve:  
For which I n'axe in guerdon but oo bone,  
That thou Criseyde ayein me sendé sone.

565. *Sy* read: *Lo, yonder* (Cl. *yonde*) saw I  
my own lady daunce.

570. *blisly*, so P G H<sub>3</sub> R Cx.; rest *blisfully*.  
580. *place*, so P G H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. omit.

'Distreyne her herte as fasté to retorne  
As thou dost myn to longen her to see:  
Than wot I wel that she n'il not sojorne.  
Now, blisful Lord, so cruel thou ne be  
Unto the blood of Troye, I preyé thee, for  
As Juno was unto the blood Thebaine,  
For which the folk of Thebés caughte hi  
bane!'

And after this he to the yatés wente  
Ther-as Criseyde out-rod a ful good pas  
And up and down ther made he many  
wente,

And to himself ful ofte he seide, 'Allas  
From hennés rod my blis and my<sup>585</sup> soras  
As woldé blisful God now for his joye,  
I mighte her sen ayein come into Troye

'And to the yonder hil I gan her gide, 6  
Allas, and there I took of her my leve!  
And yond I saw her to her fader ride,  
For sorwe of which myn herté wol to-cleve  
And hider hom I com whan it was eve  
And here I dwelle out-cast from allé joy  
And shal, til I may sen her eft in Troye

And of himself imaginéd he ofte  
To ben defet and pale, and waxen les  
Than he was wont; and that men seid  
softe,

'What may it be? Who can the sor  
gesse,

Why Troilus hath al this hevynesse?'  
And al this n'as but his maléncolye,  
That he hadde of himself swich fantas

Another time imaginen he wolde  
That every wight that wenté by the w  
Had of him routhe, and that they se  
sholde,

'I am right sory Troilus wol deye.'  
And thus he drof a day yit forth or tw  
As ye han herd: swich lif right gan he!  
As he that stood bitwixen hope and dr

For-which him likéd in his songés sh  
Th'encheson of his wo as he best mig

585. *not*, J so (read? *Than wot I wel sh  
not so sojorne*).

608. *fit*, J P G H<sub>3</sub> R H<sub>4</sub> omit.

609. *right*, J P G Cx. omit.

And make a song of wordés but a fewé,  
Somwhat his woful herté for to lighte;  
And whan he was from every mannés  
sighté,  
With softé vois he of his lady dere  
That absent was gan singe as ye may here:

'O sterre, of which I lost have al the  
light,  
With herté soor wel oughte I to biwaile  
That everé derk in torment night by  
night, 640  
Toward my deth with wind in stere I  
saile:

For-which the tenthé night if that I faile  
The giding of thy bemés brighte an houre,  
My ship and me Caribdis wol devoure.'

This song whan he thus songen haddé, sone  
He fil ayein into his sikés olde;  
And every night, as he was wont to done,  
He stood the brighté moné to biholde,  
And al his sorwe he to the moné tolde,  
And seide, 'Y-wis, whan thou art hornéd  
newe, 650  
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe!

I saw thy hornés oldé by the morwe  
Whan hennés rod my righté lady dere,  
That cause is of my torment and mysorwe:  
For-which, O brighté Lúcina the clere,  
For love of God, ren faste aboute thyspere!  
For, whan thy hornés newé ginné springe,  
Than shal she come that may my blisse  
bringe!

The dayés more and lenger every night  
Than they ben wont to ben, him thoughté  
tho; 660

And that the sonnè wente his cours unright  
By lenger wey than it was wont to go;  
And seide, 'Y-wis, me dredeth everé mo  
The sonnés soné Pheton be on-live,  
And that his fader carte amis he drive.'

Upon the wallés faste ek wolde he walke,  
And on the Grekés oost he woldé see,

655. *Enchiridion*, so Cx. Th.; J and others *La-  
Monna*. See iv. 1591.

664. *Pheton*, Phæton. See H. F. 942.

And to himself right thus he woldé talke,  
'Lo, yonder is myn owné lady free!  
Or ellés yonder ther the tentés be! 670  
And thennés com'th thiseir that is so swote,  
That in my soule I fele it doth me bote!

'And, hardily, this wind, that more and more  
Thus stoundémele encresseth in my face,  
Is of my lady's depé sikés sore!  
I preve it thus, for in non other space  
Of al this town, save only in this place,  
Fele I no wind that souneth so lik peyne:  
It seith, "Allas! why twinnéd be we  
tweyne?"'

This longé time he driveth forth right thus,  
Til fully passéd was the ninthé night; 682  
And ay beside him was this Pandarus,  
That bisily dide al his fullé might  
Him to confôrte and make his herté light,  
Yiving him hope alwéy, the tenthé morwe  
That she shal come and stinten al his sorwe.

—Upon that other sidé was Criseyde,  
With women fewe, among the Grekés  
stronge:

For-which ful ofte a day 'Allas!' she seyde,  
'That I was born! Wel may myn herté  
longe 690  
After my deth, for now live I too longe!  
Allas, and I ne may it not amende,  
For now is wors than everé yit I wen'de!

'My fader n'il for no thing do me grace  
To gon ayein, for aught I can him quemen;  
And, if so be that I my termé pace,  
My Troilus shal in his herté deme  
That I am fals; and so it may wel seme:  
Thus shal I have unthank on every side.  
That I was born, so weylawey the tide! 700

'And if that I me putte in jupartye  
To stele away by night, and it bi-falle  
That I be caught, I shal be holde espye:  
Or ellés, lo, this drede I most of alle,  
If in the hondés of som wrecche I falle.  
I n'am but lost, al be myn herté trewe!  
Now mighty God, thou on my sorwé rewe!'

695. *sought*, J. and others *sought*.

Ful pale y-waxen was her brighte face,  
 Her limés lene, as she that al the day  
 Stood whan she dorste, and lokéd on the  
     place 720  
 Ther she was born and ther she dwelt  
     had ay;  
 And al the night wepinge, alas, she lay.  
 And thus despaired out of allé cure,  
 She ledde her lif, this woful créature.

Ful ofte a day she sighte ek for distresse,  
 And in herself she wente ay pörtreyinge  
 Of Troilus the greté worthinesse,  
 And alle his goodly wordés récordinge  
 Sin first that day her love bigan tospringe:  
 And thus she sette her woful herte a-fire 720  
 \*Thorough rémembraunce of that she gan  
     desire.

In al this world ther n'is so cruel herte  
 That her had herd compleynen in her  
     sorwe,  
 That n'olde han wepen for her peynés  
     smerte,  
 So tendrelly she wep bothe eve and morwe:  
 Her nedéd no terts for to borwe.  
 And this was yet the worste of al her peyne,  
 Ther was no wight to whom she dorste  
     her pleyne.

Ful rewfully she lokéd upon Troye, 729  
 Biheld the tourés heighe and ek the halles:  
 'Allas!' quod she, 'the plesaunce and the  
     joye,  
 The whiche that now al tornéd into galle is,  
 Have ich had ofte withinne tho yonder  
     walles!  
 O Troilus, what dostow now?' she seyde:  
 'Lord, whether thou yit thenke upon  
     Criseyde!

'Allas, I n'hadde y-trowéd on your lore,  
 And went with you, as ye me redde or this!  
 Than hadde I now not sikéd half so sore!  
 Who mighte have said that I had don amis  
 To stele away with swich oon as he is? 740  
 But al too laté com'th the letuárie  
 Whan men the cors unto the gravé carie!

'Too late is now to speke of that maté  
 Prudence, alas! oon of thine yen th  
 Me lakkéd alwey or that I com here  
 On timé passéd wel remembred me,  
 And present time ek coude ich wel y-  
 But futur time, or I was in the snare  
 Coude I not see: that causeth now myc

'But nathéles, bitidé what bitide,  
 I shal tomorwe at night, by est or w  
 Out of this oost stele on som maner:  
 And gon with Troilus wher-as him le  
 This purpos wol I holde, and this is l  
 No fors of wikked tongés janglerye,  
 For evere on love han wrecches had en

'For who-so wol of every word take h  
 Or rulen him by every wightés wit,  
 Ne shal he neveré thriven, out of dr  
 For that that some men blamen ever  
 Lo, other maner folk comenden it.  
 And as for me, for al swich variaunc  
 Felicité clepe I my suffisaunce!

'For-which, withouten any wordés r  
 To Troye I wol, as for conclusioun.  
 But God it wot, or fully monthés tw  
 She was ful fer fro that entencioun!  
 For bothé Troilus and Troyés toun  
 Shal knottéles throughout her hertés  
 For she wol take a purpos for t'abide

—This Diomedé, of whom you telle I  
 Go'th now, withinne himself ay argu  
 Withal thesleighte and al that evere he  
 How he may best with shortest tary  
 Into his net Criseydes herté bringe.  
 To this entente he coude neveré fine  
 To fasshen her, he leyde out hook and

But nathéles wel in his herte he thou  
 That she n'as not withoute a love in Tr  
 For neveré sithen he her thenpés bro  
 Ne coude he sen her laughe and n  
     joye.

He n'iste how best her herté for t'ac  
 But 'for t'assaye,' he seide, 'it poug  
     greveth,

For he that nought n'assayeth, n  
     n'acheveth!

Yit seide he to himself upon a night,  
 'Now am I not a fool, that wot wel how  
 Her wo for love is of another wight;  
 And her-upon to gon assaye her now,  
 I may wel wite, it n'il not ben my prou.  
 For wise folk in bokés it expresse,  
 "Menshal not wowe a wight in hevinesse."

'But who-so mighté winnen swich a flour  
 From him for whom she morneth night  
 and day,

He mighté seyn he were a conquerour!  
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay,  
 Thoughte in his herté, 'Happe how happé  
 may,

Al sholde I deye, I wol her herté seche:  
 I shal no moré lesé but my speche!'

This Diomede, as bokés us declare,  
 Was in his nedés prest and corageus,  
 With sterné vois and mighty limés square,  
 Hardy and testif, strong and chivalrus  
 Of dedés, lik his fader Tidéus;  
 And some men seyn he was of tongé large,  
 And heir hé was of Calidoyne and Arge.

Criseyde mené was of her statüre,  
 Therto of shap, of face, and ek of chere  
 Ther mighté be no fairer créature:  
 And ofté timé this was her manére  
 To gon y-tresséd with her herés clere  
 Down by her coler at her bak bihinde,  
 Whiche with a thred of gold she wolde  
 binde;

And, save her browes joinéden i-fere,  
 Ther nas no lak in aught I can espyen.  
 But for to speken of her yen clere,  
 So, trewely, they writen that her syen,  
 That Paradys stood forméd in her yen;  
 And with her riché beauté everé more  
 Trof love in her ay, which of hem was  
 more.

he sobré was, ek simple and wis withal,  
 The best y-norishéd ek that mighté be,

799-840. Much of this passage seems to have  
 been taken direct from Benoit de Sainte More,  
*Roman de Troie*. It is remarkable that in these  
 stanzas there should be six defective or doubt-  
 ful lines.

802. and testif, so S; rest testif.

And goodlich of her speche in general,  
 And charitable, estatly, lusty, free:  
 Ne neveré mo ne lakkéd pieté  
 Her tendré herté, sliding of corage.  
 But trewely I can not telle her age.

And Troilus wel waxen was on highte,  
 And complet forméd by proporcioun  
 Sowel that kindeit nought amendémighte:  
 Yong, fressh, and strong, and hardy as  
 lioun,

And trewe as steel in ech condicioun:  
 And oon the best entechéd créature  
 That is, or shal, whil-that the world may  
 dure.

And certainliche in storie it is y-founde  
 That Troilus was nevere unto no wight,  
 As in his time, in no degré secoúnde  
 In during don that longeth to a knight.  
 Al mighte a geaunt passen him of might,  
 His herte ay with the firste and with the  
 beste  
 Stood paregal to durre-don that him leste.

—But for to tellen forth of Diomede.  
 It fil that after, on the tenthé day  
 Sin that Criseyde out of the cité yede,  
 This Diomede, as fressh as braunche in  
 May,  
 Com to the tenté ther-as Calcas lay,  
 And feynéd him with Calcas han to done:  
 But what he mente, I shal you tellé sone.

Criseyde, at shorté wordés for to telle,  
 Welcoméd him, and down him by her sette;  
 And he was ethe y-nough to maken dwelle!  
 And after this, withouté longé lette  
 The spices and the wyn men forth hem fette;

823. And charitable (7), all Charitable; P and  
 (before estatly); H<sub>4</sub> G H<sub>3</sub> R Cx. A D H<sub>1</sub> Cl. and  
 (before free); P R estatly; J etc. estat (fals) chide.  
 804. lakkéd pieté (7), all lakkéd (6) her pite (pité).  
 (See iii. 2033; iv. 246; v. 1298.)

805. Her tendre herte (7), G tendry herte; P  
 Tendre hertid; H<sub>3</sub> Thendres hertede; rest,  
 Tendre herted.

830. and strong, so S; rest strong.

831. And trewe (7), all Truwe.

832. And oon the (7), H<sub>1</sub> Oon the; rest oon of  
 the.

842. This line follows l. 770 in *Boisheide*, who  
 makes it the fourth day.

And forth they speke of this and that i-fere  
As frendes don, of which som shal ye here.

He gan first fallen of the werre in speche  
Bitwixe hem and the folk of Troye toun ;  
And of th'assege he gan her ek bisechie  
To telle him what was her opinioun.  
Fro that demaunde he so descendeth doun  
To axen her, if that her straungé thoughte  
The Grekes gise, and werkés that they  
wroughte ; 861

And why her fader tarieth so longe  
To wedden her unto som worthy wight.—  
Criseyde, that was in her peynés stronge  
For love of Troilus, her owne knight,  
As ferforth as she conning hadde or might  
Answérde him tho ; but, as of his entente,  
It seméd not she wisté what he mente.

But natheles this ilke Diomedé  
Gan in himself assure, and thus he seyde :  
' If ich aright have taken of you hede, 871  
Me thinketh thus, O lady myn Criseyde,  
That, sin I first hond on your bridel leyde  
Whan ye out-come of Troye by the morwe,  
Ne coude I neveré sen you but in sorwe.

' Can I not seyn what may the causé be,  
But-if for love of som Trojan it were ;  
The whiche right soré wolde athinken me,  
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there  
Sholde everé spille a quarter of a tere, 880  
Or pitously yourselven so bigile :  
For dreddeles it is not worth the while.

' The folk of Troye, as who seith, alle and  
some  
In prison ben, as ye yourselven see ;  
Nor thennés shal not oon on-live come  
For al the gold atwixen sonne and sea :  
Trusteth right wel and understondeth me,  
Ther shal not oon to mercy gon on-live,  
Al were he lord of worldés twyés five !

' Swich wreche on hem for, fecching of  
Eléyne 890  
shal ben take or-that we hennés

That Manés, whiche that Goddés ben of  
peyne,  
Shal benagast that Grekes wol hem shende,  
And menshul drede, unto the worldés ende,  
From hennésforth to raviashén any quene,  
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene !

' And but-if Calcas lede us with ambages,  
That is to seyn, with doublé wordés slye,  
Swich as men clepe a word with two visages,  
Ye shal wel knowén that I nought ne lye  
And al this thing right sen it with your ye  
And that anon, ye n'il not trowe how  
sone !

Now taketh hedé, for it is to done 90

' What ! Wené ye your wisé fader wold  
Have yeven Antenor for you anon,  
If he ne wisté that the cité sholde  
Destroyéd ben ? Why, nay, so mote I gor  
He knew ful wel ther shal not scapen oc  
That Trojan is, and for the greté fere  
He dursté not ye dwelté lenger there. 9

' What wol ye moré, lufsom lady dere !  
Lat Troye and Trojan fro your herté pac  
Drif out that bittre hope, and mak go  
chere,  
And clepe ayein the beauté of your fac  
That ye with salté terés so deface,  
For Troye is brought in swich a jupart  
That it to save is now no remedye !

' And thenketh wel, yeshal in Grekes fir  
A moré parfit love, or it be night,  
Than any Trojan is, and moré kinde,  
And bet to serven you wol don his mig  
And if ye vouchésauf, my lady bright,  
I wol ben he to serven you myselve,  
Ye, leveré than be king of Grecés twel

And with that word he gan to waxen  
And in his speche a litel wight he quc  
And caste aside a litel wight his hed,  
And stinte a while. And afterward  
wook,

895. *remission*, pronounce *rem'ishon*.  
*notwithstanding*, l. 891.  
900. *to*, so Cx. ; H<sub>4</sub> *now to* ; G *not to* ;  
others *for to*.  
908. *As wook* ; J and others *abide*.

all *Sholdes*.  
not, so Cx. S ; rest *wol*

Andsobreliche on her hethrew his look, 929  
And seide, 'I am, al be it you no joye,  
'As gentil man as any wight in Troye.

'For if my fader Tydeus,' he seyde,  
'Y-livéd hadde, ich haddé ben, or this,\*  
Of Calidoyné and Arge a king, Criseyde !  
And so hope I that I shal yit, ywis !  
But he was slayn, allas, the more harm is,  
Unhappily at Thebés al too rathe,  
Polymites and many a man to scathe.

'But, herté myn, sin that I am your man, 939  
And ye the firste of whom I seché grace  
To have you as hertly as I can,  
And everé shal whil I to live have space,  
So, or that I departe out of this place,  
That ye me graunté that I may tomorwe  
As bettre leiser tellé you my sorwe !'

What sholde I telle his wordés that he  
seyde ?

He spak y-nough for oo day at the meste !  
It preveth wel, he spak so that Criseyde  
Graunted him on the morwe at his requeste  
To have a speché with her at the leste, 950  
So that he n'oldé speke of swich matere :  
And thus to him she seide, as ye may here,

As she that haddé her herte on Troilus  
fasté, that they may it non arace ;  
And straungely she spak, and seidé thus :  
'Diomedé, I love that ilké place  
er I was born ; and Jovés for his grace  
divere it sone of al that doth it care !  
d, for thy might, so leve it wel to fare !

bat Grekés wolde hir wraththe on Troyé  
wreke 960  
bat they mighte, I knowe it wel, y-wis :  
t it shal not bifallen as ye speke,  
d God to-form ! And fether over this,  
not my fader wis and redy is ;

18. *Polymites*, *Polynices*. (See ll. 1488, 1507,  
l. 1498 note.)

19. *ye the*, so Cx.; P *ye be*; H<sub>3</sub> *bethe the*;  
*ben the*.

14. *That ye, S y Ye wol*.

19. *kiné*, so Cx.; rest omit.

20. *To have a speche with her*, so Cx.; rest  
*to speken with him*.

And that he me hath bought, as ye me  
tolde,  
So dere, I am the more unto him holde.

'That Grekés ben of heigh condicioun  
I wot ek wel ; but, certain, men shal finde  
As worthy folk withinné Troyé toun, 969  
As conning, and as parfit, and as kinde,  
As ben bitwixen Orcadés and Inde ;  
And that ye coudé wel your lady serve,  
It trowe it wel, her thank for to deserve.

'But as to speke of love, y-wis,' she seyde,  
'I hadde a lord, to whom I wedded was,  
The whos myn herte al was til that he  
deyde ;

And other love, as help me now Pallas,  
Ther in myn herté n'is, ne neveré was.  
And that ye ben of noble and heigh kinréde,  
I have wel herd it tellen, out of drede ; 980

'And that doth me to hansomget a wonder,  
That ye wol scornen any woman so !  
Ek, God wot, love and I be fer asonder :  
I am disposéd bet, so mote I go,  
Unto my deth to pleyne and maken wo :  
What I shal after don, can I not seye ;  
But trewéliche, as yit, me list not pleye.

'Myn herte is now in tribulacioun,  
And ye in armés bisy day by day : 989  
Hereafter, whan ye wonnen han the toun,  
Paraunter thanné so it happen may,  
That whan I see that neveré yit I say,  
Than wol I werké that I neveré wroughte !  
This word to you y-nough suffisen oughte.

'To-morweek wol I speken with you fayn,  
So that ye touchen nought of this matere ;  
And whan you list, ye may come here aye yn.  
And, or yegon, thus muche I seye you here :  
As help me Pallas with her herés clere, 999  
If that I sholde on any Grek han routhé,  
It sholdé be yourselves, by my trouthe !

'I sey not therfor that I wol you love,  
N'I sey not nay ; but in conclusioun  
I mené wel, by God that sit above

999. *neveré yit I*, so Cx. P H<sub>4</sub>;  
*others I nevere(er), etc.*



And therewithal she caste her yen doun,  
And gan to sike, and seide, 'O Troye toun,  
Yit bidde I God, in quiete and in reste  
I may thee sen, or do myn herté breste !'

But in effect, and shortly for to seye,  
This Diomedé al freshly newe ayeyn 1020  
Gan pressen on, and faste her mercy preye;  
And after this, the sothé for to seyn,  
Herglove he took, of which he was ful fayn:  
And finally, whan it was waxen eve,  
And al was wel, he roos and took his leve.

The brighté Venus folwed and ay taughte  
The wey ther brodé Phebus doun alighte,  
And Cynthea her char-hors over-raughte  
To whirle out of the Leoun, if she mighte,  
And Signifer his candels sheweth brighte,  
Whan that Criseyde unto her resté wente  
Inwith her fadres faire brighté tente, 1022

Retorning in her soule ay up and doun  
The wordés of this sodein Diomedé,  
His grete estat, and peril of the toun,  
And that she was alone and haddé nede  
Of frendés help. And thus bigan to brede  
The causes why, the sothé for to telle,  
That she took fully purpos for to dwelle.

The morwé com, and gostly for to speke  
This Diomedé is come unto Criseyde; 1031  
And, shortly, lest that ye my talé breke,  
So wel he for himselven spak and seyde,  
That alle her sikés sore adoun he leyde;  
And finally, the sothé for to seyne,  
He refte her of the grete of al her peyne.

And after this the storie telleth us  
That she him yaf the faire bayé stede

1019. See Cressida's promise, iv. 1592, and v. 1192.

1020. *Signifer*, the Zodiac.

1021. *ruste*, H<sub>2</sub> S y *bedde*; H<sub>4</sub> *chamber*.

1028. *causes*, so J P G (Boc.); rest *cause*.

1029. *Justly*, as her spiritual adviser.

1037. The incidents in the two following stanzas seem to have been taken from Benoît, though the *Historia Troiana* of Guido delle Colonne may also have been consulted (see l. 1044). Chaucer for his audience, see *Prologue to Legend of Good Women* has evidently been dissatisfied with Benoît's account of Cressida's faithlessness. The complaint (ll. 1031 seq.) is probably Chaucer's. Chaucer returns to Boccaccio

The whiche he onés wan of Troilus; 10  
And eke a broche—and that was litel nede!  
That Troilus' was, she yaf this Diomedé  
And ek, the bet from sorwe him to relev  
She made him were a pencil of her slev

I finde ek in the stories elléswhere,  
Whan thorough the body hurt was Diome  
Of Troilus, tho wep she many a tere,  
Whan that she saw his widé woundés bled  
And that she took, to kepen him, go  
hede;

And, for to hele him of his sorwés smer  
Men seyn—I n'ot—that she yaf him l  
her te.

But trewely the storie telleth us,  
Ther madé neveré woman moré wo  
Than she, whan that she falséd Troilr  
She seyde, 'Allas! for now is clene a  
My name of trouthe in love for everén  
For I have falséd oon the gentileste  
That everé was, and oon the worthies

'Allas! of me, unto the worldés ende  
Shal neither ben y-written nor y-songe  
No good word, for these bokés wol  
shende.

O, rolléd shal I ben on many a tonge  
Throughout the world my bellé shal  
ronge;

And wommen most wol haté me of a  
Allas, that swich a cas me sholdé fall

'They wol seyn, in as muche as in me  
I have hem don dishonour, weylawe  
Al be I not the firste that dide amis,  
What helpeth that, to don my blame av  
But, sin I see ther is no bettré wey,  
And that too late is now for me to ri  
To Diomedé algate I wol be trewe.

'But Troilus, sin I no bettré may,  
And sin that thus departen ye and I  
Yet preye I God so give you right gooc  
As for the gentilesté, trewely,  
That everé I say, to serven feithfully  
And best can ay his lady honour ke  
And with that word she brast anon to v

1044. *she*, J and others omit.

1046. *wep*, so J P G; H<sub>4</sub> *wepes* *gan*; rest:

'And certés, you ne haten shal I nevere,  
And frendés love, that shal ye han of me,  
And my good-word, al mighte I liuén evere!  
And trewélliche, I woldé sory be 1082  
For to sen you in any adversité:  
And gíltés, I wot wel, I you love:  
But al shal passe!—And thus take I my  
leve.'

But trewély, how longe it was bitwene,  
That she forsook him for this Diomedé,  
Ther n'is non auctour telletþ it, I wene:  
Take every man now to his bokés hede,  
He shal no termé finden, out of drede;  
For though that he bigan to wowe hersone,  
Or he her wan, yit was ther more to done.

Ne me ne list this sely womman chide  
Further than thilké storie wol devise:  
Her name, allas, publisshéd is so wide,  
That for her gilt it oughte y-nough suffice:  
And if I mighte excuse her any wise,  
For she so sory was for her untrouthe,  
Y-wis, I wolde excuse her yit for routhe.

—This Troilus, as I bífóre have told, 1100  
Thus driveth forth as wel as he hath might:  
But often was his herté hoot and cold,  
And namély that ilké ninthé night,  
Which on the morwé she had him bihight  
To come ayein: God wot, ful litel reste  
Hadde he that night: nothing to slepe  
him leste!

'he laurer-crownéd Phebus with his hete  
an, in his cours ay upward as he wente,  
'o warme of th' esté see the wawés wete,  
and Nisus' doughter song with fressh  
entente, 1110  
Vhan Troilus his Pandar after sente,  
and on the wallés of the town they pleydc,  
'o loke if they can sen aught of Criseyde.

1082. *mighte*, J and others *sholde*.

1083. *ay*, so H<sub>4</sub> Cx: S; rest omit.

1085. *But*, J H<sub>3</sub> Cl. *And*.

1086. *thilke* (7), Cl. *this*; rest *the*.

1087. *publisshéd*, so H<sub>3</sub> Cx: J and others *pub-*

*lishéd*.

1102. *ninthé*, J G H<sub>3</sub> *tenthé*.

1110. *Nisus' daughter*, Scylla, changed into a

rk. See L.G.W. 1908.

Til it was noon they stoden for to see  
Who that ther com; and every maner wight  
That com fro fer, they seiden it was she,  
Til that they couden knowén him aright:  
Now was his herté dul, now was it light;  
And thus bi-japéd, stonden for to stare  
Abouté naught this Troilus and Pandare!

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seyde, 1121  
'For aught I wot, bífór noon sikerly  
Into this town ne com'th not here Criseyde.  
She hath y-nough to doné, hardily,  
To winnen from her fader, so trowe I.  
Her oldé fader wol yit make her dine  
Or-that she go: God. yive his herté pine!'

Pandarcanswérde, 'It may wel be, certein;  
And for-thy lat us dine, I thee biseche;  
And after noon than maystow come  
ayein.' 1130

And hom they gon, withouten moré  
speche,  
And come ayein. But longé may they  
seche

Or-that they finden that they after cape:  
Fortúne hem bothé thenketh for to jape!

Quod Troilus, 'I see wél now that she  
Is taried with her oldé fader so,  
That, or she come, it wil neigh even be.  
Com forth, I wol unto the yaté go.  
These porters ben unconning everé mo,  
And I wol don hem holden up the yate  
As naught ne were, although she comé  
late.' 1142

The day go'th faste, and after that com'th  
eve,

And yit com nought to Troilus Criseyde.  
He loketh forth by haye, by tree, by greve,  
And fer his hed over the wal he leyde;  
And at the laste he tornéd him and seyde,  
'By God, I wot her mening now, Pandaré!  
Almost, y-wis, al newé was my care!

'Now doutéles this lady can her good!  
I wot she meneth riden privély, 1150

1123. *here*, J and others omit.

1125. *winnen*, J Cl. *swinnen*.

1144. *haye* (7), all *hag* (6) *hag* (6). (See III.

351.)

And I comende her wisdom, by myn hood !  
She n'il not maken peple nicely  
Gaure on her whan she com'th ; but softly  
By night into the town she thenketh ride.  
And, deré brother, thenk not long t'abide ;

We have not ellés for to done, y-wis.—  
And Pandarus, now wiltow trowen me ?  
Have here my trouthe, I see her ! Yond  
she is !

Heve up thine yen, man ! Maystow not  
see ? <sup>1159</sup>

Pandare answerd, 'Nay, so mote I thee !  
Al wrong, by God ! What seystow, man ?  
Wher arte ?

That I see yond n'is but a faré-carte !'

'Allas, thou sey'st ful soth !' quod Troilus.  
'But, hardily, it n'is not al for nought  
That in myn herte I now rejoise thus :  
It is ayeins som good I have a thought.  
N'ot I not how, but sin that I was wrought  
Ne felte I swich a confort, soth to seye !  
She com'th to-night, my lif that dorste I  
leye !'

Pandare answerd, 'It may be, wel  
y-nough !' <sup>1170</sup>

And held with him of al that evere he leyde :  
But in his herte he thoughte, and softé  
lough,

And to himself ful sobrelliche he seyde :  
'From hasel-wode ther joly Robin pleyde  
Shal come al that that thou abidest here !  
Ye, far-wel al the snow of ferné yere !'

The wardein of the yatés gan to calle  
The folk whiche that withoute the yatés  
were,

And bad hem driven in hir beestés alle,  
Or al the night they mosten bleven there.  
And fer withinne the night, with many a  
tere, <sup>1181</sup>

This Troilus gan homward for to ride,  
For wel he seeth it helpeth nought t'abide.

1151. And I (T), all I. (Boc. ed. in 'I commendo.)

1162. ful, S y (exc. A) right.

1168. soth to seye, S y (exc. A) dar I seye.

1171. leyde (T), all ayeins. (See ll. 1169, 1204.)

1174-1176. In Boccaccio, 'From Etna the poor  
fallow expects a wind !'

1177. that that, so J P H<sub>1</sub> R Cl ; A that at ;  
rest that.

But natheles he gladded him in this :  
Hethoughte he misaccounted hadde his day  
And seide, 'I understonden have amis ;  
'For th'ilké night I last Criseyde say,  
She seide, "I shal ben here, if that I may  
Or that the mone, O deré herté swete,  
The Lioun passe out of this Ariete." <sup>111</sup>

'For-which she may yit holde al h  
biheste.'—

And on the morwe unto the yate he went  
And up and down, by westeand ek by est  
Upon the wallés made he many a went  
But al for nought : his hope alwéy hi  
blente.

For-which at night, insorweand sikés so,  
He wente him hom, withouten any mo

His hope al clene out of his herté fled  
He n'hath wheron nowlenger for to hong  
But for the peyne him thoughte his he  
bledde, <sup>1</sup>

So were his throwés sharpe and wone  
stronge.

For, whan he saw that she abood solong  
He n'isté what he jugen of it mighté,  
Sin she hath broken that she him bihigh

The thriddé, ferthé, fifté, sixté day  
After tho dayés ten of which I tolde,  
Bitwixen hope and drede his herté lay  
Yit somewhat trusting on her hestés ol  
But whan he sawshen'olde her termé hol  
He can now sen non other remedye  
But for to shape him soné for to dye.

Therwith the wikked spirit (God us bles  
Which that men clepeth wodé Jalous)  
Gan in him crepe in al his hevinesse ;  
For-which, bicause he woldé soné dy  
He n'et ne drunk for his maléncolye  
And ek from every companye he fled  
This was the lif that al this time he led

He so defet was, that no maner man  
Unnethe him mighté knowé ; ther  
wente,

So was he lene, and therto pale and

1190. this, J H<sub>1</sub> R H<sub>2</sub> ; G that. (See iv. 12)

1193. wode, P H<sub>2</sub> D Cp. Cl the wode.

And feblé, that he walketh by potente;  
And with his ire he thus himselven shente.  
And who-so axéd him wherof him smerte,  
He seide, his harm was al aboute his herte.

Priam ful ofte, and ek his moder dere,  
His brethren and his sustren gonne him  
freyne

Why he so sorful was in all his chere,  
And what thing was the cause of al his  
peyne;

But al for nought. He n'olde his causé  
pleyne, 1230

But aside he felte a grevous maladye  
Aboute his herte, and fayn he woldé dye.

So on a day he leyde him down to slepe:  
And so bifil that in his slep him thoughte  
That in a forest faste he welk to wepe  
For love of her that him this peyne  
wroughte;

And, up and down as he the forest soughte,  
Him mette, he say a boor with tuskés grete,  
That slep ayein the brighté sonnés hete;

And by this boor, faste in her armés  
folde, 1240

Lay, kissing ay, his lady bright, Criseyde:  
For sorwe of which, whan he it gan biholde,  
And for despit, out of his slep he breyde,  
And loude he cri'de on Pandarus, and  
seyde,

'O Pandarus, now knowe I crop and rote!  
I n'am but ded, ther n'is non other bote!

'My lady bright, Criseyde, hath me  
bitrayed,

In whom I trusted most of any wight:  
She elléswere hath now her herte apayed:  
The blisful Goddés through hir greté might  
Han in my drem y-shewed it ful right! 1251  
Thus in my drem Criseyde I have  
biholde,'—

And al this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

'O my Criseyde, allas! what subtilté,  
What newé lust, what beauté, what sciéce,  
What wrathe of the justé cause han ye to me?  
What gilt of me, what fel experience

1240. her, H<sub>4</sub> Cl. his; P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>3</sub> Cx. omit.

Hath fro me reft, allas, thyn advertence?  
O trust! O feith! O depé assurance!  
Who hath me reft Criseyde, al my ples-  
aunce?

'Allas! why let I you from hennés go, 1261  
For which wel neigh out of my wit I breyde?  
Who shal now trowe on any othés mo?  
God wot, I wen'de, O lady bright, Criseyde,  
That every word was gospel that ye seyde!  
But who may bet bigilé, yif him liste,  
Than he on whom men weneth best to triste?

'What shal I don, my Pandarus? Allas!  
I felé now so sharpe a newé peyne, 1269  
Sin that ther li'th no remedie in this cas,  
That bet were it I with mine hondés tweyne  
Myselven slow, alwey than thus to pleyne;  
For through the deth my wo sholde have  
an end,  
Ther every day with lif myself I shende.'

Pandare answerde and seide, 'Allas the  
while

'That I was born! Have I not seid or this,  
That dremés many a maner man bigile?  
And why? For folk expouden hem amis!  
How darstow seyn that fals thy lady is 1279  
For any drem, right for thyn owné drede?  
Lat be this thought, thou canst no dremés  
rede!

'Paraunter, ther thou dremest of this boor,  
It may so ben that it may signéfyé,  
Her fader, which that old is and ek hoor,  
Ayein the sonné li'th, o-point to dye,  
And she for sorwé ginneth wepe and crye,  
And kisseth him ther he li'th on the  
grounde:

Thus sholdestow thy drem a-right ex-  
pounde!'

'How mighte I thanné don,' quod Troilus,  
'To knowe of this, ye, were it never so  
lite?'— 1290

'Now seystow wisly!' quod this Pandarus,  
'My red is this: sin thou canst wel endite,

1259. read? O depé feith! O assurance!  
1266. yif, so J G H<sub>4</sub>; H<sub>3</sub> D yif that; others if  
1270. li'th, S y le.

That hastily a lettré thou her write,  
Thorough which thou shalt wel bringen it  
abouté,

To knowe a soth ther thou art now indoute.

'And see now why! for this I dar wel seyn;  
That, if so is that she untrewé be,  
I can not trowén she wol write ayein;  
And, if she writé, thou shalt soné see  
As whether she hath any libérté <sup>1300</sup>  
To come ayein, or ellés in som clause,  
If she be let, she wol assigne a cause.

'Thou hast not writen hersin that she wente,  
Nor she to thee; and this I dorsté leye,  
Ther may swich causé ben in her entente,  
That hardily thou wolt thyselfen seye  
That her abood the beste is for you tweye.  
Now write her thanne, and thou shalt  
félé sone

A soth of al: ther n'is no more to done.'

Acorded ben to this conclusioun, <sup>1320</sup>  
And that anon, this ilké lordés two;  
And hastily sit Troilus adoun,  
And rolleth in his herté to and fro  
How he may best discriven her his wo.  
And to Criseyde, his owné lady dere,  
He wrot right thus, and seide as ye shal  
here.—

'Right fresshé flour, whos I bèn have and  
shal,

Withouten part of elléswhere servise,  
With herté, body, lif, lust, thought, and al,  
I, woful wight, in every humblé wise <sup>1330</sup>  
That tongé telle or herté may devise,  
As ofte as mater occupieth place,  
Me recomaunde unto your noblé grace.

'Liketh it you to witen, sweté herte,  
As ye wel knowe, how longé time agon  
That ye me lefte in aspré peynés smerte  
Whan that ye wente: of which yit boté non  
Have I non had,"but everé wors bigon

<sup>1299.</sup> *ther thou art now*, J Cx. omit *now*; S y  
*that (H<sub>2</sub> of which) thou art*.

<sup>1298.</sup> *she*, so J R Cx. G H<sub>2</sub>; rest *that she*.

<sup>1299.</sup> *some*, J and others *ful some*.

<sup>1320.</sup> *shal*, so J P R Cx. G H<sub>2</sub>; rest *may*.

<sup>1344.</sup> *it*, J and others omit.

Fro day to day am I, and so mot dwelle  
Whil it you list, of wele and wo my welles

'For-which to you, with dredful hert  
trewé,

I write, as he that sorwé drif'th to write <sup>1331</sup>  
My wo that everich houre encresseth newe  
Compleynyng as I dar or can endite.  
And that defacéd is, that may ye wite  
The terés whiche that fro mine yen reyn  
That wolden speke if that they coude, ar  
pleyne.

'You first biseche I, that your yen <sup>1332</sup>  
To loken on this, defouléd ye not holde,  
And over al this, that ye, my lady dere, <sup>1333</sup>  
Wol vouché-sauf this lettré to biholde:  
And by the cause ek of my carés colde  
That sleeth my wit, if aught amis m'aster  
Forgive it me, myn owné sweté herte!

'If any servant dorste or oughte of rigl  
Upon his lady pitously compleyne,  
Than wene I that ich oughté ben ti  
wight,  
Consideréd this, that ye thise monti  
tweyne

Han taried, ther ye seyden, soth to seyn  
But dayés ten ye n'olde in oost sojorne,  
But in two monthés yit ye not retorne.'

'But for as muche as me mot nedés li  
Al that you list, I dar not pleyné mor  
But humblély, with sorwful sikés sike.  
You write ich mine unresty sorwes so  
Fro day to day desiring everé more  
To knowén fully, if your wille it were  
How ye han ferd and don whil ye be the

'The whos welfare and hele ek  
encresse

In honour swich, that upward in degl  
It growe alwey, so that it neveré cess  
Right as your herte ay can, my lady f  
Devise, I preye to God so mote it be  
And grante it that ye sone upon me r  
As wialy as in al I am you trowe!

<sup>1335.</sup> *And that*, J *And that is* (read ?  
*that*).

<sup>1365.</sup> *you*, J and others *to you*; Cx. *your*.

'And if you liketh knowen of the fare  
Of me, whos wo ther may no wit describe,  
I can no more, but, cheste of every care,  
At writing of this lettre I was on-live,  
Al redy out my woful gost to drive : 1390  
Which I delay, and holde him yit in honde  
Upon the sighte of mater of your sonde.

'Myn-ȝen two, in veyn with whiche I see,  
Of sorful teres salte am waxen welles :  
My song, in pleynte of myn adversité :  
My good, in harm : myn ese ek waxen  
helle is :  
My joye, in wo : I can seye you nought  
elles,  
But turned is, for which my lif I warie,  
Everich joye or ese in his contrarie.

'Which with your coming hom ayein to  
Troye 1380  
(emay redresse, and, more a thousand si the  
Than evereich hadde, encressen in me joye.  
'Or was ther nevere herté yit so blithe  
To han his lif as I shal ben, as swithe  
Is I you see. And, though no maner  
routhe  
Commevè you, yit thenketh on your  
trouthe.

And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,  
Or if you list no more upon me see,  
n guerdon yit of that I have you served  
Biseche I you, myn hertés lady free, 1390  
That her-upon ye wolden writé me,  
'Or love of God, my righté lodé-sterre,  
That deth may make an ende upon my  
werre !

If other cause aught doth you for to  
dwelle,  
That with your lettré ye me réconforte !  
'Or, though to me your absence is an helle,  
With patience I wol my wo conporte,  
And with your lettre of hope I wol desporte.  
Now writeth, swete, and lat me thus not  
pleyne :  
With hope, or deth, delivereth me fro  
peyne ! 1400

'Y-wis, myn owné deré herté trewe,  
I wot that, whan ye next upon me see,  
So lost have I myn hele and ek myn hewe,  
Criseyde shal not conné knowén me.  
Y-wis, myn hertés day, my lady free,  
So thursteth ay myn herté to biholde  
Your beauté, that my lif unnethé I holde.

'I sey no more, al have I for to seye  
To you wel moré than I tellen may. 1409  
But whether that ye do me live or deye,  
Yit preye I God so give you right good day !  
And far'th wel, goodly fairé fresshé may,  
As she that lif or deth me may comaunde !  
And to your trouthe ay I me recomaunde

'With helé swich that, but ye given me  
The samé hele, I shal non helé have !  
In you li'th, whan you list that it so be,  
The day on which me clothen shal my  
grave :  
In you my lif, in you might for to save  
Me from disce of allé peynés smerte ! 1420  
And far'th now wel, myn owné sweté  
herte !'

This lettré forth was sent unto Criseyde,  
Of which her answer in effect was this :  
Ful pitously she wrot ayein, and seyde,  
That al-so sone as that she mighte, y-wis,  
She woldé come, and mende al that was  
mis,  
And finally—she wrot and seide him  
thanne—  
She woldé come, ye, but she n'isté whanne.

But in her lettré made she swiché festes  
That wonder was, and swer'th she lov'th  
him best : 1430  
Of which he fond but botméles bihestes.  
But Troilus, thou mayst now, est or west,  
Pipe in an ivy leef, if that thee lest !  
Thus go'th the world ! God shilde us  
fro mischaunce,  
And every wight that meneth trouthe  
avaunce !

Encressen gan the wo fro day to night  
Of Troilus, for taryng of Criseyde,

1367. wit, G Cl. and other wight; H<sub>4</sub> man.  
1393. That, Cx. Or; H<sub>4</sub> The; Cl. Cp. Ther.

1413. she, Cx. S y se.

And lessen gan his hope and ek his might ;  
For which al down he in his bed him leyde.  
He n'et, ne dronk, ne slep, ne no word  
seyde, 1440

Imaginge ay that she was unkinde ;  
For-which wel neigh he wex out of his  
minde.

This drem, of which I told have ek biforn,  
May nevere come out of his remembrance :  
He thoughte ay wel he hadde his lady lorn,  
And that that Jovés of his purveyaunce  
Himshewéd hadde in slep the signefiaunce  
Of her untrouthe and his disaventure,  
And that this boor was shewed him in  
figúre. 1449

For-which he for Sibille his suster sente,  
That calléd was Cassandre ek al aboute ;  
And al his drem he tolde her or he stente,  
And her bisoughte assoilen him the doute  
Of th'ilke strongé boor with tuskés stoute ;  
And finally withinne a litel stounde  
Cassandre him gan right thus his drem  
expounde.

She gan first smile, and seide, 'O brother  
dere,

If thou a soth of this desiré knowe,  
Thou most a fewe of oldé stories here,  
To purpos how that Fortune overthrowe  
Hath lordés olde : thorough which, withinne  
a throwe, 1461

Thou wel this boor shal knowe, and of  
what kinde

He comén is, as men in bokés finde.

'Diané, which that wroth was and in ire  
For Grekés n'olden don her sacrificé,  
N'encéus upon her auter sette a-fire,  
She, for-that Grekés gonne her so despise,  
Vengéd her in a wonder cruel wise ;

1440. *no word*, so H<sub>1</sub> R Cx. ; G *no word he ne*  
(om. *ne slop*) ; H<sub>2</sub> *wordé me* ; rest *word(e)*.

1446. *that that*, so J P H<sub>1</sub> G Frag. ; rest *that*.  
(See iii. 1751, 1752.)

1447. *signefiaunce*, so J A ; rest *signifiaunce*.

1449. *this*, H<sub>2</sub> S y *the*.

1454. *th'ilke* (1), R *that* ; Cx. *this* ; A *a* ; rest  
*the*.

1457. The incidents in the following lines are  
taken from Ovid and Statius. Chaucer returns  
to Boccaccio at l. 1513.

1468. *Venged*, so H<sub>2</sub> only ; rest *Wrak*.

For with a boor as gret as oxe in stalle  
She made up-frete hir corn and vinés alle.

'To slee this boor was al the contré reysed,  
Amongés whiche ther com, this boor tr  
see, 1471

A mayde, oon of this world the bes  
y-preysed ;

And Meleagré, lord of that contré,  
He lovedé so this fresshé maydée free  
That with his manhod, or he woldé stente  
This boor he slow, and her the hed h  
sente :

'Of which, as oldé bokés tellen us,  
Ther ros a contek and a gret envye.  
And of this lord descended Tydéus 1474  
By ligne, or ellés oldé bokés lye :  
But how this Meleagré gan to dye  
Thórough his moder, wol I you not telle  
For al too long it weré for to dwelle.'

She tolde ek how Tydéus, or she stent  
Unto the strongé cité of Thebés  
To cleymen kingdom of the cité wente  
For his felawé, daun Polymites,  
Of which the brother, daun Ethiocles,  
Ful wrongfully of Thebés held t  
strengthe : 1481

This toldé she by proces al by lengthe.

She tolde ek how Hemonides asterte,  
Whan Tydéus slough fifty knightés stou  
She tolde ek alle the prophecies by her  
And how the sevené kingés with hir ro  
Bisegédén the cité al aboute ;  
And of the holy serpent, and the wellé  
And of the Furies, al she gan him tell

1473. *A mayde*, Atalanta.

1480. Tydeus was Meleager's brother. C  
cer's mistake may have been made on purpose  
it may be due to *Filestrato* vii. stanza 27, w  
Troilus refers to Meleager as the ancestor  
Diomedes.

1482. *gan to*, G *dude*.

1483. *Thórough his*, H<sub>2</sub> *Thurgh* ; G *Of h*  
R *Thurgh out*.

1483. *his moder*, Althaea.

1498. The following argument of the 15  
books of Statius' *Thebais* is placed after this  
in all the MSS. except H<sub>1</sub> and Rawl. :—

Associat profrum Tideo prius Polimitem ;  
Tideo legatum docet insidiasque secutus ;  
Tertius Hemonidem canit et vates latentes ;

Of Archimoris' burying and the pleyes,  
And how Amphiorax fil thorough the  
grounde ; <sup>1500</sup>

How Tydëus was slayn, lord of Argéyes :  
And how Ypomedon in litel stounde  
Was dreynt, and ded Parthonopé of  
wounde :

And also how Cappaneus the proude  
With thonder-dint was slayn, that cri'de  
loude.

Shegan ek telle him how that either brother,  
Ethiocles and Polymite also,  
Yit at a scarmuche ech of hem slough  
other,

And of Argivés weping and hir wo :  
And how the town was brent she tolde ek  
tho ; <sup>1510</sup>

And so descendeth down from gestés olde  
To Diomede : and thus she spak and tolde.

'This liké boor bitokneth Diomede,  
Tydëus sone, that doun descended is  
Fro Meleagre, that made the boort to blede :  
And thy lady, wher-so she be, y-wis,  
This Diomede her herte hath, and she his.  
Wep if thou wolt, or lef ! For out of doute  
This Diomede is inne, and thou art oute !'

'Thou seyst not soth,' quod he, 'thou  
sorceresse, <sup>1520</sup>

With al thy falsé gost of prophecye !  
Thou wenest ben a gret devineresse !  
Now seestow not this fool of fantasye  
That peyneth her on ladies for to lye !

*Quartus habet reges ineuntis prelia septem ;  
Mox furie Lænæ gwinio narratur et anguli ;  
Archimori bustum secuto ludique leguntur ;  
Dæd Græcia Thebes et vatum ægyptiacis umbris ;  
Oculus cecidit Tidis, apen, vicia Pelagie ;  
Ypomedon nomen moritur cum Parthonopeo ;  
Fulmine percussus, decimo Capaneus superat ;  
Undecimo ensa perimunt per vulnera fratres ;  
Argium fontem narrat duodevus et ignem.*

1502-1504. J G read :

And how Ypomedon with bloody wounds  
And ek Parthonopé in litel stounde  
Ben slayn, and how Cappaneus the proude

1503. *ded, Cp. dede* (read ? *deyde Parthonope*  
if . . .)

1508. *Yit wot, so A ; rest At.*

1516. *wher-so, Cl. wher that ; J and others*  
*wher* (read ? *And thus thy lady, wher she be,*  
*revis*)

1524. *That peyneth (T), all Peyneth.*

Away !' quod he, 'Ther Jovés yive thee  
'sorwe !

Thou shalt ben fals paraunter yit to-morwe !

'As wel thou mightest lyén on Alceste,  
That was of créaturés, but men lye,  
That everé weren, kindest and the beste :  
For whan her housband was in jupartye  
To dye himself but-if she woldé dye, <sup>1532</sup>  
She ches for him to dye and gon to helle,  
And starf anon, as us the bokés telle !'

Cassandrè go'th : and he with cruel herte  
Foryat his wo for angré of her speche,  
And from his bed al sodeinly he sterte,  
As though al hool him haddé maad a leche.  
And day by day he gan enquere and seche  
A soth of this with al his fullé cure :  
And thus he drieth forth his aventure. <sup>1540</sup>

—Fortüné, which that permutacioun  
Of thingés hath, as it is her committed  
By purveyaunce and disposicioun  
Of heighé Jove, as regnés shal be fittid  
Fro folk to folk, or whan they shal be  
smitted,  
Gan pulle away the fetherés brighte of Troye  
Fro day to day, til they ben bare of joye.

Among al this, the fyn of the paródie  
Of Ector gan aprochen wonder blive : <sup>1549</sup>  
The Faté wolde, his soulé sholde unbódie,  
And shapen hadde a mene it out to drive  
Ayeins which fate him helpeth not to strive ;  
But on a day to fighten gan he wende,  
At which, allas, he caughte his livés ende.

For which me thinketh every maner wight  
That haunteth armés oughté to biwaile  
The deth of him that was so noble a  
knight ;  
For, as he drough a king by th'aventaille,  
Unwar of this, Achilles, thorough the maille  
And thorough the body gan him for to rive :  
And thus this worthy knight was brought  
of live. <sup>1561</sup>

1527. *Alceste, Alcestia. See l. 1778, and*  
*L.C.W. 422, etc.*

1532. *for him to dye and gon, J G to dye (G*  
*deth) and ek to gon.*

1542. *By S y Thorough.*

1558. This account of the death of Hector  
seems to have been taken from Benoit.



For whom, as oldé bokés tellen us,  
Was maad swich wo, that tonge it may not  
telle,

And namely, the sorwe of Troilus,  
That next him was of worthiness welle :  
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwelle,  
That, what for sorwe, and love, and for  
unreste,

Ful ofte a day he bad his herté breste.

But nathéles, though he gan him despire,  
And dredde ay that his lady was untrewé,  
Yit ay on her his herté gan repire ; 1571  
And as thise lovers don, he soughte ay  
newe

To gete ayein Criseyde bright of hewe,  
And in his herte he wente her excusinge,  
That Calcas causéd al her tarynge.

And ofté time he was in purpos grete  
Himselfen lik a pilgrim to disglise,  
To sen her ; but he may not contrefete  
To ben unknowe of folk that weren wise,  
Ne finde excuse aright that may suffice,  
If he among the Grekes knowén were :  
For which he wep ful ofte, and many a  
tere. 1582

To her he wrot yit ofté time al newe  
Ful pitously,—he lefte it not forslouthe,—  
Biseching her that, sin that he was trewe,  
That she wol come ayein and holde her  
trouthe :

For which Criseyde upon a day, for routhe  
(I take it so,) touching al this matere

Wrot him ayein, and seide as ye may  
here.— 1589

' Cupidés sone, ensaumple of godlihede,  
O swerd of knightod, sours of gentillesse !  
How mighte a wight, in torment and in  
drede

And helédes, you sende as yit gladnése ?  
I hertéles, I sik, I in distresse !  
Sin ye with me, nor I with you may dele,  
You neither sende ich herté may ne hele !

1570. *dredde ay*, J P G H<sub>2</sub> *dread(s)*; H<sub>4</sub>  
*dredde ayere*.

1577. *disglise*, J H<sub>1</sub> Cl. *degise*.

1581. *and*, G H<sub>4</sub> Cl. *omit*.

1590. Criseyde's letter is not in Boccaccio.

' Your lettres ful, the papir al y-pleynted,  
Conceyved hath myn hertés pleté : 1598  
I have ek seyn with terés al depeynted  
Your lettre, and how that ye requeren me  
To come ayein, which yit ne may not be ;  
But why, lest that this lettre founden were,  
No mencion ne make I now for fere.

' Grevous to me, God wot, is your unreste,  
Your haste, and that the Goddés ordi-  
naunce,

It semeth not ye take it for the beste ;  
Nor other thing n'is in your rémem-  
braunce,

As thinketh me, but only your pleasance.  
But beth not wroth, and that I you biseche ;  
For that I tarie is al for wikked speche. 1610

' For I have herd wel moré than I wen'de,  
Touching us two how thingés han y-stonde,  
Which I shal with dissimulinge amende.  
And beth not wroth, I have ek understonde  
How ye ne don but holden me in honde.  
But now no fors : I can not in you gesse  
But allé trouthe and allé gentillesse.

' Comén I wol ; but yit in swich disioynt  
I stonde as now, that what yer or what day  
That this shal be, that can I nota-poynt. 1620  
But in effect, I preye you as I may  
Of your good-word and of your frendshipe  
ay ;

For trewely, whil-that my lif may dure,  
As for a frend ye may in me assure.

' Yet preye I you, on yvel ye ne take  
That it is short which that I to you write  
I dar not, ther I am, wel lettres make,  
Ne neveré yit ne coude I wel endite.  
Ek gret effect men writé in placé lite :  
Th'entente is al, and not the lettres space  
And far'th now wel, God have you in h  
grace !'— 1630

This Troilus this lettré thoughte al straung  
Whan he it saugh, and sorwfully he sighte

1598. *pleté*, so J S Cp. ; R *privetous* ; rest *pleté*  
*pleté*.

1618. *disioynt*, J and others *disioynt*.

1620. *a-poynt*, J *poynt*; Cl. and others *a*  
(*poynte*). (See ill. 496, 497.)

Him thoughte it lik a kalendés of chaunge.  
But finally he ful ne trowén mighte  
That she ne wolde him holden that she  
highte;  
For with ful yvel wil list him to leve  
That loveth wel, in swich cas, though him  
greve!

But natheles men seyn that at the laste,  
For anything, men shal the sothé see! 1640  
And swich a cas bitidde, and that as faste,  
That Troilus wel understood that she  
N'as not so kinde as that her oughte be;  
And finally he wot now, out of doute,  
That al is lost that he hath ben aboute.

—Stood on a day in his malécolye  
This Troilus, and in suspicioun  
Of her for whom he wen'de for to dye:  
And so bifel that thorough-out Troyé toun,  
As was the gise, y-born was up and down 1650  
A maner cote-armure, as seith the storie,  
Biforn Deiphébe in signe of his victorie:

The whiché cote, as telleth Lollius,  
Deiphébe it hadde y-rent fro Diomedé  
The samé day. And whan this Troilus  
It saugh, he gan to taken of it hede,  
Avising of the lengthe and of the brede  
And al the werk. But, as he gan biholde,  
Ful sodeinliche his herté gan to colde,

As he that on the coler fond withinne 1660  
A broche, that he Criseyde yaf that morwe  
That she from Troyé mosté nedés twinne,  
In rémembraunce of him and of his sorwe.  
And she him leyde ayein her feith to borwe  
To kepe it ay! But now ful wel he wiste,  
His lady n'as no lenger on to triste.

He go'th him hom, and gan ful soné sende  
For Pandarus; and al this newé chaunce  
And of this broche he tolde him, word and  
ende,

Compleynyng of her hertés variaunce, 1670  
His longé love, his trouthe, and his  
pensaunce.

And after deth, withouten wordés more,  
Ful faste he cri'de, his reste him to restore.

1653. *Lollius*, Bodonaccio. (See L. 394 note.)

Than, spak he thus, 'O lady bright,  
Criseyde,  
Wher is your feith, and wher is your  
biheste?

Wher is your love? Wher is your trouthe?'  
he seyde;

'Of Diomedé have ye now al this feste!  
Allas! I wolde han trowéd at the leste  
That, sin ye n'olde in trouthe to me stonde,  
That ye thus n'olde han holden me in  
honde! 1680

'Who shal now trowe on any oothés mo?  
Allas! I n'oldé nevere han wen'd or this  
That ye, Criseyde, coude han changéd so,  
Ne, but I hadde agilt and don amis,  
So cruel wen'de I not your herte, y-wis,  
To slee me thus! Allas, your name of  
trouthe

Is now fordon: and that is al my routhé!

'Was ther non other broche you listé lete  
To seffe with your newé love,' quod he, 1689  
'But th'ilké broche that I with terés wete  
You yaf as for a rémembraunce of me?  
Non other cause, allas, ne hadden ye  
But for despit, and ek for that ye mente  
Al outrely to shewén your entente!

'Thorough which I see that clene out of your  
minde

Ye han me cast! And I ne can ne may,  
For al this world, within myn herté finde  
T'unloven you a quarter of a day!

In cursed time I born was, weylawey, 1699  
That you, that don me al this wo endure,  
Yit love I best of any créature!

'Now God,' quod he, 'me sendé yit the  
grace.

That I may meten with this Diomedé!  
And trewely, if I have might and space,  
Yet shal I make, I hope, his aidés blede!  
O God,' quod he, 'that oughtest takén hede  
To furthren trouthe, and wrongés to punice,  
Why n'iltow don a vengeaunce on this vice?

'O Pandar, that in dremés for to triste  
Me blaméd fast, and wont art ofte  
upbreyde, 1710

1674. *bright*, Hs B y myn (Boc.)

Now maystow sen thyself, if that thee liste,  
How trewe is now thy necé bright,  
Criseyde!

In sondry formés, God it wot,' he seyde,  
'The Goddés shewén bothé joye and tene  
In slep, and by my drem it is now sene.

'And certainly, withouté moré speche,  
From hennésforth, as ferforth as I may,  
Myn owné deth in armés wol I seche:  
I recché not how soné be the day!  
But trewely Criseydé, sweté may, 1720  
Whom I haveay with al my mighty-served,  
That yethus don, In'haveit not deserved!'

This Pandarus, that alle these thingés herde,  
And wisté wel he seide a soth of this,  
He not a word ayein to him answérde;  
For sory of his frendés sorwe he is,  
And shaméd for his nece hath don amis;  
And stant, astonéd of thise causes tweye,  
As stille as ston: a word ne coude he seye.

But at the lasté thus he spak and seide: 1730  
'My brother dere, I may do thee no more!  
What sholde I seye? I hate, y-wis,  
Criseyde;

And God wot, I wol hate her everémore!  
And that thou me bisoughtest don of yore,  
Having unto myn honour né my reste  
Right no reward, I dide al that thee leste.

'If I dide aught that mighté liken thee,  
It is me lief. And of this treson now,  
God wot that it a sorwe is unto me!  
And dredéles, for hertés ese of yow, 1740  
Right fayn I wolde amende it, wiste I how.  
And fro this world, almighty God I preye,  
Delivere her sone! I can nomoréseye!'

Gret was the sorwe and pleynte of Troilus.  
Büt forth her cours Fortune ay gan to holde:  
Criseydé lov'th the sone of Tydés,  
And Troilus mot wepe in carés colde!  
Swich is this world! Who-soit can biholde,  
In ech estat is litel hertés reste!  
God leve us for to take it for the beste! 1750

In many cruel bataille, out of drede,  
Of Troilus, this ilké noblé knight,

1731. *de thee, J Cl. thee do.*

As men may in thise oldé bokés rede,  
Was sene his knighthod and his greté  
might.

And dredéles, his iré, day-and night,  
Ful cruely the Grekés ay aboute,  
Ald alwey móst this Diomedé he soughte.

And ofté time, I findé that they mette  
With bloody strokés and with wordés grete,  
Assaying how hir sperés werén whette; 1760  
And God it wot, with many a cruel hete  
Can Troilus upon his helm to bete!  
But natheles, Fortune it nought ne wolde,  
Of oþthes hond that either deyé sholde.

—And if I hadde y-taken for to writen  
Thé armés of this ilké worthy man,  
Than wolde I of his bataillés enditen.  
But for-that I to writen first bigan  
Of his lovinge, I have seid as I can. 1769  
His worthy dedés, who-so list hem here,  
Red Dares: he can telle hem alle i-fere.

Biseching every lady bright of hewe  
And every gentil woman, what she be,  
That, al be that Criseydé was untrewé,  
That for that gilt ye be not wroth with me!  
Ye may her gilt in oþré bokés see!  
And gladlier I wol writé, yif you leste,  
Penelopéés trouthe and goode Alceste!

N' I sey not this al-only for thise men;  
But most for wommen that bitrayséd be; 178  
Thorough falsé folk. God yive hem sorwe,  
amen!

That with hir greté wit and subtilté.  
Bitraysé you! And this commeveth nu  
To speke; and, in effect, you alle I preye  
Beth ware of men, and heikneth what  
seye!

—Go, litel book! Go, litel myn tragédie  
Ther God thy maker yit, or-that he dye  
So sendé might to make in som comédie  
But, litel book, no making thou h'envyé  
But subgit be to allé poesye! 179

1761. *many a, J and others many.*  
1769. *lovinge, so S; rest love. (See L. 1833)*  
(Read? *As of his love*...)  
1775. *ye, R S y she.*  
1776. *other; H; H; other.*

And kis the steppes wher-as thou seest pace  
Virgile, Ovide, Omér, Lucán, and Stace !

And, for ther is so gret diversité  
In English and in writing of our tonge,  
So prey to God that non miswrité theé,  
Ne thee mismetré for defaute of tonge !  
And, red wher-so thou be or ellés songe,  
That thou be understandé God biseche !—  
But yet to purpos of my rather speche.

—The wraththe, as I bigan you for to seye,  
Of Troilus the Grekés boughten dere ; 1801  
For thousandés his hondés maden deye,  
As ffe that was withouten any pere  
Save Ector in his time, as I can here.  
But weylawey, save only Goddés wille,  
Ful pitously him slough the fierse Achille.

And whan that he was slayn in this manére  
His lighté goost ful blisfully is went  
Up to the holwesse of the eighté spere,  
In convers leting everich element : 1810  
And ther he saugh with ful avisement  
Th'erratik sterres, herkning armonye  
With sounés fulle of haveniss melodye.

And down from thennés faste he gan avise  
This litel spot of erthe that with the see  
Enbraced is, and fully gan despise  
This wrecched world, and held al vanité  
To réspect of the pleyne felicite  
That is in hevене above. And at the laste,  
Ther he was slayn his loking down he  
caste, 1820

And in himself he lough right at the wo  
Of hem that wepen for his deth so faste,

1791. *pace*, so P H<sub>4</sub> Cl. Th. only ; rest *space*.  
1795. *prey to God*, so J P Cx. ; others *prey I*  
*to God*, *pray I God*, *prey thy God*.

1798. *God biseche*, so J R A Cp. Cl. ; others *God*  
*I (thou) biseche*.

1806. *Ful pitously*, Cx. S γ *Dispitously*. (Boc.  
*miseramente*.)

1807. The following three stanzas are from the  
account of the death of Arcite in Boccaccio's  
*Teseida*. They are omitted in H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> and in-  
serted later in P.

1809. *eighte*, J *wif* ; others *seventhe*. (Boc.  
*Ver la concavita del cielo ottava*.)

1810. Boc. *Degli element i convessi lasciando*.  
(Possibly Chaucer uses *convers* here with the  
meaning of *convers*.)

And dampned al our werk, that folwen so  
The blindé lust the whiche that may not  
laste,

And sholden al our herte on hevéné caste.  
And forth he wenté, shortly for to telle,  
Ther-as Mercurie sorted him to dwelle.

Swich fyn hath tho this Troilus for love !  
Swich fyn hath al his greté worthinesse !  
Swich fyn hath his estat réal above ! 1830  
Swich fyn his lust, swich fyn hath his  
noblesse !

Swich fyn, this falsé worldés brotelnesse !—  
And thus bigan his loving of Criseyde  
As I have told, and in this wise he deyde.

—O yongé fresshé folkés, he or she,  
In whiche ay love up-groweth with your  
age,

Repeireth hom fro worldly vanité !  
And of your herte up-casteth the visagé  
To th'ilké God that after his imagé  
You made ; and thinketh al n'is but a  
faire 1840

This world, that passeth sone as flourés  
faire !

And loveth Him, the whiche that right  
for love

Upon a cros, our soulés for to beye,  
First starf, and roos, and sit in hevене  
above ;

For He n'il falsen no wight, dar I seye,  
That wol his herte al hoolly on him leye !  
And sin He best to love is, and most meke,  
What nedeth feynéd lovés for to seke ?

Lo here, of payens corséd oldé rites !  
Lo here, what alle hir Goddés may  
availe ! 1850

Lo here, thise wrecched worldés appetites !  
Lo here, the fyn and guerdon for travaile  
Of Jove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich  
rascalle !

Lo here, the forme of oldé clerkés speche  
In poetrye, if ye hir bokés seche !

1823. *folwen* (V), all *folweth*.

1824. *that*, J D *us* ; H<sub>3</sub> Cl. omit.

1831. *hath*, H<sub>4</sub> omits.

1832. *this* (V), H<sub>2</sub> *hath this* ; H<sub>4</sub> *hath the* ; J  
and others *hath*.

1836. *ay*, so J P H<sub>2</sub> H<sub>4</sub> H<sub>5</sub> ; R. Om. S *yet*.

1842. *the*, J and others omit.

—O moral Gower, this book I directe  
To thee, and to thee, philosophical Strode,  
To vouchen-sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,  
Of your benignetés and zelés gode.—  
And to that sothfast Crist, that starf on  
rode, 1860  
With al myn herte, of mercyevere I preye,  
And to the Lord right thus I speke and  
seye :

Thou oon, and two, and three, eterne on-  
live,

That regnest ay in three and two and oon,  
Uncircumscrip, and al mayst circumscribe,  
Us from visibill and invisibill foon  
Defende! And to thy mercy, everichoon,  
So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy digne,  
For love of maydeand moder thyn benigne!

## CHAUCER'S WORDS UNTO ADAM, HIS OWNE SCRIVEYNE

ADAM SCRIVEYN, if ever it thee bifalle  
Boece or Troylus for to writen newe,  
Under thy long lokkes thou most have  
the scalle

But after my making thou write more  
trewe.

So ofte a daye I mot thy werk renewe,  
Hit to correcte and eek to rubbeand  
scrape;

And al is through thy negligence and  
rape.

## THE HOUS OF FAME

### FIRST BOOK

#### (Proem)

GOD turne us every dreem to gode!  
For hit is wonder, be the Rode,  
To my wyt, what causeth swevenes  
Either on morwés, or on evenes;  
And why theffect folwéth of somme,  
And of somme hit shal never come;  
Why that is an avisioun,  
And this a revelacioun;  
Why this a dreem, why that a sweven,  
And noght to every man liche even; 10  
Why this a fantom, why these oracles,  
I noot; but who-so of these miracles  
The causés knoweth bet then I,  
Devyne he; for I certeynly  
Ne can hem noght, ne never thynke  
To healy my wyt to swynke,  
To knowe of hir signifiunce

The gendrés neither the distaunce  
Of tymés of hem, ne the causés,  
Or why this moré then that cause is;  
As if folkés complexiouns  
Make hem dreme of reflexiouns;  
Or ellés thus, as other sayn,  
For to greet feblenease of her brayn,  
By abstinence, or by seeknesse,  
Prisoun, stewe or greet distresse;  
Or ellés by disordynaunce,  
Of naturel acustomaunce,  
That somme men ben to curious  
In studie, or melancolious;  
Or thus, so inly ful of drede,  
That no man may him boté redé;  
Or ellés that devocioun  
Of somme, and contemplacioun,  
Causeth swiché dremés ofte;

9. P a *vision*; Cx. that it is a *vision*; Th. that it is.

10. All insert *why*, caught from line above.

11. P Cx. Th. *signification*.

18. Cx. Th. *distinctions*.

19. P Cx. Th. insert *the* before *tyms*.

20. F B *For why*. All read *this is*.

26. P *also*; Cx. Th. *story* for *vision*.

32. F B *both beds*.

Or that the cruel lyf unsofte  
Which these ilkē lovers leden,  
That hopen over moche or dreden,  
That purely hir impressiouns  
Causeth hem have visiouns ;  
Or if that spirits have the myght  
To makē folk to dreme a-nyght ;  
Or if the soule, of propre kynde,  
Be so parfit as men fynde,  
That hit forwot that is to come,  
And that hit warneth alle and somme  
Of everiche of her adventures,  
By avisiouns, or by figures,  
But that our flesh ne hath no myght  
To understonden hit aright,  
For hit is warnēd to derkly ;  
But why the cause is, noght wot I.  
Wel worthe, of this thyng, gretē clerkes,  
That trete of that, and other werkes ;  
For I of noon opinioun  
Nil as now makē menciou ;  
But only that the holy rode  
Turne us every dreem to gode ;  
For never sith that I was born,  
Ne no man ellēs me beforē,  
Mette, I trowē stedfastly,  
So wonderful a dreem as I  
The tenthē day [dide] of Decembre ;  
The which, as I can now remembre,  
I wol yow tellē every dele.

(The Invocation)

But at my gynnypg, trusteth wel,  
I wol make invocacioun,  
With special devocioun  
Unto the god of slepe anon,  
That dwelleth in a cave of stoon,  
Upon a streem that cometh fro Lete,  
That is a flood of helle unswete,  
Beayde a folk men clepe Cymérie ;  
There slepeth ay this god unmerie,

40. F B *hem avisiouns.*

63. Willert reads *dide* for *now* of the MSS. P and Cx. wrongly insert *dide* before I in l. 62, having caught it from its right place in l. 63.

64. F *now* for *now*; Cx. omits *now*.

65. P Cx. omit this and next line.

69. *god* for *hope*, Morpheus; cp. *Dethe of the Duchesse*, l. 137, and *Metamorphoses*, xi. l. 592 ff.

71. *Lete*, *Lethes*.

73. *Cymérie*, *Cimmeria*.

With his slepy thousand sones,  
That alway for to slepe hir wone is ;  
That to this god, that I of rede,  
Preye I, that he wol me spede,  
My sweven for to telle aright,  
If every dreem stonde in his myght ;  
And he that mover is of al  
That is and was, and ever shal,  
So yive hem joyē that hit here,  
Of alle that they dreme to-yere ;  
And for to stonden alle in grace  
Of hir loves, or in what place  
That hem were levest for to stonde,  
And shelde hem fro povérte and shonde,  
And fro unhappe and ech disese,  
And sende hem al that may hem plesē,  
That take hit wel and scorne hit noght,  
Ne hit mysdemen in her thoght,  
Through malicious entencioun.  
And who-so, through presumpcioun,  
Or hate, or scorne, or through envye,  
Dispit, or jape, or vilanyē,  
Mysdeme hit, pray I Jesus God,  
That (dreme he barfoot, dreme he shod),  
That every harm, that any man  
Hath had sith the world began,  
Befalle him thérōf, or he sterve,  
And graunt he mote hit ful deserve,  
Lo ! with swich a conclusioun,  
As hadde of his avisioun  
Cresus, that was kyng of Lyde,  
That high upon a gebet dyde !  
This prayer shal he have of me ;  
I am no bet in charité.

Now herkneth, as I have yow seyd,  
What that I mette or I abreyd.

(The Dream)

Of Decembrē the tenthē day,  
Whan hit was nyght, to slepe I lay,  
Right ther as I was wonte to done,  
And fil on slepē wonder sone,  
As he that wery was for-go  
On pilgrymagē mylēs two  
To the cōseynt Léonard,  
To makē lythe of that was hard.  
But as I sleep, me mette I was

105. *Cresus*, *Cronus*, king of Lydia.

119. MSS. *slepē*. Cp. l. 498.

Withyn a temple y-mad of glas ; 120  
 In whiche ther weré mo ymáges  
 Of gold, stondynge in divers stáges,  
 And mo riché tabernacles,  
 And with perré mo pynacles,  
 And mo curious portreytures,  
 And queynté maner of figúres  
 Of golde werke, then I sawgh ever.  
 But certeynly I nysté never  
 Wher that I was, but wel wyste I,  
 Hit was of Venus redély, 130  
 This temple ; for in portreyture,  
 I saw anoon right hir figure  
 Naked fletynge in a see.  
 And also on hir heed, pardé,  
 Hir rosé garlond white and reed,  
 And hir comb to kembe hir heed,  
 Hir dowvés, and daun Cupidó,  
 Hir blyndé sone, and Vulcanó,  
 That in his facé was ful broun.

But as I roméd up and down, 140  
 I fond that on a walle ther was  
 Thus writen on a table of bras :  
 ' I wol now synge, gif that I can,  
 The armés, and also the man,  
 That first cam, through his destinee,  
 Fúgitif of Troy crete, 150  
 In Itálie, with ful moche pyne,  
 Unto the strondés of Lavyne.'  
 And tho began the story anoon,  
 As I shal tellé you echoon.

First saw I the destruccioun  
 Of Troý through the Greek Synoun,  
 [That] with his falsé forswerynge,  
 And his chere and his lesynge  
 Made the hors broght into Troye,  
 Through which Troyens loste al her joye.

And after this was grave, allas !  
 How Ilioun assailed was  
 And wonne, and kyng Priám y-slayn,  
 And Polites, his sone, certayne, 160  
 Dispitously of daun Pirrús.

125. P Her vanguard land on her hede, and om.  
 next line; Cx. Ross garlondes swellynge as a  
 mede, And also fleyng about her hede.

143. Cx. wold . . . now and I; F B say for  
 1260.

148. Lavyne, Laviniúm.

152. Synoun, Sinon; cp. Æn. ii. l. 195.

153. All omit That.

158. Ilioun, Ilium.

161. Pirrús, Pyrrhus.

And next that saw I how Venús,  
 Whan that she saw the castel brende,  
 Doun fro the hevene gan descende,  
 And bad hir sone Eneas flee;  
 And how he fledde, and how that he  
 Escapéd was from al the pres,  
 And took his fader, Anchisés,  
 And bar him on his bakke away,  
 Crying, ' Allas, and welaway !' 170  
 The whiche Anchises in his honde  
 Bar the goddess of the londe,  
 Thilké that unbrendé were.

And I saw next in al this fere,  
 How Creusa, daun Eneas wyf,  
 Which that he lovéd as his lyf,  
 And hir yongé sone Iuló  
 And eek Ascanius alsó,  
 Fledden eek with drery chere,  
 That hit was pitee for to here ; 180  
 And in a forest as they wente,  
 At a turnynge of a wente,  
 How Creusa was y-lost, allas !  
 That deed,—ne wot I how—she was ;  
 How he hir soughte, and how hir  
 gost

Bad hym to flee the Grekes ost,  
 And seyde, he moste into Itálie,  
 As was his destinee, sauns faille,  
 That hit was pitee for to here,  
 Whan hir spirit gan appere, 190  
 The wordés that to him she seyde,  
 And for to kepe hir sone him preyde.

Ther saw I graven eek how he,  
 His fader eek, and his meynee,  
 With his shippes gan to saile  
 Toward the contree of Itálie,  
 As streight as that they myghté go.  
 Ther saw I thee, cruel Juno,  
 That art daun Jupitérés wyf,  
 That hast y-hated, al thy lyf, 200  
 Al thé Troyanyshé blood,  
 Renne and crye, as thou were wood,  
 On Eolus, the god of wyndes,  
 To blowen out of allé-kyndes  
 So loudé that he shuldé drenche  
 Lord and lady, grome and wenche

177. Iulú, Iulus, the same person as Ascanius;  
 cp. Æn. i. l. 267.

184. All MSS. read not (= ne wot).

198. P omits this line.

198. P Cx. Th. insert *and* before *shee*.

Of al the Troyan nacioun,  
Withoute any savacioun.

Ther saw I swich tempeste arise,  
That every hertē myghte agrise, 210  
To see hit peynted on the walle.

Ther saw I graven eek withalle,  
Venus, how ye, my lady dere,  
Wepying with ful woful chere,  
Prayn Jupiter on hye  
To save and kepē that navye  
Of the Troyan Eneās,  
Sith that he hir sonē was.

Ther saw I Jovēs Venus kisse,  
And graunted of the tempest lisse. 220

Ther saw I how the tempest stente,  
And how with allē pyne he wente,  
And prevēly took arrygage  
In the trete of Cartage;  
And on the morwē, how that he  
And a knyght hight Achatē,  
Metten with Venus that day,  
Goyng in a queynt array,  
As she hadde ben an hunteresse,  
With wynd blowyng upon hir tresse;  
How Eneas gan him to pleyne, 231  
Whan that he knew hir, of his  
peyne;

And how his shippēs dreyntē were,  
Or ellēs lost, he nyste where;  
How she gan hym comfortē tho,  
And bad hym to Cartagē go,  
And ther his folk he shuldē fynde,  
That in the see were left behynde.

And, shortly of this thyng to pace, 240  
She made Eneas so in grace  
Of Dido, quene of that contrē,  
That, shortly for to tellen, she  
Becam his love, and lete him do  
Al that wedding longth to.  
What shulde I speke morē queynte,  
Or peyne me my wordēs peynte,  
To speke of love? hit wol not be;  
I can not of that facultē.  
And eek to tellē the manere  
How that they first aqeyntēd were, 250

208. P *if hem saucon*; Cx. Th. *of her*  
*saucoun*.

209. Achatē, idus Achatas.

210. All read *he shulde his folk*.

244. F B *That that for Al that*.

250. F B *acquyngeden in fere*.

Hit were a longe proces to telle,  
And over long for you to dwelle.

Ther saw I grave, how Eneas  
Toldē Dido every cas,  
That him tidde upon the see.

And after gravē was, how she  
Made of him, shortly, at a word,  
Hir lyf, hir love, hir lust, hir lord;  
And dide him al the reverence,  
And leyde on him al the dispence, 260  
That any woman myghte do,  
Wēnyng hit ladde al be so,  
As he hir swoor; and hertly demedē  
That he was good, for he swiche semedē.

Allas, what harme doth apparence,  
Whan hit is fals in existence!  
For he to hir a traytour was;  
Wherfor she slow hir-self, alas!

Lo, how a woman doth amys,  
To love him that unknowen is! 270  
For, by Cryst, lo! thus it fareth;  
'Hit is not al gold that glareth.'  
For, al-so brouke I wel myn heed,  
Ther may be under goodliheed  
Keverēd many a shrewēd vyce;  
Therfor be no wyght so nyce,  
To take a love only for chere,  
Or speche, or for frendly manere;  
For this shal every woman fynde,  
That som man of his purē kynde 280  
Wol shewen outward the faireste,  
Til he have caught that what him  
leste;

And thannē wol he causēs fynde,  
And swerēn how she is unkynde,  
Or fals, or prevy or double was.  
Al this seye I be Eneās  
And Dido, and hir nycē lest,  
That lovēd al to sone a gest;  
Therfor I wol seye o proverbe,  
That 'he that fully knoweth therbe 290  
May sauſy leye hit to his yē';  
Withoutē drede, that is no lyē.

But let us speke of Eneās,  
How he betrayēd hir, alas!  
And lefte hir ful unkyndly.

254. P *Toldē to*.

263. F B Th. *herby for hertly*.

271. P *For any trust to now*; Cx. *For every*  
*trust*.

280-283. All omit except Th.



So whan she saw al-utterly,  
That he wolde hir of trouthe faille,  
And wende fro hir to Itale,  
She gan to wringe hir hondés two.  
'Allas !' quod she, 'what me is wo ! 300  
Allas ! is every man thus trewe,  
That every yer wolde have a newe,  
If hit so longé tymé dure ?  
Or ellés three, peraventure ?  
And thus, of oon he wolde have fame  
In magnyfying of his náme ;  
Another for frendship, seith he ;  
And yet ther shal the thridde be,  
That shal be taken for delyt,  
Loo, or for singular profit.' 310

In swiché wordés gan to pleyne  
Dido of hir greté payne,  
As me metté redély ;  
Non other autour allegge I.

'Allas !' quod she, 'my sweté herte,  
Have pitee of my sorwés smerte,  
And alee me not ! go noght away !'  
'O woful Dido, welaway !'  
Quod she to hir selvé tho.  
'O Eneás ! what wil ye do ! 320  
O, that your lové, ne your bonde,  
That ye han sworn with your right bonde,  
Ne my cruel deeth,' quod she,  
'May holdé you still heer with me !  
O, haveth of my deeth pitee !  
Y-wys, my déré herté, ye  
Knownen ful wel that never yit,  
As fer-forth as I haddé wyt,  
Agilte [I] you in thoght ne dede.  
O men, have ye swich goodliheed 330  
In speche, and never a deel of trouthe ?  
Allas, that ever haddé routhé  
Any woman on any man !  
Now see I wel, and tellé can,  
We wrecched wymmen conne noon art ;  
For certeyn, for the moré parte,  
Thus we be servéd everichone.  
How soré that ye men conne grone,  
Anoon as we have you receyved,  
Certainly we ben deceyved ; 340  
For, though your love laste a sesoun,  
Wayte upon the conclusioun,

300. F B *As thus*.

309. All omit *I*.

313. F Cx. *Th. a fals man*.

And eek how that ye détermynen,  
And for the moré part diffynen.

'O, welaway that I was born !  
For through you is my namé lorn,  
And myn actés red and songe  
Over al this londe, on every tonge.  
O wikké Famé ! for ther mys  
Nothyng so swift, lo, as she is ! 350  
O, sooth is, every thyng is wyst,  
Though hit be keveréd with the myst.  
Eek, thogh I myghte enduren ever,  
That I have doon rekever I never,  
That I ne shal be seyde, allas,  
Y-shaméd be through Eneás,  
And that I shal thus jugé be,—  
"Lo, right as she hath doon, now she  
Wol do eftsonés, hardily."

Thus seyth the peple prevély. 36  
But that is doon nis not to done ;  
Al hir compleynt ne al hir mone,  
Certeyn awayleth hir not a stre.

And whan she wisté sothly he  
Was forth unto his shippés goon,  
She into hir chambre wente anoon,  
And calléd on hir suster Anne,  
And gan her to compleyné thanne ;  
And seyde, that she causé was,  
That she first lovéd him, alas,  
And thus counselléd hir therto.  
But what ! whan this was seyde and d.  
She roof hir-selvé to the herte,  
And deyde through the woundé smerte.  
But al the maner how she deyde,  
And al the wordés that she seyde,  
Who-so to knowe hit hath purpos,  
Rede Virgile in Eneïdés,  
Or the Epistle of Ovide,  
What that she wroot or that she dide ;  
And neré hit to long tendyte, 381  
By God, I woldé hit here write.

But, welaway ! the harm, the routhé,  
That hath betid for swich untrouthé,  
As men may ofte in bokés rede,

347. F B *your for myn* ; F B insert *al* before *my*.

360. All read *But* before *Al*, caught from line above ; P *compleynynge ne hir* ; Cx. *Th. a hir*.

370. All except Th. omit *him* ; P Cx. so to first, perhaps rightly.

381. B F Cx. *were it more* ; F *was hit were*.

And al day seen hit yet in dede,  
That for to thenken hit a tene is.

Lo, Demophon, duk of Athenis,  
Iow he forswor him ful falsly,  
und trayed Phillis wikkedly, 390  
that kynges doghter was of Trace,  
und falsly gan his termé pace;  
und when she wyste that he was fals,  
he heng hir-selven by the hals,  
or he hadde do hir swich untrouthe;  
oo! was not this a wo and routhe?

Eek lo! how fals and recchèles  
Was to Breseida Achillés,  
und Paris to Eoné;  
und Jason to Isiphilé; 400  
und eft Jason to Medéa;  
recèles to Dyaniré;  
or he lefte hir for Iolé,  
that made him cacche his deeth, pardé.

How fals eek was he, Théséus;  
that, as the story telleth us,  
Iow he betrayed Adriane;  
he devel be his soules bane!  
or had he laughéd, had he loured,  
he mosté have ben al devoured, 410  
f Adriane ne haddé be.

und, for she hadde of him pitee,  
he made him fro the deeth escape,  
und he made hir a ful fals jape;  
or after this, withyn a while,  
he lefte hir slepyng in an ile,  
deserte alone, right in the se,  
und stal away, and leet hir be;  
und took hir suster Phedra tho 420  
Vith him, and gan to shippé go.  
und yet he hadde y-sworn to here,  
n al that ever he myghté swere,  
that so she savéde him his lyf,  
he wolde have take hir to his wyf,  
or she desiréde nothing ellés,  
a certeyn, as the book us tellés.

But to excusen Eneás  
ulliche of his greté trespas,

The book seyth Mercurie, sauns failé,  
Bad him go into Itaile, 430  
And leve Aufrikés regioun,  
And Dido and hir lairé toun.

Tho saw I grave how to Itaile  
Daun Eneas is go to saile;  
And how the tempest al began,  
And how he loste his sterésman,  
Which that the stère, or he took keep,  
Smot over bord, lo as he sleep.

And also saw I how Sibyle  
And Eneas, beside an yle, 440  
To hellé wentén, for to see  
His fader Anchises the free,  
How he ther fond Pallinurus,  
And also Dido, and Deiphebus,  
And every torment eek in helle  
Saw he, which is long to telle.  
Which who-so willeth for to knowe,  
He mosté redé many a rowe  
On Virgile or on Claudian,  
Or Daunté, that hit tellé can. 450

Tho saw I grave al tharivaile  
That Eneas had in Itaile;  
And with kyng Latyne his tretté,  
And alle the bataillés that he  
Was at himself, and eek his knyghtés,  
Or he hadde al y-wonne his rightés;  
And how he Turnus refté his lyf,  
And wan Lavyna to his wyf;  
And al the marvelous signals  
Of the goddés celestials; 460

How, mawgré Juno, Eneás  
For al hir sleighte and hir compas,  
Achevéd al his aventure;  
For Jupiter took of him cure,  
At the prayere of Venus,—  
The whiche I preye alway save us,  
And us ay of our sorwés lighte!

When I hadde seyén al this sighte  
In this noble temple thus,  
'A, Lord!' thoughte I, 'that madest us,  
Yet saw I never swich noblesse 470  
Of ymages, ne swich richesse,

388. Demophon and the other false lovers mentioned below are referred to in the *Heroides*, pictures II. iii. v. vi. ix. x. xi.

398. Breseida, Briseida.

400. Isiphilés, Hypsipyle; cp. *L. of G. W.*

407. Adriane, Ariadne.

428. The knights *ad* before *his*; F B of *al* his *lyf*.

429. The book, i.e. *En.* iv. 252 ff.

445. F C. *whyche no tonge can telle.*

449. Claudian, Claudius Claudianus wrote *De Raptu Proserpine* in the 4th century.

450. Daunté, Dante's *Inferno*.

453. Latyne, Lavinia, king of the Rutuli.

458. Lavyna, Lavinia, daughter of Latinus.

As I saw graven in this chirche ;  
But not woot I who dide hem wirche,  
Ne wher I am, ne in what contree.  
But now wol I go out and see,  
Right at the wyket, yif I can  
See o-wher any steryng man,  
That may me tellen wher I am.'

When I out of the dorés cam,  
I faste aboute me behelde.  
Then sawgh I but a largé feld,  
As fer as ever I myghte see,  
Withouten toun, or hous, or tree,  
Or bush, or gras, or eréd lond ;  
For al the feld nas but of sonde,  
As smal as than may see yet lye  
In the desert of Lybye ;  
Ne no maner créature,

478. Th. steryng any.

That is y-formed by nature, 490  
Ne saw I me to rede or wysse.  
'O Crist,' thoughte I, 'that art in blisse,  
Fro fantom and illusioun  
Me save !' and with devocioun  
Myn jén to the heven I caste.  
Tho was I war lo ! at the laste,  
That faste be the sonne, as hye  
As kenné myghte I with myn ye,  
Mé thoughte I saw an egle sore,  
But that hit semedé moché more  
Then I hadde any egle seyn.  
But, this as sooth as deeth certeyn,  
Hit was of gold, and shoon so bright,  
That never saw men swich a sight,  
But-if the heven hadde y-wonne  
Al newe of gold another sonne ;  
So shoon the eglés fethrés brighte,  
And somewhat downward gan hit lighte.

## SECOND BOOK

### (Proem)

Now herkneþ every maner man,  
That English understande kan,  
And listeth of my dreem to lere ;  
For at the firste shul ye here  
So sely an avisoun,  
That Isayé ne Scipioun,  
Ne kyng Nabugodonosor,  
Pharo, Turnús, ne Elcanor,  
Ne metté swich a dreem as this.  
Now fairé blisful, O Cipris,  
So be my favour at this tyme !  
And ye, me to endite and ryme  
Helpeth, that on Parnaso dwelle,  
By Elicóá the cléré welle.

O Thought, that wroot al that I mette,

4. F B Th. *For now at eris shal*,  
6. *Isaye*, Isaiah. Scipioun, cp. *P. of Foules*,  
L. 31 note.

7. *Nabugodonosor*, Nebuchadnezzar, a variant  
of the *Vulgate* spelling Nabuchodonosor.

8. *Pharo*, Pharaoh. *Elcanor*, perhaps Elkanah  
(*Vulgate* Elcana); cp. 1 Sam. I. 1.

10. *Cipris*, Venus; cp. *P. of Foules*, L. 277 note.

12. *Parnaso*, Parnassus.

14. *Elicóá*; cp. *Angela*, L. 17 note.

15. *Thought*; cp. *Angela*, ll. 8 :—

(O thought, the storytold clo to yill.

It here means memory.

And in the tresorie hit shette  
Of my brayn ! now shal men se  
If any vertu in thee be,  
To tellen al my dreem aright ;  
Now kythé thyn engyn and myght !

### (The Dream)

This egle of which I now have told,  
That shoon with fethrés alle of gold,  
Which that so hye gan to sore,  
I gan beholdé more and more,  
To see her beautee and the wonder,  
But never was ther dynt of thonder,—  
Ne that thyng that men callé foudre,  
That smyteth sone a tour to poudre,  
And in his swifté comyng brende,—  
That so swythé gan descende,  
As this foul when hit behelde,  
That I a-roume was in the feldé ;  
And with his grymmé páwés stronge,  
Withyn his sharpé naylés longe,  
Me, fleyng, at a swappé he hente,  
And with his sours a-geyn up wente,

20. P Th. insert *thy* before *myght*.

21. P Cx. Th. *smyte* for *smythé*; F B m  
som *lyng* a *twyne* of *foudre*.

30. P Cx. Th. insert *downward* after *gan*.

Me caryng in his clawes starke,  
 As lightly as I were a lark,  
 How high, I cannot tellé yow,  
 or I cam up, I nysté how. 40  
 or so astonyé and a-sweved  
 Was every vertu in my heved,  
 That with his sours and with my drede,  
 That al my felyng gan to dede;  
 or why hit was to greet affray.  
 Thus I long in his clawes lay,  
 'il at the laste he to me spak  
 n mannés vois, and seyde, 'Awak!  
 and be not so a-gaste, for shame!' 50  
 and calledé me tho by my name.  
 and for I sholde the bet abreyde,  
 Je mette, 'Awak,' to me he seyde,  
 tight in the samé vois and stevene,  
 That useth oon I coudé nevene;  
 and with that vois, soth for to seyne,  
 My myndé cam to me ageyn  
 For hit was goodly seyde to me,  
 so nas hit never wont to be.  
 And herwithal I gan to stere,  
 And he me in his feet to bere, 60  
 'il that he felte that I hadde hete,  
 And felte eek tho myn herté bete.  
 And tho gan he me to disporte,  
 And with wordés to comforte,  
 And sayde twyés, 'Seynte Marie!  
 Thou art noyous for to carie,  
 And nothyng nedith hit pardé  
 For, al-so wys God helpe me,  
 As thou noon harm shalt have of this;  
 And this cas that betid thee is, 70  
 Is for thy lore and for thy prow,—  
 Let see; dairst thou yet loké now?  
 Be ful assuréd, boldély,  
 I am thy friend.' And therwith I  
 Gan for to wondren in my mynde.  
 'O God,' thoughte I, 'that madest  
 kynde,  
 That I noon other weyés dye?  
 Vher Joves wol me stellifye,  
 or what thing may this signyfye?  
 neyther am Enok, ne Elye, 80  
 ne Romulus, ne Ganymede,  
 That was y-bore up, as men rede,

49. Cf. *Th. P.* agst 29; F B omit 20.80. *Enok*, Enoch.80. *Elye*, Elias.

To hevене with daun Jupiter,  
 And made the goddés botélér.  
 Lo! this was tho my fantasye!  
 But he that bar me gan espye  
 That I so thoghte, and seyde this:  
 'Thow demest of thy-self amys;  
 For Jovés is not therabouté,—  
 I dar wel putte thee out of doute,— 90  
 To make of thee as yit a sterre.  
 But er I bere thee moché ferre,  
 I wol thee tellé what I am,  
 And whider thou shalt, and why I cam  
 To doné this, so that thou take  
 Good herte, and not for feré quake.'  
 'Gladly,' quod I. 'Now wel,' quod he:—  
 'First, I, that in my feet have thee,  
 Of which thou haste a feer and wonder,  
 Am dwellyng with the god of thonder, 100  
 Which that men callén Jupiter,  
 That dooth me flee ful ofté ier  
 To do al his comaundément.  
 And for this cause he hath me sent  
 To thee: now herké, by thy trouthe!  
 Certeyn he hath of thee routhe,  
 That thou so longé trewély  
 Hast servéd so ententifly  
 His blindé newew Cupido,  
 And fair [dame] Venus also, 110  
 Withouté guerdoun ever yit,  
 And neverthesse hast set thy wyt—  
 Although that in thy heed ful lyte is—  
 To maké bookés, songes, or dytees,  
 In ryme, or ellés in cadence,  
 As thou best canst in reverence  
 Of Love, and of his servánts eke,  
 That have his servyse soght, and seke;  
 And peynest thee to preysé his arte,  
 Although thou haddest never part; 120  
 Wherfor, al-so God me blesse,  
 Jovés halt hit greet humblese,  
 And vertu eek, that thou wolt make  
 A-nyght ful ofte thyn heed to ake,  
 In thy studie so thou writest,  
 And evermo of love enditest,  
 In honour of him and preisynges,  
 And in his folkés furtherynges,  
 And in hir matere al devycest,

110. All omit *dame*. Sicut inserts *goddess* after *Venus*.113. All read *lyte*.

And noght him nor his folk despisest, 130  
Although thou maist go in the daunce  
Of hem that him list not avaunce.

'Wherfor, as I seyde, y-wys,  
Jupiter considereth wel this;  
And also, beau sir, other thynges;  
That is, that thou hast no tydynges  
Of Loves folk, if they be glade,  
Ne of nothyng ellés that God made;  
And noght only fro fer contree,  
That ther no tydyng cometh to thee, 140  
But of thy verray neyghéboures  
That dwellen almost at thy dores,  
Thou herest neither that ne this;  
For when thy labour doon al is,  
And hast y-maad thy rekenynges,  
In stede of reste and newé thynges,  
Thou gost hoome to thy hous anoon,  
And, also domb as any stoon,  
Thou sittest at another boke,  
Til fully dawéd is thy looke, 150  
And lyvest thus as an herémite,  
Although thyn abstynence is lyte.

'And therfor Jovés, through his grace,  
Wol that I bere thee to a place,  
Which that hight the Hous of Fame,  
To do thee som disport and game,  
In som recompensacioun  
Of labour and devocioun  
That thou hast had, lo! causéles, 160  
To Cupido the rechhéles.  
And thus this god, through his merite,  
Wol with som maner thyng thee quyte,  
So that thou wolt be of good chere.  
For trusté wel that thou shalt here,  
When we be comén ther. I seyde,  
Mo wonder thyngés, dar I leye,  
Of Loves folké mo tidynges,  
Both sothé sawés and lesynges;  
And moo lovés newe begonne,  
And longe y-servéd lovés wonne; 170  
And mo lovés casuelly  
That been betid, no man wot why,  
But "as a blynd man stert an hare";  
And more jolytee and well-fare,  
Whil that they fynden love of stele,  
As thinketh hem, and over-al wele;  
Mo discords, and mo jelousyes,  
Mo mournurs, and mo novelryes,

124. F B. omit *wel*.

And mo dissymulaciouns;  
And feynéd reparaciouns; 180  
And mo berdés in two houres—  
Withouté rasour or soursours—  
Y-maad, then greynés be of sondes;  
And eek mo holdyng in hondes,  
And also mo renovaunces  
Of olde forletén aqueyntaunces;  
Mo lové-dayés, and acordés,  
Then on instruments ben cordes;  
And eek of lovés mó eschaunges,  
Than ever cornés were in graunges; 190  
Unethé maistow trowen this?"  
Quod he. 'No, helpe me God so wys!'  
Quod I. 'No? why?' quod he. 'For hit  
Were impossible to my wyt,  
Though that Fame hadde al the pies  
In al a realme, and al the spies,  
How that yet she shulde here all this,  
Or they espie hit.' 'O yis, yis!'  
Quod he to me, 'that can I preve  
By resoun, worthy for to leve, 200  
So that thou yeve thyn advertence  
To understondé my sentence.

'First shalt thou herén where she  
dwelleth,  
And so thyn owné book hit telleth,  
Hir paleys stant, as I shal seye  
Right even a-myddés of the weye,  
Betwixen hevene, erthe, and see;  
That whatsoever in al these three  
Is spoken in privee or aperte, 210  
The wey therto is so overte,  
And stant eek in so juste a place,  
That every soun mot to hit pace,  
Or what so cometh fro any tonge,  
Be hit rounéd, red, or songe,  
Or spoke in suertée or in drede,  
Certeyn hit mosté thider nede.

'Now herkné wel; for-why I wille  
Tellen thee a propré skile,  
And a worthy demonstracioun  
In myn ymagynacioun. 220

'Geffrey, thou wost right wel this,

128a. P inserts *any* before *rasour*.  
127. P Cx. Th. insert *mo* before *acordes*, per-  
haps rightly.

129a. Cx. Th. *So helpe*. P Cx. Th. *as for so*.

129. P Cx. Th. omit *that*.

129. F *worthe a*; B *worth a*. Perhaps *worthe*  
is the true reading.

129. P Cx. Th. *worthe* *wel*.

That every kyndly thyng that is,  
 Hath a kyndly stede ther he  
 May best in hit conservèd be;  
 Unto which place every thyng,  
 Through his kyndly enclynynge,  
 Moveth for to comen to,  
 Whan that it is away therfro;  
 As thus, lo, thou maist al day see  
 That any thing that hevye be, 230  
 As stoon or leed, or thyng of wighte,  
 And ber hit never so hye on highte,  
 Lat go thyñ hand, hit falleth down.

'Right so seye I, by fire or soun,  
 Or smoke, or other thynges lighte,  
 Alwey they seke upward on highte;  
 Whil ech of hem is at his large,  
 Lyght thyng up, and downward charge.

'And for this causè mayst thou see,  
 That every ryver to the see 240  
 Enclynéd is to go by kynde.

And by these skillés, as I fynde,  
 Hath fish dwellyng in floode and see,  
 And treës eek on erthe be.

Thus every thyng by this resoun  
 Hath his propre mansioun,  
 To which hit seketh to repaire,  
 Ther as hit shuldè not afaire.  
 Loo, this sentence is knowen couthe 250  
 Of every philosophèr's mouthe,  
 As Aristotle and dan Platon,  
 And other clerkés many oon,  
 And to confirmè my resoun,  
 Thou wost wel this, that speche is soun,  
 Or ellès nò man myghte hit here;  
 Now herkne what I wol thee lere.

'Soun is nocht but eyr y-broken,  
 And every spechè that is spoken,  
 Lowde or pryvee, foul or fair, 260  
 In his substaunce is but air;  
 For as flaumbe is but lightèd smoke,  
 Right so soun is air y-broke.  
 But this may be in many wyse,  
 Of which I wil thee two devyse,  
 As soun that cometh of pipe or harpe.  
 For whan a pipe is blowen sharpe,

237, 238. Cx. Th. invert these lines. Cx. Th.  
*Light thynges up; P Light thynges upward;*  
 F B *upward for up.*

254. P Cx. Th. omit this.

260. P Cx. *as air.*

262. P Cx. Th. *is soun.*

The air is twyst with violence,  
 And rent : lo, this is my sentence;  
 Eek, whan men harpè-strynges smyte,  
 Whether hit be moche or lyte, 270  
 Lo, with the strook the air to-brekeþ;  
 Right so hit brekeþ whan men speketh.  
 Thus wost thou wel what thyng is speche.

'Now hennèsforth I wol thee teche,  
 How every speche, or noise, or soun,  
 Through his multiplicacioun,  
 Thogh hit were pipèd of a mouse,  
 Moot nedès come to Famès House.  
 I preve hit thus—tak hedè now—  
 By experience; for if that thou 280  
 Throwè in a water now a stoon,  
 Wel wost thou, hit wol make anoon

A litel roundel as a cercle,  
 Paraunter brood as a covercle;  
 And right anoon thou shalt see weel,  
 That wheel wol cause another wheel,  
 And that the thridde, and soforth, brother,  
 Every cercle causyng other,  
 Broder than himselve was;  
 And thus, fro roundel to compas, 290  
 Ech aboute other goynge,  
 Causèth of othres sterynge,  
 And multiplying evermo,  
 Til that hit be so fer y-go  
 That hit at bothè brynkes be.

Al-thogh thou mowe hit not y-see  
 Above, hit goth yet alway under,  
 Although thou thenke hit a gret wonder.  
 And who-so seith of trouthe I varie,  
 Bid him provèn the contrarie. 300  
 And right thus every word, y-wys,  
 That loude or pryvee spoken is,  
 Moveth first an air aboute,  
 And of his movyng, out of doute,  
 Another air anoon is mevéd,  
 As I have of the water prevéd,  
 That every cercle causeth other.  
 Ryght so of air, my levè brother;

284. P Cx. Th. insert *as before brood.*

285. P Cx. omit this and the next three lines:  
 F B Th. insert *cercle* after *wheel*, to which it was  
 originally a gloss.

289. F B *Wider than.*

292. F B *Caused.*

296. P Cx. Th. *see.*

297. F B omit *alway.*

303. P Cx. *in the air.*

304. F B *this for his.*

Everich air in other stereth  
More and more, and speche up bereth 310  
Or vois, or noise, or word, or soun,  
Ay through multiplicacioun,  
Til hit be atte House of Fame,—  
Tak hit in earnest or in game.

'Now have I told, if thou have mynde,  
How speche or soun, of puré kynde  
Enclynéd is upward to meve;  
This, mayst thou felé, wel I preve.  
And that same place, y-wys,  
That every thyng enclynéd to is, 320  
Hath his kyndeliché stede:  
That sheweth hit, withouten drede,  
That kyndely the mansioun  
Of every speche, of every soun,  
Be hit either foul or fair,  
Hath his kyndé place in air.  
And syn that every thyng that is  
Out of his kyndé place, y-wys,  
Moveth thider for to go,  
If hit a-weyé be therfro, 330  
As I before have prevéd thee,  
Hit seweth, every soun, pardee,  
Moveth kyndely to pace  
Al up into his kyndely place.  
And this place of which I telle,  
Ther as Famé list to dwelle,  
Is set amyddés of these three,  
Heven, erthe, and eek the see,  
As most conservatif the soun.  
Than is this the conclusioun, 340  
That every speche of every man,  
As I thee tellé first began,  
Moveth up on high to pace  
Kyndely to Famés place.

'Tellé me this faithfully,  
Have I not prevéd thus symply,  
Withouten any subtilitee  
Of speche, or gret prolixitee  
Of termés of philosophýe,  
Of figurés of poetrye, 350  
Or colours of rethorike?  
Pardee, hit oghté thee to lyke;  
For hard langage, and hard matére

Is encombrous for to here  
Atonés; worst thou not wel this?'  
And I answerde and seyde, 'Yis.'  
'A ha!' quod he, 'lo, so I can,  
Lewedly to a lewéd man  
Speke, and shewe him swyché skiles,  
That he may shake hem by the biles, 360  
So palpable they shuldén be.  
But tel me this now pray I thee,  
How thinkéth thee my conclusioun?'  
[Quod he,] 'A good perswasoun.'  
Quod I, 'hit is; and lyk to be'  
Right so as thou hast prevéd me.'  
'By God,' quod he, 'and as I leve,  
Thou shalt have yet, or hit be eve, 370  
Of every word of this sentence  
A prevé by experience;  
And with thyn erés herén wel  
Top and tail, and everydel,  
That every word that spoken is  
Cometh into Famés House, y-wys,  
As I have seyde; what wilt thou more?'  
And with this word upper to sore  
He gan, and seyde, 'By Seynt Jame!  
Now wil we speken al of game.

'How farest thou?' quod he to me.  
'Wel,' quod I. 'Now see,' quod he, 380  
'By thy trouthe, yond adoun,  
Wher that thou knowest any toun,  
Or hous, or any other thyng.  
And whan thou hast of ought knowyng,  
Loké that thou warné me,  
And I anon shal tellé thee  
How fer thou art now therfro.'

And I adoun gan loken tho,  
And beheld feldés and playnes,  
And now hilles, and now mountaynes, 390  
Now valeys, and now forestes,  
And now unethés greté bestes;  
Now ryvérés, now citees,  
Now tounés, and now greté trees,  
Now shippés seyllinge in the see.

But thus sone in a while he  
Was flowén fro the grounde so hýe,  
That al the world, as to myn ýe,  
No more semedé than a prikke;  
Or elles was the air so thikke  
That I ne myghté not discerné.

309. F B omit *is*; Willert reads *another* for *in rethor.*

319. F *And that sum place stide*; B *And that sum stide*; Th. *And that some stede*; P Cx. *stide* is *say* 366. *stide* is a gloss on *place*, which has crept into the text. *some* should be *same*.

364. All omit *Quod he*; Skeat inserts.  
367. P omits *for*; F B Th. insert *that* after *for*.

With that he spak to me as yerne,  
And seyde: 'Seestow any token,  
Or ought that in the world is of spoken?'

I seyde, 'Nay.' 'No wonder nis,'  
Quod he, 'for half so high as this  
Nas Alexandre Macedo;  
Ne the kyng, dan Scipio,  
That saw in dreame, at poynt devys,  
Helle and erthe, and paradys; 410  
Ne eek the wrighte Dedalus,  
Ne his child, nyce Icarus,  
That fleigh so high that the hete  
His wynges malt, and he fel wete  
In ~~the~~ the see, and ther he dreynte,  
For whom was maad a greet compleynte.

'Now turn upward,' quod he, 'thy  
face,

And behold this largé place,  
This eyr; but loké thou ne be  
Adrad of hem that thou shalt see; 420  
For in this regioun, certeyn  
Dwelthe many a citezeyn,  
Of which that speketh dan Plato.  
These ben the eyrysh bestes, lo!  
And tho saw I al that meynce,  
Bothé goon and also flee.

'Now,' quod he tho, 'cast up thyn ýc;  
See yonder, lo, the Galaxýe,  
The which men clepe the Milky Wey,  
For hit is white: and somme, parfeý 430  
Callen hit Watlyngé strete,  
That onés was brent wyth the hete,  
Whan the sonnés sone, the rede,  
That highté Pheton, woldé lede  
Algate his fader cart, and gye.  
The cart-hors gonné wel espye  
That he [ne] coude no governaunce,  
And gonné for to lepe and daunce,  
And berén him now up, now down,  
Til that he saw the Scorpioun, 440  
Which that in heven a sign is yit.  
And he, for ferde, lost his wyt  
Of that, and lat the reynés goon  
Of his hors; and they anoon

403, 404. F B omit. P reads, l. 404, *Or ought  
thou inward yonder doun*; Th. *this for the*.

408. *Scipio*, cp. *Parl. of Foules*, l. 31 note.

411. F B *wrighte Dedalus*.

416. F B *maad moch compleynte*.

427. P Cx. Th. *Lo, quod he, cast*.

437. All omit *me*.

Gonne up to mounte, and doun descende,  
Til bothe eyr and erthe brende;  
Til Jupiter, lo, atte laste

Him slow, and fro the carté caste.  
Lo, is it not a greet myschaunce,  
To lete a fole han governaunce 450  
Of thynges that he can not demeyne?'

And with this word, soth for to  
seyne,

Ile gan alwey upper to sore,  
And gladded me ay more and more,  
So feithfully to me spak he.

Tho gan I loken under me,  
And behelde the eyrysh bestes,  
Cloudés, mystics, and tempestes,  
Snowés, haylés, reynés, wyndes,  
And thengendryng in hir kyndes, 460  
Al the wey through which I cam;  
'O God,' quod I, 'that made Adam,  
Moche is thy myght and thy noblesse.'

And tho thoughte I upon Boëce,  
That writ 'A thought may flee so hyc,  
With fetherés of Philosophye,  
To passen everich element;  
And whan he hath so fer y-went,  
Than may be seen, behynd his bak,  
Cloud, and al that I of spak.' 470

Tho gan I wexen in a wre,  
And seyde, 'I woot wel I am here;  
But wher in body or in gost  
I noot y-wys; but God, thou wost!  
For moré clere entendément  
Nadde he me never yit y-sent.  
And than thoughte I on Marcian,  
And eek on Antecclaudian,  
That sooth was hir descripcioun  
Of al the hevenés regioun, 480  
As fer as that I saw the preve;  
Therfor I can hem now beleve.

With that this egle gan to crye:  
'Lat be,' quod he, 'thy fantasye;

449. F B *moche*.

464. *Boece*, cp. Boethius, *De Consolatione  
Philosophie*, bk. iv. met. i.

476. F B *Nas never*; Th. *Nas me never*.

477. *Marcian*, Martians Mineus Felix  
Capella, the 8th book, l. 857, of whose *De  
Nuptiis inter Mercurium et Philologiam* is  
quoted by Copernicus in support of his system of  
astronomy; cp. also *Marsch. Gale*, l. 1738 ff.

478. *Antecclaudian*, 'Anticlaudianus', a Latin  
poem by Alanus de Insulis; cp. *P. of F.* l. 326.

480. P omits this line.



Wilt thou lere of sterres aught ?  
 'Nay, certeynly,' quod I, 'right naught.'  
 'And why ?' 'For I am now to old.'  
 'Ellës wolde I thee have told,'  
 Quod he, 'the sterres namës, lo,  
 And al the hevenës signes ther to, 490  
 And which they been.' 'No fors,' quod  
 I.

'Yis, pardée,' quod he, 'wostow why ?  
 For whan thou redest poetrye,  
 How goddës gonnë stellifye  
 Brid, fish, beste, or him, or herc,  
 As the Raven or eyther Bere,  
 Or Arionës harpë fyn,  
 Castor, Pollux, or Delphyn,  
 Or Atlantës doughttrës sevene,  
 How allë these are set in hevene ; 500  
 For though thou have hem ofte on  
 honde,

Yet noston not wher that they stonde.'  
 'No fors,' quod I, 'hit is no nede,  
 As wel I leve, so God me spede,  
 Hem that write of this matere,  
 As though I knew hir places here ;  
 An eke they shyne here so brighte  
 Hit shuldë shenden al my sighte,  
 To loke on hem.' 'That may wel be,'  
 Quod he. And so forth bar he me 510.  
 A whil, and than he gan to crye,  
 That never herde I thyng so hye,  
 'Now up the heed ; for al is wel ;  
 Seynt Julian, lo, bon hostel !  
 See here the Hous of Famë, lo !  
 Maistow not heren that I do ?'  
 'What ?' quod I. 'The gretë soun,'  
 Quod he, 'that rumbleth up and doun  
 In Famës Hous, ful of tidynges,  
 Bothe of fair speche and chidynges, 520  
 And of fals and soth compounded.  
 Herkne wel ; hit is not rounded.  
 Herestow not the gretë swogh ?'  
 'Yis, pardée,' quod I, 'wel y-nogh.'  
 'And what soun is it lyk ?' quod he.  
 'Peter ! betyng of the see,'

Quod I, 'again the rochës holowe,  
 Whan tempest doth the shippës swalowe,  
 And lat a man stonde, out of doute,  
 A mylë thens, and here hit route. 530  
 Or ellës lyke the last humblynge  
 After the clappe of a thundrynge.  
 When Iovës hath the air y-bete ;  
 But hit doth me for ferë swete.  
 'Nay, dred thee not therof,' quod he,  
 'Hit is nothyng wil beten thee,  
 Thou shalt non harm have trewely.'

And with this word bothe he and I  
 As nygh the place arryvëd were  
 As men may casten with a spere. 540  
 I nystë how, but in a strete  
 He settë me faire on my fete,  
 And seyde, 'Walkë forth a pas,  
 And tak thyn aventure or cas,  
 That thou shalt fynde in Famës place.'

'Now,' quod I, 'whil we han space  
 To speke, or that I go fro thee,  
 For the love of God, tel me,  
 In sooth, that wil I of thee lere,  
 If this noisë that I here 550  
 Be, as I have herd thee tellen,  
 Of folk that doun in erthë dwellen,  
 And cometh here in the samë wyse  
 As I thee herde or this devyse ;  
 And that there lyvës body nys  
 In al that hous that yonder is,  
 That maketh al this loudë fare ?'  
 'No,' quod he, 'by Seyntë Clare !  
 And, also wis God redë me,  
 But o thinge I wil warnë thee, 560  
 Of the which thou wolt have wonder.  
 Lo, to the House of Famë yonder,  
 Thou wost now how cometh ever  
 speche,

Hit nedeth nocht eft thee to teche.  
 But understand now right wel this,  
 Whan any speche y-comen is  
 Up to the paleys, anon-right  
 Hit wexeth lyk the samë wyght,  
 Which that the word in erthë spak,  
 Be he clothëd reed or blak ; 57

496. *eyther Bere*, Ursæ Major and Ursæ Minor.

497. *Arionës harpë*, cp. *Fasti*, li. 80.

498. *Delphyn*, the dolphin.

499. *Atlantës doughttrës*, the Pleiades.

500. *Seynt Julian*, St. Julian, patron of  
 travellers; cp. *C.T. Prol.* l. 310.

501. *P.Cz. Th.* and of other thynges.

536. *Th. B bitten*; *Cz. grove*.

549. *P.Cz. Th. / will*.

552. *P.Cz. forth for doun*.

558. *Seyntë Clare*, a disciple of St. Francis  
 whose day is Aug. 12th.

And hath so verray his lyknesse, 571  
That spak the word, that thou wilt gesse  
That it the samé body be,  
Man or woman, he or she.  
And is not this a wonder thyng?'  
'Yis,' quod I tho, 'by hevené kyng!'

576. P *hevenes*.

And with this worde, 'Farewel,' quod  
he,  
'And here I wol abyden thee,  
And God of hevené sende thee grace,  
Som good to lernén in this place.' 580  
And I of him took leve anon,  
And gan forth to the paleys goon.

## THIRD BOOK

*(The Invocation)*

O GOD of science and of light,  
Apollo, through thy greté myght,  
This lytel lasté book thou gye!  
Nat that I wilné, for maistrýe  
Here art poetical be shewed;  
But, for the rym is light and lewed,  
Yit make hit sumwhat agreable,  
Thogh som vers failé in a sillable;  
And that I do no diligence,  
To shewé craft, but o sentence.  
And if, divyné vertu, thou  
Wilt helpé me to shewé now  
That in myn hede y-markéd is,—  
Lo, that is for to menén this,  
The Hous of Fame for to descryve,—  
Thou shalt see me go as blyve  
Unto the nexté laure I see,  
And kisse it, for hit is thy tree.  
Now entreth in my breste anon!

*(The Dream)*

Whan I was fro this egle goon,  
I gan beholde upon this place.  
And certein, or I ferther pace,  
I wol yow al thys shap devyse  
Of hous and site; and al the wyse  
How I gan to this place aproche,  
That stood upon so high a roche,  
Hyer stant there noon in Spayne.  
But up I clomb with allé payne,  
And though to clymbe it grevedé me,  
Yit I ententif was to see,  
And for to pouren wonder lowe,  
If I coude any weyés know

6. P Cx. *But the ryme that is so lewed.*

10. P Cx. *omit a*

What maner stoon this roche was;  
For hit was lyk alyné glas,  
But that hit shoon ful moré clere;  
But of what congeléd matere  
I hit was, I nysté redély.  
But at the laste espiéd I,  
And found that hit was everydeel  
A roche of yse, and not of steel. 40  
Thoughte I, 'By Seynt Thomas of Kent!  
This were a feble foundémént,  
To bidden on a placé hye;  
He oughte him litel glorifyé  
That her-on bilt, so God me save!'

Tho saw I al the half y-grave  
With famous folkés namés fele,  
That hadde y-been in mochel wele,  
And her famés wide y-blowe.  
But wel unethés coude I knowe 50  
Any lettrés for to rede  
Hir namés by; for, out of drede,  
They were almost of-thowéd so,  
That of the lettrés oon or two  
Were molte away of every name.  
So unfamous was wexe hir fame;  
But men seyn, 'What may ever laste?'

Tho gan I in myn herté caste,  
That they were molte away with hete,  
And not away with stormés bete. 60  
For on that other syde I sey  
Of this hill, that northward lay,  
How hit was written full of namés  
Of folk that haddén greté famés  
Of oldé tyme, and yit they were

34. P *alynde*; Cx. Th. *a lymed*; F. B. *a thyng of*. I read *alynd* (=aligned, i.e. placed in lines).

35. P *shewen mer*; Cx. *shaped more*.

41. *Seynt Thomas*, Thomas à Becket.

53. P Cx. *overthowéd*.

64. P *had a fer*; Cx. Th. *had afore*.

As fresshe as men had write hem here  
 The selvè day right, or that houre  
 That I upon hem gan to poure.  
 But wel I wistè what hit made;  
 Hit was conservèd with the shade,  
 Of a castel stood on hy,  
 Al the writynge that I sy;  
 And stood eek on so cold a place,  
 That hetè myghte it not deface.

Tho gan I up the hill to goon,  
 And fond upon the coppe a woon,  
 That alle the men that ben on lyve  
 Ne han the cunnyng to descryve  
 The beautee of that ilke place,  
 Ne coude casten no compace  
 Swich another for to make,  
 That myghte of beautee be his make;  
 Ne so wonderliche y-wrought,  
 That hit astonyeth yit my thought,  
 And maketh al my wyt to swynke  
 On this castel for to thynke.  
 So that the gretè craft, beautee,  
 The caste, the curiositee  
 Ne can I not to yow devyse,  
 My wyt ne may me not suffice.

But nathèles al the substance  
 I have yit in my remembrance;  
 For-why me thoughtè, by Seynt Geyle!  
 Al was of stone of beryle,  
 Bothe the castel and the tour,  
 And eek the halle, and every bour,  
 Wythouten pecès or ioynnynges.  
 But many subtil compassynges,  
 Babewynnes and pynacles,  
 Imageries and tabernacles,  
 I saw eek, and ful of wyndowes,  
 As flakès falle in gretè snowes.  
 And eek in ech of the pynacles  
 Werèn sondry habitacles,  
 In whichè stoden al withoute—  
 Ful the castel, al aboute—  
 Of allè maner of mynstrales,

71. F B Th. invert the order of this and the next line. P Cx. Th. insert *that so* before *stood*; B inserts *that*.

87. F B omit *craft*; P Cx. Th. insert it wrongly in the next line.

99. F *Rabewynnes*; B *Rabewynnes*; Cx. *As Babewynnes*; Th. *As babewynnes*; P *Babewynnes*. *Shewt* rightly reads *Babewynnes* (O.F. *babwin*, L. *lat. babewynus*, Mod. Engl. *baboon*); used of grotesque figures in architecture.

And gestiours, that tellèn tales  
 Bothe of weping and of game,  
 Of al that longeth unto Fame.

Ther herde I playèn on an harpe  
 That sownèd bothè wel and sharpe,  
 Orpheus ful craftèly,  
 And on his syde fastè by  
 Sat the harper Orion  
 And Eacidès Chiron,  
 And other harpers many oon.  
 And the Bret Glascurioun,  
 And smalè harpers with her gleès,  
 Seten under hem in seès,  
 And gonne on hem upward to gape,  
 And countrefet hem as an ape,  
 Or as craft countrefeteth kynde.

Tho saw I stonden hem behynde,  
 A-fer fro hem, alle be helmselve,  
 Many thousand tymès twelve,  
 That madèn loudè menstralcyes  
 In cornemuse, and shalmys,  
 And many other maner pipe,  
 That craftèly begunne to pipe,  
 Bothe in doucet and in rede,  
 That ben at festès with the brede,  
 And many floute and liltyng horne,  
 And pipès made of grenè corne,  
 As han thise litel herde-gromes,  
 That kepèn bestès in the bromes.

Ther saw I than dan Cytherus,  
 And of Athenes dan Proserus,  
 And Marcia that lost hir skyn,  
 Bothe in face, body, and chyn,

112. P Cx. Th. omit *bothe*.

113. P inserts *And*, Cx. Th. insert *Hym* before *Orpheus*. Perhaps the original copy read *Dan Orpheus*, and the first word had become illegible.

115. *Orion*, Arion; cp. bk. ii. l. 497.

116. *Eacidès Chiron*, i.e. Achilles' Chiron; Chiron, the centaur, was tutor to Achilles, son of *Æacus*; cp. Ovid, *Art. Am.* l. 27, *Eacidès Chiron*.

118. *Bret Glascurioun*, the British Glasgerion; cp. Percy Folio MS. ed. Hales and Furnivall, l. 246.

128. *cornemuse*, a bagpipe. *shalmys*, a shawm, from Lat. 'calamus,' a reed.

137. F B invert this and the next line.

137. F B *Atiteris* for *dan Cytherus*, both perhaps corruptions for *dan Tityrus*.

138. F B *dan Pseustis*; P *dan presentus*. All three readings are corrupt.

139. *Marcia*, Dante's *Marsia* (*Parad.* l. 13-17) i.e. Marsyas the male flute-player; cp. *Metamorphoses*, vi. 388-400.

For that she wolde envyeñ lo !  
To pipen bet than Apolló.

There saw I famous, olde and yonge,  
Pipers of the Duché tonge,  
To lerné lovè-dauncés, sprynges,  
Reyès, and these straungé thynges.

Tho saw I in another place,  
Stondén in a largé space  
Of hem that makén bloody soun,  
In trumpe, beme, and clarioun ;  
For in fight and blod-shedyng  
Is uséd gladly clarionyng.

Ther herde I trumpeñ Messenus,  
Of whom that speketh Virgilius.

Ther herde I Joab trumpe also,  
Theodomas, and other mo ;  
And al that uséde clarion,  
In Cataloigne and Aragon,  
That in hir tyme famous were  
To lerné, saw I trumpe there.

Ther saw I sit in other seés,  
Pleyinge upon othere gleés,  
Whiche that I cannot nevене,  
Mo than sterres been in hevене,  
Of whiche I nyl as now not ryme,  
For ese of yow, and losse of tyme :  
For tyme y-lost, this knowén ye,  
By no way may recovered be.

Ther saw I pleyén jogelours,  
Magiciens, and tregetours,  
And phitonesses, charmeresses,  
Oldé wycches, sorceresses,  
That use exorsisaciouns,  
And eek thise fumygaciouns ;  
And clerkes eek, which conné wel  
Al this magik naturel,

146. *Reyes*, round dances, from Dut. 'rey'; cp. Ger. 'Reihentanz', a circular dance.

150. *beme*, a horn, trumpet.

153. *Messenus*, Misenus, son of Æolus, trumpeter first to Hector and then to Æneas; cp. *Æn.* iii. 239 and vi. 162 ff.

155. *Joab*, cp. *1 Sam.* ii. 28; xviii. 16; xx. 22.

156. *Theodomas*, Thiodamas, augur in succession to Amphiaras at the siege of Thebes; cp. Statius, *Thebaid.* viii. 343, and *March. Tale*, l. 1720 ff.

162. *F B sondry* for *others*; Th. *other sondry*. 166. *jogelours* played, sang, danced, and performed tricks by sleight of hand.

170. *tregetours* performed more elaborate tricks requiring mechanical contrivances.

171. *phitonesses*, pythoneses; cp. *Freres Tale*, l. 1510.

174. P omit this line.

That craftely don hir ententes,  
To make, in certeyn ascendentes,  
Imagés, lo, through swych magik,  
To make a man ben hool or syk.

Ther saw I thee quene Medesé,  
And Circes eek, and Calipsa ;  
Ther saw I Hermes Ballenus,  
Lymote, and eek Symon Magus.  
Ther saw I, and knew hem by name,  
That by such art don men han fame.  
Ther saw I Colle tregetour

Upon a table of sicamour  
Pleye an uncouth thyng to telle ;  
I saw him carien a wynd-melle  
Under a walsh-noté shale.

What shulde I maké lenger tale  
Of al the peple that I say,  
Fro hennés unto domésday ?

When I hadde al this folk beholde,  
And fond me lous, and noght y-holde,  
And eft y-muséd longé while  
Upon these wallés of berile,  
That shoon ful lighter than a glas,  
And made wel moré than hit was,  
To semén, every thyng, y-wis,  
As kyndé thyng of Fames is ;  
I gan forth romen til I fond  
The castel-yate on my right hond,  
Which that so wel corvéñ was,  
That never swich another nas ;  
And yit it was by aventure  
Y-wrought, as often as by cure.

178. *ascendentes*. The ascendent is that point of the zodiac ascending above the horizon at a given time. It was a factor of great importance in calculating nativities.

181. *Medesé*, the wife of Jason.

182. *Circes*, Circe; cp. *Odyssey* x. *Calipsa*, Calypso; cp. *Odyssey* i.

183. *Hermes Ballenus*. Belinuous, the disciple of Hermes. Belinuous discovered beneath a statue of Hermes a book explaining the secrets of the universe. *Hermes* is here in the possessive case.

184. *Lymote*, Elymas the sorcerer (Acts xiii. 8), according to Prof. Hale's. *Symon Magus*; cp. Acts viii. 9.

187. *Colle tregetour*, Colle the juggler, a now unknown celebrity.

194. *Cx. Th. I could not telle tyl domesday*.

197. *P lenger a while*, perhaps rightly; *Cx. a lenger while*.

201. P omits this line; *Cx. Th.* also omit but insert the line *And thesne anon after this after* l. 202.

208. *Cx. Th. Ywrought by grete and subtyl cure*.

Hit nedeth noght yow for to tellen,  
 To maké yow to lenger duellen, 210  
 Of this yatés florissahynges,  
 Ne of compassés, ne of kervynges,  
 Ne how they hatte in masoneries,  
 As corbets, ful of ymageries.  
 But, Lord! so fair it was to shewe  
 For hit was al of gold behewe.  
 But in I wente, and that anoon;  
 Ther mette I crying many oon,—  
 'A largés, largés! uphold wel!  
 God save the lady of this pel, 220  
 Our owné gentil lady Fame,  
 And hem that wilne to have a name  
 Of us!' Thus herde I crien alle,  
 And fasté comén out of halle,  
 And shokén noblés and sterlynges.  
 And sommé crounéd were as kynges,  
 With crounés wroght ful of losenges;  
 And many riban, and many frenge  
 Were on hir clothes trewely.

Tho atté laste aspyéd I 230  
 That pursévauntés and heraudes,  
 That crien riché folkés laudes,  
 Hit weren alle; and every man  
 Of hem, as I yow tellén can,  
 Hadde on him throwén a vesture,  
 Which that men clepe a cote-armure,  
 Enbrowdéw wonderliché riche,  
 Al-though they neré nought y-liche.  
 But noght nyl I, so mote I thryve,  
 Been abouté to dyscryve 240  
 Al this armés that ther weren,  
 That they thus on hir cotés beren,  
 For hit to me were impossible;  
 Men myghte make of hem a bible,  
 Twenty foot thikke, as I trowe.  
 For certeyn, who-so coude y-knowe  
 Myghte ther allé the armés seen,  
 Of famous folk that haddé been  
 In Aufrike, Europe, and Asye,  
 Sith first began the chevalrye. 250

Lo! how shulde I now telle al this?

219. P Cx. Th. *how the hachyngs in.*  
 214. P Cx. Th. *and for ful of.*  
 219. F B Th. *holds up;* P Cx. Th. repeat a  
 before second *largés.*  
 227. P Cx. *ful of larynges.*  
 228. P. *and may thynges;* Cx. *and many*  
 thynges.  
 229. F Cx. Th. *lo for began the.*

Ne of the halle eek what nede is  
 To tellén yow that every wal  
 Of hit, and floor, and roof wyth al,  
 Was plated half a foté thikke  
 Of gold, and that nas no thyng wikke,  
 But, for to prove in allé wyse,  
 As fyn as ducat of Venyse,  
 Of whiche to litel in my pouche is?  
 And they were set as thikke of nouchis  
 Fulle of the fynest stonés faire, 26  
 That men rede in the Lapidaire,  
 As gresés growén in a mede.  
 But hit were al to longe to rede  
 The namés; and therefore I pace.  
 But in this ryché lusty place, 27  
 That Famés hallé calléd was,  
 Ful moché prees of folke ther nas,  
 Ne croudyng, for to moché prees.  
 But al on hye, upon a dees, 27  
 Sitte in a see imperial,  
 That maad was of a rubee al,  
 Which that a carbuncle is y-called,  
 I saw perpetually y-stalled,  
 A femynyné créature;  
 That never forméd by nature  
 Nas swich another thyng y-seye.  
 For altherfirst, soth for to seye,  
 Me thoughté that she was sô lyte,  
 That the lengthe of a cubite 28  
 Was lenger than she semedé be;  
 But thus sone in a whilé she  
 Hir-self tho wonderliché streighte,  
 That with hir feet she therthé reighte,  
 And with hir heed she touchéde hevene,  
 Ther as shyne the sterres sevene.  
 And therto cek, as to my wyt,  
 I saw as gret a wonder yit,  
 Upon hir eyén to beholde,  
 But certeyn I hem never tolde. 29

239. P Th. *to lite al in;* Cx. *to lyte in;* F B  
*litel al.*

260. P Cx. *as ouches.*  
 272. P Cx. *on for in.*  
 272. P omits *al;* Cx. Th. *Ryal (royal) for al.*  
 277. P Cx. omits *Nas;* Th. *Was.*  
 283. F B *This was gret maravaylle to me.*  
 284. F *Hir tho so wonderly straight;* B *He*  
*tho so wonderlich straight;* P Cx. Th. *wonderly*  
*for wonderliche.* The original of F B probably  
 read:—

This was gret maravaylle to me, she  
 Hir tho so wonderliche straighte,  
 which is perhaps the right reading.

For as fele eyen haddē she,  
 As fetherēs upon foulēs be,  
 Or werēn on the bestēs foure,  
 That goddēs tronē gunne honoure,  
 As writ John in the Apocalips.  
 Hir heer that oundy was and crips,  
 As burnēd gold shoon for to see.  
 And sooth to tellē also, she  
 Had also fele up-standyng eres  
 And tonges, as on a best ben heres; 300  
 And on hir feet wexen saw I  
 Partrichēs wingēs redely.

But, lord ! the perrie and the richesse  
 I saw sittyn on this godesse !  
 And lord ! the hevenysh melodye,  
 Of songēs ful of armonye,  
 I herde aboute her trone y-songe,  
 That al the paleys-wallēs rongē !  
 So song the myghty Musē, she  
 That clepēd is Caliopee, 310  
 And hir eightē sustrēn eek  
 That in her facē semēn meke ;  
 And ermo, eternally  
 They synge of Fame as tho herde I :—  
 Heriēd be thou and thy name,  
 Goddessē of renoun and of fame.'

Tho was I war, lo, attē laste,  
 As I myn eyen gan up caste,  
 That this ilke noblē quene  
 On hir shuldrēs gan sustene 320  
 Bothē tharmēs, and the name  
 Of tho that haddē largē fame ;  
 Alexander, and Hercules  
 That with a shertē his lyf lecs !  
 Thus fond I sittyn this goddessē,  
 In nobley honour and richesse ;  
 Of which I stynte a whilē now,  
 Other thyng to tellēn yow.

Tho saw I stonde on either syde,  
 Streight down to the dorēs wyde, 330  
 Fro the dees many a pileer  
 Of metal, that shoon not ful cleer,  
 But though they nere of no rychesse,  
 Yet they were maad for greet noblesse,

307. P Cx. insert *as before for*; F B Th. *hit shoon to see*.

300. F B *as on herde heres*.

321. F B P Cx. *Both (Bothe) armes*.

325. All read *And thus*.

329. P Cx. Th. *as Mother*.

And in hem hy and greet sentence ;  
 And folk of dignē reverence,  
 Of whiche I wol yow tellē fonde,  
 Upon the piler saw I stonde.

Alderfirst, lo, ther I sigh,  
 Upon a piler stonde on high, 340  
 That was of lede and yren fyn,  
 Him of sectē Saturnyn,  
 The Ebrayk Josephus the olde,  
 That of Jewēs gestēs tolde ;  
 And bar upon his shuldrēs hye,  
 The fame up of the lewērye.

And by him stoden other sevene,  
 Wyse and werthy for to nevene,  
 To helpen him bere up the charge,  
 Hit was so hevy and so large. 350  
 And for they writen of batailes,  
 As wel as of othēr mervayles,  
 Therfor was, lo, this pileer,  
 Of which that I yow telle heer,  
 Of lede and yren bothe, y-wys.  
 For yren Martēs metal is,  
 Which that god is of bataille ;  
 And the leed, withouten faile,  
 Is, lo, the metal of Saturne,  
 That hath ful largē wheel to turne. 360  
 Tho stoden forth on every rowe  
 Of hem which that I coude knowe,  
 Thogh I hem night be ordēr telle,  
 To makē you to long to dwelle.

These, of whiche I gynnē rede,  
 There saw I stonden, out of drede :  
 Upon an yren piler strong,  
 That pcyntēd was, al endēlong,  
 With tigrēs blode in every place,  
 The Tholosan that hightē Stace, 370  
 That bar of Thebēs up the name  
 Upon his shuldrēs, and the fame

335. All omit *hy and*, which, however, Th. wrongly inserts in the next line; P and Cx. alter *hy and* in l. 336 into *gret and* by contamination with the previous line.

342. P omits this line; Cx. *Hym that wrote thactes dyngne*.

347. P Cx. *ther stoden sevene*.

352. F B *as other olde mervayles*.

367. P omits this line; Cx. *a fyler hye and stronge*.

369. *tigrēs blode*; cp. *Tholoid*, bk. vii. The killing of two lions by the besiegers caused a renewal of the siege.

370. *The Tholosan . . . Stace*. According to Dante, Statius was a native of Toulouse. He was born at Naples A.D. 61.

Also of cruel Achillés.  
 And by him stood, withouten lees,  
 Ful wonder hye on a pileer  
 Of yren, he, the grette Omere;  
 And with him Dares and Tytus  
 Before, and eek he, Lollius,  
 And Guydo eek de Columpnis,  
 And English Gaufride eek, y-wys. 380  
 And ech of these, as have I joye,  
 Was besy for to bere up Troye.  
 So hevy was therof the fame,  
 That for to bere hit was no game.  
 But yit I gan ful wel espie,  
 Betwix hem was a litel envye.  
 Oon seyde that Omere madé lyes,  
 Feynyng in his poetries,  
 And was to Grekes favorable;  
 Therfor held he hit but fable. 390

Tho saw I stonde on a pileer,  
 That was of tynned yren cleer,  
 That Latyn poete Virgile,  
 That hath boren up longé while  
 The fame of Pius Eneas.

And next him on a piler was,  
 Of coper, Venus clerk, Ovyde,  
 That hath y-sowen wonder wyde  
 The grette god of Love his fame.  
 And ther he bar up wel his name, 400  
 Upon this piler, also hye,  
 As I hit myghte see with myn ye:  
 For-why this halle of whiche I rede  
 Was woxe on highte, lengthe and brede,  
 Wel moré, by a thousand dele,  
 Than hit was erst, that saw I wel.

Thoo saw I on a piler by,  
 Of yren wroght ful sternely,

377. *Dares and Tytus*, Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis, the reputed authors of two late histories of the Trojan War.

378. *Lollius*, probably a misunderstanding on Chaucer's part of Horace, *Epist.* i. 2:—

'Troiani belli scriptorem, maxime Lolli,  
 Dum tu declamas Romæ, Prenestatæ relecti.'

379. *Guydo . . . de Columpnis*, Guido delle Colonne, whose *Historia Troiana* (1287) is a translation of Benoît de Sainte-Maure's *Roman de Troie*. The M.E. *Geste Hystoriale* (E. E. T. S.) is a translation of the *Historia*.

380. *English Gaufride*, Geoffrey of Monmouth, author of the *Historia Britonum*.

387. So Th.; F B omit that and read was for made; Cx. P read Other for Oon.

394. F B bore hath up longé; P Cx. Th. hath bore up a longé.

The grette poete, dan Lucan,  
 And on his shuldrés bar up than, 410  
 As highe as that I myghte see,  
 The fame of Julius, and Pompee.  
 And by him stoden alle these clerkes,  
 That write of Romés myghty werkes,  
 That if I wolde her namés telle,  
 Alle to longé moste I dwelle.

And next him on a piler stood,  
 Of soulfre, lyk as he were wood,  
 Dan Claudian, soth for to telle,  
 That bar up al the fame of helle, 420  
 Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne,  
 That quene is of the derké pyne.

What shulde I moré telle of this?  
 The hallé was al ful, y-wys,  
 Of hem that writen oldé gestes,  
 As ben on treés rokés nestes;  
 But it is a ful confus matere  
 Were al the gestés for to here,  
 That they of write, and how they highte  
 But whil that I beheld this sighte, 430  
 I herde a noise aprochen blyve,  
 That ferde as been don in an hye,  
 Ayenst her tyme of out-comyng;  
 Right swiche a maner murmuryng,  
 For al the world hit semedé me.

Tho gan I loke aboute and see,  
 That ther com entryng into the halle,  
 A right greet company withalle,  
 And that of sondry regiouns,  
 Of allé kynnes condiciouns, 44  
 That dwelle in erthe under the mone,  
 Pore and riche. And also sone  
 As they were come into the halle,  
 They gonné doun on kneés falle,  
 Before this ilké noble quene,  
 And seyde, 'Graunte us, lady shene,  
 Eche of us, of thy grace, a bone!'  
 And somme of hem she grauntedé sone,  
 And somme she-wernedé wel and faire;

409. *Lucan*, author of the *Pharsalia*, which describes the war between Cæsar and Pompey.

419. *Claudian*; cp. *supra*, bk. i. l. 449 note.

427. P Cx. invert this and the next line.

433. F B out-feyngs.

440. F alle skynnes; B all skynys; Cx. all kyns; Th. al kyns.

444. P. *They gonns wy on knees down falle*, which is probably a corruption of the true reading; perhaps *They gonns wy on knees down falle*; Cx. Th. *They gonns (gan) on knees down falle*.

And somme she grauntéde the contraire 450  
Of her axyng utterly.

But this I seye yow trewely,  
What hir causé was, I nyste.  
For of this folk ful wel I wyste,  
They haddé good fame ech deservéd, /  
Although they were diversly servéd.  
Right as hir suster, dame Fortune,  
Is wont to servén in comune.

Now herkné how she gan to paye  
That gonne hir of hir gracé praye ; 460  
And yit lo, al this companye  
Seyden sooth, and noght a lye.

'Madame,' seyden they, 'we be  
Folk that heer besechen thee,  
That thou graunte us now good fame,  
And let our werkés han that name.  
In ful recompensacioun  
Of goodé werkés, yive us renoun.'

'I wene hit yow,' quod she, anoon,  
'Ye wete of me good famé noon, 470  
By which and therfor go your wey.'

'Noght,' quod they, 'and welaway !  
Telle us what your cause may be.'

'For me list hit noght,' quod she,  
'No wyght shal speke of yow, y-wys,  
Good ne harm, ne that ne this.'

And with that word she gan to calle  
Her messenger that was in halle,  
And bad that he shulde fasté goon,  
pon payne to be blynde anoon, 480  
or Eolus, the god of wynde,  
In Tracé ther ye shul him finde,  
And bid him bringe his clarioun,  
That is ful dyvers of his soun,  
And hit is clepéd Clere Laude,  
With which he wonte is to heraude  
Hem that me list y-preised be :  
And also bid him how that he  
Brynge his other clarioun,  
That highté Sclaundre in every toun, 490

451. P Cx. omit this and the next line.

453. P Cx. *What ther grace was*; Th. *What her grace was*.

456. F B omit this line.

466. P Cx. Th. *good name*.

480. A line is left blank here in F B. The next two lines read :

Upon the payn to be blynde,  
For Eolus, the god of wynde.

42. P omits this line.

With which he wont is to diffame  
Hem that me liste, and do hem shame.'

This messenger gan fasté goon,  
And found wher in a cave of stoon,  
In a contree that highté Trace,  
This Eolus, with hardé grace,  
Held the wyndés in distresse,  
And gan hem under him to presse,  
That they gonne as berés rore,  
He bond and presséde hem so sore. 500

This messenger gan fasté crie,  
'Ris up,' quod he, 'and fasté hye,  
Til thou at my lady be ;  
And tak thy clarioun cek with thee,  
And speed thee fast.' And he anon  
Took to a man that hight Triton,  
His clariouns to beré tho,  
And lect a certeyn wynd to go,  
And blew so hidously and hye,  
That hit ne lefté not a skye 510  
In al the welken longe and brood.

This Eolus no-wher abood,  
Til he was come at Famés feet,  
And cek the man that Triton heet ;  
And ther he stood as still as stoon.  
And her-withal ther com anoon  
Another hugé companye  
Of oldé folk and gunné crie,  
'Lady, graunte us now good fame  
And lat our werkés han that name, 520  
Now in honour of gentillesse,  
And also God your soulé blesse !  
For we han wel deservéd hit,  
Therfor is right that we ben quyt.'

'As thryve I,' quod she, 'ye shal faile,  
Good werkés shal yow noght availle  
To have of me good fame as now.  
But wite ye what ? I graunté yow,  
That ye shal have a shrewéd name,  
And wikkéd loos and worsé fame, 530  
Though ye good loos have wel deservéd.  
Now go your wey, for ye be servéd ;  
And thou, dan Eolus,' quod she,  
'Tak forth thy trompe anon, let see,

503. So all the authorities.

504. F B *forth for fast*.

506. *Triton*; cp. Ovid, *Met.* l. 333.

518. F B Th. *gods for olds*.

534. F B

Have doom, Eolus, let see,  
Take forth thy trompe anon, and see



That is y-cleped Schlaunder light,  
And blow hir loos, that every wyght  
Speke of hem harm and shrewdnesse,  
In stede of good and worthynesse.  
For thou shalt trumpe al the contraire  
Of that they han don wel and faire.' 540  
'Alas,' thoughte I, 'what adventures  
Han these sory creatures,  
That they amonges al the pres,  
Shulde thus be shaméd gylteles !  
But what ! hit mostè nedès be.'

What dide this Eolus, but he  
Took out his blakkè trompe of bras,  
That fouler than the devil was,  
And gan this trompè for to blowe,  
As al the world shulde overthrowe. 550  
Throughouten every regioun  
Wente this foulè trumpès soun,  
As swift as pelet out of gonne,  
Whan fyr is in the poudrè ronne.  
And swiche a smokè gan out-wende,  
Out of his foulè trumpès ende,  
Blak, blo, grenysh, swartysh, reed,  
As doth when that men meltè leed,  
Lo, al on hys fro the tuél !  
And therto oo thing saw I wel, 560  
That the ferther that hit ran,  
The gretter wexén hit began,  
As doth the ryver from a welle,  
And hit stank as the pit of helle.  
Allas, thus was her shame y-ronge,  
And gylteles, on every tonge.

Tho com the thriddè companye,  
And gunne up to the dëes, hys,  
And doun on knees they fille anon,  
And seyde, they ben everychon 570  
Folk that han ful trewely  
Deservéd famé rightfully,  
And prayè that hit myghte be knowe,  
Right as hit is, and forth y-blowe.  
'I grauntè,' quod she, 'for me list  
That now your godè werkes be wist ;  
And yit ye shul han better loos,

Right in dispit of alle your foos,  
Than worthy is ; and that anon :  
Lat now,' quod she, 'thy trumpe goon,  
Thou Eolus, that is so blak ; 580  
And out thyn other trompè tak  
That hightè Laude, and blow it so  
That through the world her fame go,  
Al esely and not to faste,  
That hit be knowén attè laste.'

'Ful gladly, lady myn,' he seyde ;  
And out his trompe of golde he bpayde  
Anon, and sette hit to his mouthe,  
And blew it est, and west, and southe, 590  
And north, as loude as any thunder,  
That every wyght hath of hit wonder,  
So brode hit ran or that hit stente.  
And, certès, al the breeth that wente  
Out of his trumpès mouthè smelde  
As men a pot of bawmè helde  
Among a basket ful of roses ;  
This favour dide he to her lede.

And right with this I gan  
Ther com the ferthè companye,  
But certeyn they were wonder fewe,  
And gonnè stonden in a rowe,  
And seyden, 'Certès, lady brighte,  
We han don wel wyth al our myghte,  
But we ne kepén have no fame.  
Ilid our werkès and our name,  
For goddès love ! for certès we  
Han certeyn doon hit for bountee,  
And for no maner other thyng,' 610  
'I grauntè yow al your askyng,'  
Quod she ; 'let alle your werkès be deed.

With that aboute I clew myn heed,  
And saw anon the fiftè route  
That to this lady gonnè loute,  
And doun anon on kneès falle ;  
And hir tho besoughtén alle,  
To hide hir goodè werkès eek,  
And seyde, they yevén noght a leek  
For famé, ne for swich renoun ;  
For they for contemplacioun, 620

533. P Cx. Th. insert *a* before *pelet* and *gonne*.

534. P Cx. *fyr is in to it ronne*.

535. P Cx. omit *that* ; F B Th. *wher that*.

536. Cx. *on hys* ; F B Th. *to hys*.

537. F B Th. *we for they*.

538. F B *prays yow it not be* ; Cx. *prays hys myght* ; Th. *prays you it might*.

539. P Cx. Th. insert *now* before *we*.

578. F B omit *Right*.

585. F B omit *Al*.

586. F B Th. *potte ful* ; P Cx. *pitte ful*. Koi and Skeat omit *of*.

602. P Cx. Th. insert *to before stonden*.

612. P Cx. Th. *turned for clew*.

619. F B Th. *For no fame*. F B omit *as* P Cx. Th. omit second *for*.

And goddés lovè, hadde y-wrought,  
 Ne of famè wolde they nought.  
 'What?' quod she, 'and be ye wood?  
 And wenè ye for to do good,  
 And for to have of that no fame?  
 Have ye dispit to have my name?  
 Nay, ye shul lyven everychoon!  
 Blow thy trompe and that anon,  
 Quod she, 'thou Eolus, I hote,  
 And ryng these folkés werk by note, 630  
 That al the world may of hit here.'  
 And he gan blowe hir loos so clere,  
 In his golden clarioun,  
 That through the world wentè the soun,  
 And so kenely, and eek so softe,  
 That hir fame was blowen a-lofte.  
 Tho com the sextè companye,  
 And gan fastè to Famè crie.  
 Right verrily in this manere  
 They prayde: 'Mercy, lady dere! 640  
 For as hit is,  
 We neither that ne this,  
 Of our lyf hath be.  
 Thethes, we preyè thee,  
 For we may have so good a fame,  
 And gret renoun and knowen name,  
 As they that han don noblè gestes,  
 And achieved alle hir lestes,  
 As wel of love as other thyng;  
 Al was us never broche ne ryng, 650  
 Ne ellés nought from wymmen sent,  
 Ne ones in hir herte y-ment,  
 To make us only frendly chere,  
 But myghte teme us upon bere,  
 It lat us to the peple seme  
 As wiche as the world may of us deme  
 That wymmen lovèd us for wood.  
 It shal don us a mochè good,  
 And to our herte as moche availle  
 To countrepeise ese and travaille, 660

As we hadde wonne hit with labour;  
 For that is derè boght honour,  
 At regard of our greet ese.  
 And yit thou most us morè plesè;  
 Let us be holden eek therto,  
 Worthy, wyse, and gode also,  
 And riche, and happy unto love.  
 For Goddés love that sit above,  
 Thogh we may not the body have  
 Of wymmen, yit, so God me save! 670  
 Let men glewe on us the name;  
 Sufficeth that we han the fame.'  
 'I grauntè,' quod she, 'by my trouthe!  
 Now, Eolus, withouten slouthe,  
 Tak out thy trompe of gold,' quod she,  
 'And blow as they have axed me,  
 That every man wene hem at ese,  
 Though they gon in ful bad lese.'  
 This Eolus gan hit so blowe,  
 That through the world hit was y-knowe.  
 Tho com the seventh route anon, 680  
 And fel on kneès everychon,  
 And seyde, 'Lady, graunte us sone  
 The samè thyng, the samè bone,  
 That thise nextè folke have doon.'  
 'Fy on yow,' quod she, 'everychoon!  
 Ye masty swyn, ye ydel wrecchès,  
 Ful of roten slowè tæccchès!  
 What? falsè thevès! wher ye wolde  
 Be famous good, and nothing nolde 690  
 Deservè why, ne never thoughte  
 Men rather yow to-hangen oughte?  
 For ye be lyk the slepy cat,  
 That wolde have fish; but wastow what?  
 He woldè no-tyng wete his clowes.  
 Yvel thrift come on your jowes,  
 And on myn if I hit graunte,  
 Or do yow favour yow to avaunte!  
 Thou Eolus, thou kyng of Trace!  
 Go, blow this folk a sory grace, 700  
 Quod she, 'anon; and wostow how

621. P Cx. Th. *is wrought*.623. P Cx. Th. omit *and*.624. P Cx. Th. omit *for*.630. All read *werkes*—the plural form caughton the preceding word—cp. *hit* in next line.635. P Cx. Th. *hyndely* for *kenely*; F B *Also*

And so.

636. P omits this line; F B *But atte last*(slate) *it was on lofte*; Cx. Th. *their for hir*.643. F B *as good*; Th. *as good a*.648. P Cx. *achieved alle her bestes*; Th. *achieved*

questes.

675. F B read *now let us for quod she*.685. A loose construction. Cx. reads *That to*  
*thys next folk hast done*, which is perhaps right.

689-691. F B read:

What? falsè thevès! or ye wolde  
Be famous good, and nothing nolde  
Deserve why, ne never thoughte!  
Men rather yow to-hangen oughte!693. F *swyn* for *slepy*; B *sweynte*, rightly  
according to Skeat.699. *Trace*, Thrace.

As I shal tellé thee right now.  
 Sey, "Thise ben they that wolde honour  
 Have, and do noskynnés labour,  
 Ne do no good, and yit han laude ;  
 And that men wende that bele Isaude  
 Ne coud hem noght of lové werne ;  
 And yit she that grynt at a querne  
 Is al to good to ese hir herte."

This Eolus anon up sterte, 720  
 And with his blakké clarioun  
 He gan to blasen out a soun,  
 As loude as belweth wynde in helle.  
 And eek thérwith, sooth to telle,  
 This soun was [al] so ful of japes,  
 As ever mowés were in apes.  
 And that wente al the world aboute,  
 That every wyght gan on hem shoute,  
 And for to laugh as they were wode ;  
 Such gamé fonde they in hir hode. 720

Tho com another companye,  
 That had y-doon the trecherye,  
 The harme, the gretest wikkednesse,  
 That any herté coudé gesse ;  
 And preyde hir to han good fame,  
 And that she nolde doon hem no shame,  
 But yeve hem loos and good renoun,  
 And do hit blowe in clarioun.  
 'Nay, wis !' quod she, 'hit were a vyce ;  
 Al be ther in me no justice, 730  
 Me [ne] list not do hit now,  
 Ne this nyl I not graunté yow.'

Tho com ther lepyng in a route,  
 And gan clappén al aboute  
 Every man upon the croune,  
 That al the hallé gan to sowne,  
 And seyde, 'Lady, lefe and dere,  
 We ben swich folk as ye may here.  
 To tellén al the tale aright,  
 We ben shrewés every wyght, 740  
 And han delyt in wikkednes,  
 As goodé folk have in goodnes ;  
 And joyé to be knowén shrewes,  
 And ful of vyce and wikkéd thewes ;

702. P *ham* for *han*.

706. *Isaude*, Ysolt, the lover of Tristram ; cp. P. of R. l. 290.

712. All omit *al*, which Skeat inserts. P reads *as*, which is a contraction of *also*.

723. All read *gret*, *grete* ; Willert reads *gretest*.

731. All omit *ne*. Cx. Th. read *to do*.

732. P *The nye* for *Ne this* ; Cx. *Ne I ne wyl* ; Th. *I nyl* *graunts* *it yow*.

Wherfor we preyen you, a-rowe,  
 That our fame be swich y-knowe,  
 In allé thyng right as hit is.'  
 'I graunte hit yow,' quod she, 'y-wys.  
 But what art thou that seyst this tale,  
 That werest on thy hose a pale,  
 And on thy tipet swiche a belle ?'  
 'Madamé,' quod he, 'sooth to telle,  
 I am that ilk shrewe, y-wys,  
 That brende the temple of Isisid  
 In Athenés, lo, that citee.'  
 'And wherfor didest thou so ?' quod sh  
 'By my troth,' quod he, 'madame,  
 I woldé fayn han had a fame,  
 As other folk hadde in the touné, 750  
 Al-though they were of greet renoun ;  
 For hir vertu and hir thewes,  
 Thoughte I, as greet a fame han shrewes-  
 Though hit be noght—for shrewédnes  
 As godé folk han for goodness ;  
 And sith I may not have that oon,  
 That other nyl I noght forgooe.  
 And for to gette of Famed hire,  
 The temple sette I al a-fire.

Now do our loos be blowen swythe,  
 As wysly be thou ever blythe.'  
 'Gladly,' quod she. 'Thou Eolus,  
 Herestow not what they prayen us ?'  
 'Madamé, yis, ful wel,' quod he,  
 'And I wil trompen hit, parde !'  
 And tok his blakke trumpé faste,  
 And gan to puffen and to blaste,  
 Til hit was at the worldés ende.

With that I gan abouté wende,  
 For oon that stood right at my bak,  
 Me thoughté goodly to me spak,  
 And seyde, 'Frend, what is thy name ?  
 Artow come hider to han fame ?'  
 'Nay, for-sothé, frend !' quod I ;  
 'I cam noght hider, graunt mercy !  
 For no swich causé, by my heed !  
 Sufficeth me, as I were deed,  
 That no wyght have my name in hond  
 I woot my-self best how I stonde,

753. P ends with this line.

754. *Isidis*, Isis. Chaucer refers to Her-  
 tratus, who set fire to the temple of Diana  
 Ephesus on the night of Alexander the Gre-  
 birth.

757. F B *thirif* for *troth*.

767. Cx. Th. *As for . . . a fame here*.

'or what I drye or what I thynke,—  
 wol my selven al hit drynke, 790  
 erteyn for the more part,  
 as ferforth as I can myn art.  
 What doost thou here than?' quod he.  
 quod I, 'That wol I tellen the,  
 he causé why I stonde here.  
 om newé tydyngs for to lere,  
 om newé thynges, I not what,  
 ydynges other this or that,  
 if love, or swiché thinges glade.  
 or, certeynly, he that me made 800  
 o comen hider, seydé me  
 shuldé bothé here and see,  
 a this placé, wonder thynges;  
 ut these be no swiche tydynges  
 as I menté.' 'No?' quod he.  
 and I answerd, 'No, parde!  
 or wel I wysté ever yit,  
 th that first I haddé wit,  
 hat som folk han desiréd fame 810  
 ysté, and loos and name;  
 ut, certeynly I nysté how,  
 e where that Famé dwelldé, er now;  
 and eek of hir descripcioun,  
 e also hir condicioun,  
 e the ordre of hir dom,  
 into the tyme I hider com.'  
 '[Which] than, be lo, this tidynges,  
 hat [thee] now [thus] hider brynges,  
 hat thou hast herd?' quod he to me;  
 But now, no fors; for wel I see 820  
 /hat thou desirest for to here.  
 om forth, and stond no lenger here,  
 and I wol the, withoutén drede,  
 swich another placé lede,  
 her thou shalt héré many oon.'  
 Tho gan I forth with him to goon,

Out of the castel, soth to seye.  
 Tho saw I stonde in a valeye,  
 Under the castel, fasté by,  
 An hous, that *domus Dedali*, 830  
 That *Labyrinthus* clepéd is,  
 Nas maad so wonderlich y-wys,  
 Ne half so queyntéliche y-wrought.  
 And evermo, so swyft as thought,  
 This queynté hous abouté wente,  
 That nevermo hit stillé stente.  
 And therout com so greet a noise,  
 That had hit stonden upon Oise,  
 Men myghte hit han herd esely  
 To Rome, I trowé sikerly 840  
 And the noise which that I herde,  
 For al the world right so hit ferde,  
 As doth the routyng of the stoon,  
 That from thengyn is leten goon.  
 And al this hous of whiche I rede  
 Was maad of twiggés, falwé, rede  
 And grene eck, and som werén white,  
 Swiche as men to these cagés thwyte,  
 Or makén of these panyers,  
 Or ellés hottés or dossers; 850  
 But for the swough and for the twygges,  
 This house was also ful of gigges,  
 And also ful eek of chirkynges,  
 And of many other werkynge;  
 And eek this hous hath of entrees  
 As fele of leves as ben on trees  
 In somer, whan they grené been,  
 And on the roof men may yit seen  
 A thousand holés, and wel moo,  
 To leten wel the soun out go. 860  
 And eek by day in every tide  
 Been al the dorés opened wyde  
 And by nyght echoon unshette;  
 Ne porter ther is non to lette  
 No maner tydyngs in to pace;

793. F omits *than* and inserts *But* before *What*.  
 797. All read *thing, thinge*; read with Skeat  
*ynges*.  
 805. F B I *menté* of; Th. I *ment of*.  
 807. All read *wote* for *wyste*.  
 816. Cx. Th. *Knewe I not tyt*.  
 817-819. All read:

Why than be, lo, these tydynges  
 That thou now hider brynges  
 That thou hast herd.

cept reads *Whiche* for *Why* *than* and inserts  
*us* in l. 818; Koch reads:

Which than be, lo, these tydynges  
 That bringe thee hider, and these thynges  
 That thou wilt here.

830. *domus Dedali*, the labyrinth made by  
 Dædalus for Minos; cp. Ovid, *Met.* viii. 199 ff.  
 838. *Oise*, a northern tributary of the Seine.

839. F B Th. *Men*; Cx. I; probably the right  
 reading is *Me* (=one); Th. *myghte han herd hit*.

850. F B Cx. *hottes*; Th. *hutches*; Skeat  
 reads *hottes*.

851. F B Th. *That* for *But*.

854. So Cx. Th., but certainly wrongly; B  
 omits the line; F has only *As ful this is*.

856. F B *yn* for *on*. B omits *as before* *ben*  
 and inserts it before *of*; Cx. *As many as leves*  
*ben of trees*; Th. *As many as leves ben on*  
*trees*.

Ne never reste is in that place,  
That hit nys fild ful of tydynges,  
Other loude, or in whisprynges.  
And over alle the housés angles,  
Is ful of rounynges and of jangles, 870  
Of werres, of pees, of mariages,  
Of reste, of labour of viages,  
Of aboode, of deeth, of lyfe,  
Of love, of hate, acorde, of stryfe,  
Of loos, of lore, and of wynnynges,  
Of hele, of sekeness, of bilydynges,  
Of fairé wyndés, of tempestes,  
Of qwalme of folk, and eek of bestes ;  
Of dyvers transmutaciouns, 880  
Of estats and eek of regions ;  
Of trust, of drede, of jealousye,  
Of wyt, of wynnynges, of folye ;  
Of plentee, and of greet famyne,  
Of chepe, of derth, and of ruynes ;  
Of good or mys-governement,  
Of fire, of dyvers accident.

And lo, this hous of whiche I write,  
Siker be ye, hit nas not lyte ;  
For hit was sixty myle of lengthe,  
Al was the tymber of no strengthe ; 890  
Yet hit was foundéd to endure  
Whil that hit list to Aventure,—  
That is the moder of tydynges,  
As the see of welles and sprynges,—  
And hit was shapén lyk a cage.

' Certés,' quod I, ' in al myn age,  
Ne saw I swich a hous as this.'  
And as I wondréde me, y-wys,  
Upon this hous, tho war was I  
How that myn egle, fasté by, 900  
Was perched hye upon a stoon ;  
And I gan streighté to hym goon,  
And seyde thus : ' I preyé thee  
That thou a whil abidé me  
For Goddés love, and let me seen  
What wondrés in that placé been ;  
For yit paraunter I may lere

872. All *restes*.

876. Cx. Th. *lesynges* for *bilydynges*, perhaps rightly.

877. Cx. Th. *wether* and for *wynder*.

877. All and *eek* of *tempestes*, caught from line below.

886. All and *of*.

892. F B Th. *is* for *was*.

899. Cx. *Upon the hous that was ful hye*.

906. F B *this* for *that*.

Somme good therin, or sumwhat here  
That leef me were, or that I wente.'

' Peter ! that is myn entente,'  
Quod he to me ; ' therfor I dwelle,  
But certeyn, oon thyng I thee telle,  
That, but I bringé thee therinne,  
Ne shalt thou never cunné gynne  
To come into hit, out of doute,  
So faste hit whirleth, lo, aboute.  
But sith that Jovés, of his grace,  
As I have seyde, wol thee solace  
Fynally with thise thynges,  
Unkouthé syghtés and tydynges,  
To passé with thyn hevynesse,  
Swiche routhe hath he of thy distress  
That thou suffrest debonairly,  
And wost thy-selven utterly,  
Desperat of all maner blis,  
Sith that Fortune hath maad a-mys  
The swote of al thyn hertés reste  
Languisshe and eek in poynt to brest  
That he through his myghty merite,  
Wol do thee an ese, al be hit lyte,  
And yaf expresse commandement,  
To whiche I am obedient,  
To furthré thee with al my myght,  
And wysse and teché thee aright,  
Wher thou maist most tydynges here  
Thou shalt anon heer many oon lere

With this worde he right anon  
Henté me up bytwene his toon,  
And at a wyndowe in me broghte,  
That in this hous was, as me thoghte,—  
And therwithal me thoghte hit stente  
And no-thing hit abouté wente,—  
And me sette in the flore adoun.  
But which a congregacioun  
Of folk, as I saw rome aboute,

908. F B *theroon*.

910. Cx. Th. insert *now* after *that*.

914. Cx. Th. *comes the gyn*.

919. So all authorities. The line is at one syllable short.

925. F B *Desperat of alle blis*.

927. F *frot* ; B *foot* ; Cx. Th. *swote* ; *frust*.

930. Cx. *the an* ; F *than* ; Th. B *the*. omits *Wol* and inserts *wyl* after *he* in line a

931. All insert *is* after *yaf*.

936. F B *Shallow here anon* ; Cx. Th. *anon*, perhaps rightly ; Skeat *anon heer*.

938. F B omit this line.

940. Cx. *Whyche on*.

944. Cx. *whyche a grete* ; Th. *suche a g*

Some within and some withoute,  
 Was never seen, ne shal ben eft;  
 That, certès, in the world nys left  
 So many formed by Nature,  
 Ne deed so many a créature;  
 That wel unethe in that place  
 Hadde I oon foot brede of space;  
 And every wyght that I saw there  
 Rounéde everych in otherés ere  
 A newé tydyng prevély,  
 Or ellés tolde al openly  
 Right thus, and seydé, 'Nost not thou  
 That is betid, late or now?'  
 'Nó,' quod he, 'tél me what.'  
 And than he tolde him this and that, 950  
 And swor therto that hit was sooth,—  
 'Thus hath he sayd,' and 'Thus he dooth,'  
 'Thus shal hit be,' 'Thus herde I seye,'  
 'That shal be found,' 'That dare I leye.'  
 That al the folk that is a-lyve  
 Ne han the connyng to discryve  
 The thynges that I herdé there,  
 What aloude, and what in ere.  
 But al the wonder-most was this:  
 Whan oon hadde herd a thyng y-wys, 970  
 He com forth to another wight,  
 And gan him tellén, anoon-right,  
 The samé that to him was told,  
 Or hit a forlong-way was old,  
 But gan somewhat for to eche  
 To this tidying in his speche  
 More than ever hit spoken was.  
 And nat so some departéd nas  
 Tho fro him, that he ne mette  
 With the thriddle; and, or he lette 980

946. F B omit this line, which is probably corrupt. Koch *Many a thousand in a route*.

956. Cx. Th. insert it before *tolde*.

958. Cx. Th. to right now.

959. All *quod he*; Willert *quod the other*.

963. All insert and before each *Thus*; Cx. Th. And *thus (this) shall be*.

971. F B *comen forth right to*; Cx. *come forth unto*; Th. *Come alwyght to*. Probably right in the original of F B had the word *forth* written above it because of its recurrence in the next line, and it then crept into the text as well as right. This theory is supported by the reading of Th., which is an edited text.

973. F B Th. *that him was*; Cx. *that was to him*.

976. F B Th. *this for his*.

977. F B *More than hit ever was*.

979. F B *That he fro . . . thoo*, etc.

Any stounde, he tolde him als;  
 Were the tidying sooth or fals,  
 Yit wolde he telle hit nathelees,  
 And evermo with more encrees  
 Than hit was erst. Thus north and southe  
 Went every [thyng] fro mouth to mouthe,  
 And that encresyng evermo,  
 As fire is wont to quykke and go  
 From a sparké spronge amys,  
 Til al a citee brent up is. 990

And whan that was ful up-spronge,  
 And woxén more on every tonge  
 Than ever hit was, [hit] went anoon  
 Up to a wyndowe out to goon  
 Or, but hit myghte out ther pace,  
 Iit gan out crepe at som crevace,  
 And fleigh forth fasté for the nones.

And somtyme saw I ther, at oncs  
 A lesyng and a sad soth-sawe,  
 That gonne of aventure drawe 1000  
 Out to a wyndowe for to pace;  
 And, when they mettén in that place,  
 They were a-checkké bothé two,  
 And neither of hem myghte out go;  
 For other so they gonné croude,  
 Til eche of hem gan crién loude,  
 'Lat me go first!' 'Nay, but lat me!  
 And here I wol ensuren thee  
 Wyth the nones that thou wolt do so,  
 That I shal never fro thee go, 1010  
 But be thyn owné sworén brother!  
 We wil medle us eche with other,  
 That no man, be they never so wrothe,  
 Shal han that oon [of] two, but bothe  
 At oncs, al beside his leve,  
 Come we a-morwé or on eve,  
 Be we cried or stille y-routed.'  
 Thus saw I false and sooth compouned.  
 Togeder flec for oo tidyinge.

Thus out at holés gonné wrynge 1020

986. F B *monthes for thyng*; Cx. Th. *tydyng*; Skeat *word*.

991. F B *y-spronge*.

993. All read and for second *hit*.

999. Cx. *soth sayd sawe*, perhaps rightly.

1004. F B *most (must)*.

1005. Cx. omits l. 1005 to the end, but prints twelve spurious lines as conclusion.

1006. Th. *For ake other they gonne so*.

1009. Th. omits *the*.

1012. Th. *in for with*.

1014. F *han on two*; B omits *of two*; Th. *hane one two*.

## FIRST VERSION

And if that oldé bokis weryn aweye,  
 I-loryn were of remembrance the keye.  
 Wel oughte us thanne *on oldé bokys leve*,  
 There *as there is* non othyr *asay be* preve;  
 And as for me, thow that *myn wil be* lite,  
 On bokys for to rede I me delyte,  
 And in myn herte have hem in reverence,  
 And to hem yeve *swich lust and swich*  
 credence

That ther is *wel onethé* gamé non  
 That from myne bokys make[th] me to gon  
 But it be *other upon* the halyday,  
*Or ellis, in the joly tyme* of May,  
 Whan that I here the *small* foulis synge,  
 And that the flouris gynné for to sprynge,—  
 Farwel myn *stodye, as lastynge that sesoun!*

Now have I *therto* this condycoun, 40  
 That of alle the flouris in the mede  
 Thanne love I most these flourys white  
 and rede,

Swyche as men callé dayesis in oure  
 toun.

To hem have I so gret affecioun,  
 As I seyde erst, whan comyn is the may,  
 That in myn bed ther dawith me no day  
 That I ne am up and walkynge in the mede,  
 To sen these flouris agen the sunne to-  
 sprede,

Whan it uprysith be *the morwe schene*, 49  
*The longe day thus walkynge in the grene.*

*And whan the sunne begynnys for to weste,  
 Thanne closeth it, and drawith it to reste,  
 So sore it is-a-ferid of the nyght,  
 Til on the morwe that it is dayis lyght.  
 This dayeseye, of allé flouris flour,  
 Fulfyl of vertu and of alle honour,  
 And evere i-liké fayr and frosh of hewe,  
 As wol in wyntyr as in somyr newe,  
 Fayn wolde I preysyn if I coude aright,  
 But, wo is me! it lyth nat in myn myght*

52-59. Cp. B 60-67.

43. *mor, F her.*

50-52, 59-60, 64-72. New lines.

## SECOND VERSION, B

And if that oldé bokés were awey,  
 Y-lorné were of remembraunce the key.  
 Wel ought us, thanne, honouren and beleve  
 These bokés, ther we han noon other  
 preve.

And as for me, though that I konn  
 but lyte,

On bokés for to rede I me delyte, 3  
 And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence  
 And in myn herte have hem in reverenc  
 So hertely, that ther is gamé noon  
 That fro my bokés maketh me to goon,  
 But it be seldom on the holiday,  
 Save, certeynly, whan that the mont  
 of May

Is comen, and that I here the foulés syng  
 As comen, that the flourés gynnyn for to  
 sprynge,—

Farewel my boke, and my devocion!

Now have I thanne *suche a condicio*  
 That of alle the flourés in the mede,  
 Than love I most thise flourés white ar  
 rede,

Suche as men callen dayesyes in our tow  
 To hem have I so grete affecioun,  
 As I seyde erst, whan comen is the Ma  
 That in my bed ther daweth me no day  
 That I nam up and walkynge in the med  
 To seen this floure agein the sonnéd spred  
 Whan it uprysith erly by the morwe;  
 That blisful sighté softneth al mysorwe,  
 So glad am I, whan that I have presen  
 Of it, to doon it allé reverence,  
 As she that is of allé flourés flour,  
 Fulfilléd of al vertue and honour,  
 And evere iliké faire, and fresshe of hev  
 And I love it, and evere yliké newe,  
 And ever shal, til that myn herté dye;  
 Al swere I nat, of this I wol nat lye;  
 Ther lovéd no wight hotter in his lyve.

And, whan that it is eve, I renné bly  
 As some as evere the sonnéd gynneth wet  
 To seen this flour, how it wol nat re  
 For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknes  
 Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the brightne  
 Of the sonnéd, for ther it wol uncloze.  
 Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme  
 prose,  
 Suffisant this flour to preysen alyght!

## FIRST VERSION

For wel I wot that *folk* han herebeforn 61  
 Of makynge robyn and lad away the corn,  
 And] I come aftyr, gleyngye here and  
 ther,  
 And am ful glad if I may fynde an er  
 Of ony goodly word that *they* han laft.  
 And if it happè me rehersen eft  
 That *they* han in here frosché songis said,  
*I hope that they wole* nat ben evele a-payde,  
*Siths it is seyd in fortheryng* and honour  
*Of hem that cythir servyn* lef or flour; 70  
*For trustyth wel I ne have nat undyrtake*  
*As of the lef agayn the flour to make,*  
*Ne of the flour to make ageyn the lef,*  
 No more than of the corn agen the shef;  
 For as to me is lefere non, ne lothere,  
 I am withholdè yit with never nothire;  
 I not who servyth lef ne who the flour.  
*That nys nothyng the entent of myn*  
*labour;*

For this *werk* is al of anothyr tunne 79  
 Of oldè story, er swich *strif* was begunne.  
 But wherfore that I spak to yeve credence  
 To *bokys* olde and don hem reverence  
*Is for men schulde autoriteis beleve,*  
*There as there lyth non othyr asaybe preve.*  
*For myn entent is, or I fro you fare,*  
*The nakede tixt in Englis to declare*  
*Of manye a story, or ellis of manye a geste,*  
*As autours seyn—lowyth hem if you leste.*

61-70. Cp. B 73-82.

71-80. Cp. B 188-196.

81-84. Cp. B 97-100.

79. *With the Leaf or with the Flour.* This appears to be the earliest allusion to the dispute as to the merits of the Flower and the Leaf on which follower of Chaucer afterwards wrote the Poem with that title.

83-96. New lines.

96. *he* (a), *B* only; rest om.

100. *they*, Trin.; Arch. Seld. *man*; F om.; *it men*.

107-120. New lines.

120. *el*, om. F.

## SECOND VERSION, B

But helpeth ye that han konnyng and  
 myght,

Ye lovers, that kan make of sentement;  
 In this case ought ye be diligent 70  
 To forthren me somewhat in my labour,  
 Whethir ye ben with the Leaf or with  
 the Flour;

For wel I wot, that ye han her-biforne  
 Of makynge ropen, and lad away the corne;  
 And I come after, gleyngye here and there,  
 And am ful glad if I may fynde an ere  
 Of any goodly word that ye han left.  
 And though it happen me rehersen eft  
 That ye han in your fresshé songes sayede,  
 Forbereth me, and beth not evele apayede,  
 Syn that ye see I do it in the honour 81  
 Of love, and eke in service of the flour  
 Whom that I serve as I have witte or myght.  
 She is the clere nesse and the verray lyght,  
 That in this derké worlde me wynt and  
 ledyth,

The herte in-with my sorful brest yow  
 dredith,

And loveth so sore, that ye ben verrayly  
 The maistresse of my witte, and nothing I.  
 My worde, my werk, is knyht so in youre  
 bond

That as an harpe obeith to the hond, 90  
 That maketh it soun after his fyngerynge,  
 Ryghtso mowe ye oute of myn herté bringe  
 Swich vois, ryght as yow lyst, to laughe  
 or pleyne;

Be ye my gide, and lady sovereyne.  
 As to my erthely god, to yowe I calle,  
 Bothe in this werke, and in my sorwes alle.

But wherfore that I spake to yive  
 credence

To oldè stories, and doon hem reverence,  
 And that men mosten moré thyng beleve  
 Then they may seen at eye or ellés preve,  
 That shal I seyn, whanne that I see my  
 tyme— 101

I may nat al attonés speke in ryme.  
 My besy gost, that thursteth alwey newe,  
 To seen this flour so yong, so freshe of  
 hewe,

Constreynéd me with so gledy desire,  
 That in myn herte I feelé yet the fire,  
 That madé me to ryse er it wer day,



## FIRST VERSION

*Whan passed was almost the monyth of May*  
*And I hadde romed, al the somerys day, 90*  
*The gréne medewe, of which that I yow tolde,*  
*Upon the frosché dayeseie to beholde,*  
*And that the sonne out of the south gan weste*  
*And closede was the flour and gon to reste*  
*For derknesse of the nyht of which sche dradde,*  
*Hom to myn hous, fulswifly, I me spadde,*  
*And in a lytyl erber that I have,*  
*I-benchede newe with turvis, frosche i-grave,*  
*I had men schuldé me myn couché make ;*  
*For deynté of the newé somerys sake, 100*  
*I had hem strowé flouris on my bed.*  
*Whan I was layd and hadde myn eyen hid*  
*I fel aslepe withinne an hour or two.*  
*Me mette how I was in the medewe tho,*  
*And that I romede in that samé gyse,*  
*To sen that flour, as ye han herd devyse.*  
*Fayr was this medewe, as thoughte me, overal ;*  
*With flouris sote enbroudit was it al,*  
*As for to speke of gomme, or erbe, or tre,*  
*Comparisoun may non i-makede be ; 110*  
*For it surmountede pleynly alle odours.*  
*And of riché beuté allé flourys.*  
*Forgetyn hadde the erthe his pore estat*  
*Of wyntyre, that hym nakede made and mat,*  
*And with his swerd of cold so sore hadde grevyd :*  
*Now hadde the tempresonneal that relevyd,*  
*And clotheþ hym in gréne al newe ageyn.*  
*The smale foulis, of the seson fayn,*  
*That from the panter and the net ben skapid, 119*  
*Upon the foulere, that hem made a-wapid*

89-107. Cp. B 100, 180-182, 197-212.  
 108-137. Cp. B 119-151.

108. *the*, om. F.

112. *that*, om. F.

113. *the best*, Taurus or the Bull.

114. *Agenours doghtre*, Europa.

116. *all*, F, G.

117. *the*, F, G.

## SECOND VERSION, B

And this was now the firste morwe of May,  
 With dredful hert, and glad devocion  
 For to ben at the resurreccion 112  
 Of this flour, whan that it shulde uncloze  
 Awayne the sonne, that roos as redeas rose  
 That in the brest was of the beste, that day  
 That Agenorés doghtre hadde away.  
 And doun on knes anon-ryght I me sette  
 And as I koude, this fresshé flour I grette  
 Knelyng alwey, til it unclosed was,  
 Upon the smale, softé, swoté gras,  
 That was with flourés swote enbrouded a  
 Of swich swetnesse, and swich odor  
 over-al, 113  
 That for to speke of gomme, or herbe, or  
 tree,  
 Comparisoun may noon y-makéd be ;  
 For it surmounteth pleynly alle odoure  
 And of riché beauté allé flouras.  
 Forgeten had the erthe his pore estate  
 Of wyntir, that him naked made and mat  
 And with his swerd of coldesore greve  
 Now hath the atempresonneal that relev  
 That naked was, and clad it new agayn  
 The smale foulés, of the sesoun fayne,  
 That of the panter and the nette bescap  
 Upon the foweler, that hem made a-whap  
 In wynter, and distroyéd hadde h  
 broode,  
 In his dispite hem thoghte it did hem gox  
 To synge of hym, and in hir songe disp  
 The foulé cherle, that, for his covetyt  
 Had hem betrayéd with his sophistrye  
 This was hir songe, 'The foweler  
 deffye,  
 And al his crafte.' And sommés songend  
 Layés of love, that joye it was to here,  
 In worshipynge and in preysing of  
 make ;  
 And, for the newé bliaful somers sake  
 Upon the branchés ful of blosmés sc  
 In hire delyt, they turnéd hem ful oft  
 And songen, 'Blesséd be Seynt Valenty  
 For on his day I chees you to be my  
 Withouten répynting myne herté swe  
 And therewithal hire bekés gonnen me  
 Yeldyng honour and humble obeysan  
 To love, and diden hire othere observan  
 That longeth onto love, and to nature

## FIRST VERSION

In wyntyre, and destroyed hadde hire brood,  
In his dispit hem thoughte it dede hem  
good

To synge of hym, and in here song despise  
The foulde cherl that, for his coveytyse,  
Hadde hem betrayed with his sophistrye.  
This was here song 'The foulere we defye.'  
Some songyn on the [ ] *braunchis* clere  
[Layes] of love, that joye it was to here,  
in *worschips* and in preysyng of hire make,  
and [for] the newe blysful somerys sake.  
And [sungyn] 'Blyssede be seynt Valentyn,  
For] at his day I ches yow to be myn, 122  
Withoute répentynge, myn herté swete!  
And therwithal here bekys gunné mete,  
Veldyng] honour and humble obey-  
saunces,

And after dedyn othere observauncys,  
Ryht [longynge] onto love and to natures:  
So eche of hem to cryaturys.

*This song to herken I dede al myn entent,  
Forwhy I mette I wisté what they ment.  
Tyl at this laste a larké song above, 121  
'I se,' quod she, 'the myghty god of love.  
Lo, yond he comyth. I se his wyngis sprede.'  
Tho gan I token endeloung the mede  
And saw hym come and in his honda quene  
Clothed in ryal abyte, al of grene.*

Lines 127-138 are very imperfect in the unique MS., which omits several words and reads *and that for this* in l. 128, *of for* in l. 130, *That for And* in l. 131, *The honour and the humble* in l. 135. L. 138 seems hopeless.

144-166. Cp. B 211-234.

123-127. New lines.

124. *th*, Arch. Seld. *that*; F<sup>2</sup> *it nat*.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Construeth that as yow lyst, I do no cure.  
And tho that haddé don unkyndé-  
nesse,—

As doth the tydif, for newfangelnesse,—  
Besoghté mercy of hir trespassynge,  
And humbly songen hir répentynge,  
And sworn on the blomés to be trewe,  
So that hire makés wolde upon hem rewe,  
And at the lasté maden hir acorde. 129  
Al founde they Daunger for a tyme a lord,  
Yet Pitee, thurgh his strongé gentil myght,  
Foryaf, and madé Mercy passen Ryght,  
Thurgh Innocence, and ruled Curtesye.  
But I ne clepe it innocence folye,  
Ne fals pitee, for vertue is the mene;  
As Ethike seith, in swich maner I mene.  
And thus thise fowelés, voide of al malice,  
Acordeden to love, and lasten vice  
Of hate, and songen alle of oon acorde,  
'Welcome, Somer, oure governour and  
lorde.' 130

And Zepherus and Flora gentilly  
Yaf to the flourés, softe and tenderly,  
Hir swooté breth, and made hem for to  
sprede,  
As god and goddesse of the floury mede.  
In whiche me thought I myghté, day by day,  
Dwellen alwey, the joly month of May,  
Withouten slepe, withouten mete or  
drynke.

Adoun ful softly I gan to synke,  
And lenyng on myn elbowe and my syde,  
The longé day I shoop me for to abide, 126  
For nothing ellis, and I shal nat lye,  
But for to loke upon the dayésie,  
That men by resoun wel it callé may  
The dayésie, or elles the ye of day,  
The emperice, and flouré of flourés alle.  
I pray to God that fairé mote she falle,  
And alle that loven flourés, for hire sake!  
But, natheles, ne wene nat that I make  
In preysyng of the Flour agayn the Leaf,  
No more than of the corne agayn the sheef;  
For as to me nys lever noon, ne lother, 121  
I nam witholden yit with never nother.  
Ne I not who serveth Leaf, ne who the  
Flour.

Wel browken they hir service or labour!  
For this thing is al of another tonne,

## FIRST VERSION

A frette of goold sche haddé next hyre heer  
 And upon that a whit corone sche beer,  
 With *manys flourys*, and I schal nat lye;  
 For al the world ryght as the dayseye 150  
 I-corounede is with whit levys lite,  
*Swiche* were the *flourys* of hire corone  
 white.

For of o perle fyn and oriental  
 Hyre whit coroun was i-makyd al.  
 For which the whit coroun above the grene  
 Máde hire lyk a dayseye for to sene,  
 Considerede ek *the* fret of gold above.  
 I-clothéd was this myhty god of love  
 Of silk, i-broudede ful of grené grevys.  
*A garland on his hed of rosé levys,* 160  
*Silkid al with tylle flourys newe;*  
*But of his face I can not seyn the howe,*  
*For sakyrlly his face schon so bryhte*  
*That with the gleam astoned was the syhte,*

149. *manys*, text *mane*, with the *n* added as a correction.

149. A new line.

151-152. F has these lines in reverse order, perhaps rightly.

157. And, Arch. Seld. and ff.

161-162. New lines.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Of oldé storye, er swiche thinge  
 begonne.

Whan that the sonne out of the south  
 weste,

And that this flour gan close, and goor  
 reste,

For derkenesse of the nyght, the which  
 dredde,

Home to myn house full swiftly I mespe

To goon to reste, and erly for to ryse,

To seen this flour to-sprede, as I devy

And in a litel herber that I have,

That benchéd was on turvés fresch y-gra

I bad men sholdé me my couché maké

For deyntee of the newé someres sake

I bad hem strawen flourés on my bed

Whan I was leyde, and hadde myn e  
 hed,

I fel on slepe, in-with an houre or tw

Me metté how I lay in the medewe tho,

To seen this flour that I love so and dre

And from a-fer come walkyng in the m

The god of Love, and in his hand a que

And she was clad in real habite grene

A fret of gold she haddé next her hee

And upon that a whit crowne she be

With flourouns smalé, and I shal nat l

For al the world ryght as a dayseye

Y-corouned is with whit levés lyte,

So were the flourouns of hire corou  
 white;

For of o perlé, fyne, oriental,

Hire whit coroune was i-maké al,

For which the whit coroune above

grene

Máde hire lyke a daysie for to sene,

Considered eke hir fret of golde above

Y-clothéd was this myhty god of L

In silke enbrouded, ful of grené grev

In-with a fret of redé rosé levés,

The freshest syn the world was first

gonne.

His gilté here was corownd with a sonne

In stede of golde, for hevynesse and wyg

Therwith me thought his face schon

bryhte

That wel unnethés myght I him behol

And in his bande me thought I saugh

holde

## FIRST VERSION

*1 furlongwey I myghte hym not beholde.*  
*But at the laste in hande I saw hym holde*  
 Two fry dartis, as the gleeeds rede.  
 And aungellychhyse wengis *gan he sprede.*  
 And al-be that men seyn that blynd is he,  
 Algate me thoughte he myghte *wel i-see,*  
 For sternely on me he gan beholde, <sup>171</sup>  
 So that his lokynge doth myn herté colde.  
 And be the hond he held *the noble quene,*  
 Corowned with whit and clothe al in  
 grene,

So womanly, so benygne and so meke  
 That in this world, thow that men woldé  
 seke,

Hálf hire beuté schuldé men nat fynde  
 In cryature that formede is be Kynde.  
 Hire namé was Alceste *the debonayre.*  
 I preye to God that evere falle *schefayre,* <sup>180</sup>  
 For ne haddé confort been of hire presence  
 I hadde be ded withoutyn ony defence,  
 For dred of Lovys wordys and his chere,  
 As, whan tyme is, hereafter ye schal here.  
 Byhynde this god of love, upon *this grene,*  
 I saw comynge of ladyis nynetene,  
 In ryal abyte, a ful esy pas,  
 And after hem come of wemen swich a tras,  
 That syn that God Adam [hadde] made  
 of erthe

The threddé part of *women,* ne the ferthe,  
 Ne wende I not by possibilite <sup>191</sup>  
 Haddyn evere in this [wydé] world i-be.  
 And trewe of love these wemen were echon.  
 Now whether was that a wondyr thyng,  
 or non,

That ryht anon as that they gunne espye  
 This flour whiche that I clepe the dayseye,  
 Ful so deynly they stytyn alle atonys  
 And knelede adoun, as it were for the nonys.  
*And after that they wentyn in cumpas,*  
*Daunsynge about this flour an esy pas, 200*  
*And songyn, as it were in carole-nyse,*  
*This balade, whiche that I schal you devyse.*

Hyd, Absalon, thyne gylt tresses clere,  
 Ester, ley thow thy meknesse al adoun,

167-178. Cp. B 235-246.

167. For *two fry* the MS. reads *the fery*, and  
 in l. 178 *with* for *doth*.

179-198. Cp. B 276-295.

203-224. Cp. B 299-370.

## SECOND VERSION, B

Two fry darts, as the gledés rede,  
 And aungelyke his wyngés saugh I sprede.  
 And, al be that men seyn that blynd is he,  
 Algate me thoughté that he myghté se ;  
 For sternely on me he gan byholde, <sup>139</sup>  
 So that his loking doth myn herté colde.  
 And by the hande he held *this noble quene,*  
 Crownéd with white, and clothéd al in  
 grene,

So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,  
 That in this world, thogh that men woldé  
 seke,

Hálf hire beuté shulde men nat fynde  
 In créature that forméd is by Kynde.  
 And therfore may I seyn, as thynketh me,  
 This songe in preysyng of this lady fre.

Hyde, Absalon, thy gylt tresses clere ;  
 Ester, ley thou thymekenesse al adoun ; <sup>130</sup>  
 Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere ;  
 Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,  
 Make of youre wifhode no comparysoun ;  
 Hyde ye youre beautés, Ysoude and  
 Eleyne ;

My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Thy fairé body lat it nat appere,  
 Lavyne ; and thou Lucrese of Romé toun,  
 And Polixene, that boghten love so dere,  
 And Cleopatre, with al thy passyoun,  
 Hyde ye your trouthe of love, and your  
 renoun, <sup>160</sup>  
 And thou, Tesbe, that hast of love suche  
 peyne ;

My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

Hero, Dido, Laudómia, alle yfere,  
 And Phillis, hangyng for thy Demophon,  
 And Canace, espiéd by thy chere,  
 Ysiphile, betrayéd with Jason,

245. *Half*, Arch. Seid. *Half ef*.

247-248. New lines.

252. *Marcia Catoun*, Cato's daughter Marcia,  
 who would not marry a second time.

257. *Lavyne*, Lavinia, wife of Aeneas.

258. *Polixene*, Polyxena, daughter of Priam,  
 betrothed to Achilles.

263. *Laudomia*, Laodamia.

264. *Phillis*, see ll. 2394-2560.

265. *Canace*, cp. *Canis Tales*, B 78.

266. *Ysiphile*, Hypsipyle, see ll. 1368-1377.

## FIRST VERSION

Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere ;  
Penelope and Marcia Catoun,  
Mak of youre wyfhod no comparisoun ;  
Hyde ye youre beuteis, Ysoud and Elene :  
*Alceste is here that al that may destene.*

Thyn fayrè body lat it nat apeere, <sup>210</sup>  
Laveyne, and thow, Lucesse of Romé  
town,

And Pollexene, that boughtè love so dere,  
Ek Cleopatre with al thyn passiou, n  
Hide ye youre trouth *in* love and youre  
renoun ;

And thow Tysbe, that hast *for* love swich  
peyne ;

*Alceste is here that al that may desteyne.*

Herro, Dido, Laodomya, alle in fere,  
Ek Phillis hangynge for thyn Demophoun,  
And Canace espied be thyn chere,  
Ysiphile bytrayed with Jasoun, <sup>220</sup>  
Mak of youre trouthe *in love* no bost, ne  
soun ;

Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, *ne pleyne* ;  
*Alceste is here that al that may disteyne.*

When that this balade al i-songyn was,  
*Upon the softe and softe grenè gras*  
They settyn hem ful softly adoun,  
*By ordere alle in cumpas, alle inveroun.*  
Fyrst sat the god of love and *thanne* this  
queene

With the whitè corone clad in grene,  
And sithyn al the remenant by and by, <sup>230</sup>  
As they werè of *degre*, ful curteysly ;  
Ne nat a word was spokyn in that place  
The mountenaunce of a furlongwey of  
space.

*I larynge faste by, undyr a bentle,*  
Abod to knowè what this peple mente,  
As stille as ony ston, til at the laste  
The god of love on me his eyè caste  
And seyde 'Who restith there?' and I  
"answerde

Unto his ansyng, when that *I hym* herde,  
And seyde 'Sore, it am I,' and cam hym  
here <sup>240</sup>

## SECOND VERSION, B

Maketh of your trouthe neythir boost  
soun,

Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, ye twey  
My lady cometh, that al thys may dystey

This balade may ful wel y-songen l  
As I have seyde erst, by my lady free ;  
For certeynly al thise mowe nat suffis  
To apperen wyth my lady in no wyse  
For as the sonnè wole the fire disteyr  
So passeth al my lady sovereyne,  
That is so good, so faire, so debonayr  
I prey to God that ever falle hire fair  
For naddè comfort ben of hire presen  
I hadde ben dede, withouten any defe  
For drede of Lovè wordès, and his ch  
As, when tyme is, hereafter ye shal h  
Behynde this god of Love upon  
grene

I saugh comyng of ladyès nynetene  
In real habite, a ful esy paas ;  
And after hem come of wymen swic  
traas,

That syn that God Adam hadde mad  
erthe,

The thriddè part of mankynde, or the fer  
Ne wende I nat by possibillitee,  
Had ever in this widè worlde y-bee ;  
And trewe of love thise women were ech

Now whether was that a wonder th  
or non,

That ryght anon, as that they gonne es  
Thys flour, which that I clepe the dayè  
Ful sodeynly they stynten al attones,  
And knelède doune, as it were for the noi  
And songen with o vois, 'Heel and hor  
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this f  
That bereth our alder pris in figuring  
Hire whitè corowne beryth the with  
yngè ?'

And with that word, a-compas envirc  
They setten hem ful softly adoun.  
First sat the god of Love, and syth  
queene

258. *Ypermystre*, Hypermnestra, see II. 1

258. *Adriane*, Ariadne, see II. 255-257.

271. *by*, conspiring.

271-275. New lines.

205-207. New lines.

## FIRST VERSION

And salewede hym. Quod he, 'What  
dost thou her

*In myn presence, and that so boldely?*

For it were better worthi, trewely,

A worm to com in[to] myn syht than thou!

'And why, sere?' quod I, 'and it lykē yow!'

For thou,' quod he, 'art therto nothyng  
able,

*lyne servauntis been alle wyse and hon-  
ourable.*

how art myn mortal fo and me warreyest,

and of myne oldē servauntis thou  
mysseyest,

and hynderest hem with thy translacyoun,

and lettist folk to han devocyoun 251

to servyn me, and haldist it folye

*'to traste on me: thou mayst it nat denye.*

For in pleyn tixt, it nedyth nat to glose,

how hast translaid the Romauns of the

Rose

That is an eresye ageyns myn lawe,

and makyst wise folk fro me withdrawe.

*And thynkist in thyn wit, that is ful cole,*

*That he nys but a verray propre fole 259*

*That loveth paramours to harde and hote.*

*Wel wot I therby thou begynnyst dote,*

*As oldē folis, whan here spyrte faylyth*

*Thanne blame they folk and wete nat what*

*hem eatlyth.*

Hast thou nat mad in Englysh ek the bok

How that Criseyde Troylis forsok.

*In schewyng how that women han don mis.*

*But nathēles answers me now to this,*

*Why noldist thou as wel a seyde goodnes*

*Of women, as thou hast seyde wekedenes!*

*Was there no goodē matyr in thyn mynde,*

*Ne in alle thy bokys ne coudist thou nat*

*fynde 271*

Sum story of women that were goode and

*trews;*

*Yis, God wot, sixty bokys, olde and newe,*

*Hast thou thyself, alle ful of storys grete,*

*That bothe Romayns and ek Grekis trote*

*Of sundry women, whiche lyf that they*

*laddē,*

*And evere in hundredes goode ageyn on*

*laddē.*

*This knowith God, and alle clerkis eke,*

## SECOND VERSION, B

With the whītē corowne, clad in grene;  
And sithen al the remenaunt by and by,  
As they were of cstaat, ful curteysly,  
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place,  
The mountaunce of a furlong wey of  
space.

I, knelyng by this floure, in good entente  
Abode, to knowen what this peple mente,  
As stille as any ston; til at the laste 310  
This god of Love on me his eighen caste,  
And seyde, 'Who kneleth there?' And  
I answerde

Unto his askyng, whan that I it herde,  
And seyde, 'It am I,' and come him nere,  
And salwed him. Quod he, 'What  
dostow here,

So nygh myn ownē floure, so boldely?

It werē better worthy trewely

A worme to neghen ner my flour than  
thow.'

'And why, sire,' quod I, 'and it lykē yow?'

'For thou,' quod he, 'art therto nothing  
able. 320

It is my relyke, digne and delytable,

And thou my foo, and al my folke werreyest,

And of myn oldē servauntis thou mysseyest,

And hynderest hem, with thy translacioun,

And lettest folke from hire devocioun

To servē me, and holdest it folye

To servē Love. Thou maist it nat denye,

For in pleyn text, withouten nede of glose,

Thou hast translated the Romaunce of the

Rose,

That is an heresye ayeins my lawe, 330

And makest wise folke fro me withdrawe;

And of Cresyde thou hast seyde as the lyte,

That maketh men to wommen lassē triste,

That ben as trewe as ever was any steel?

Of thyn answer avise the ryght weel,

For thogh that thou reneyed hast my lay,

As other wrecches han doon many a day,

By Seyntē Venus, that my moder ys,

If that thou lyve, thou shalt repenten this

So cruelly, that it shal wele be sene. 340

321. A new line.

330. This line clearly points to Chaucer having translated from the continuation of the *Roman de la Rose* by Jean de Meung as well as from the unfinished original by Guillaume Lorris.

335. 348-492. New lines.

## FIRST VERSION

*That usyn sweche materis for to seke.  
 What seyth Valerye, Titus, or Claudyan,  
 What seyth Jerome agayns Jovynyan, 281  
 How clenè maydenys and howtrewè wywys,  
 How stelefaste wedewys durynge alle here  
 lyvys,*

*Telleth Jerome, and that nat of a fewe  
 But, I dar seyn, an hunderede on a rewe,  
 That it is pitè for to rede, and rounthe,  
 The wo that they endurè for here trouthe.  
 For to hyre lovè werè they so trewe,  
 That rather than they wolè take a newe,  
 They chosè to be ded in sundery wyse, 290  
 And deiedyn, as the story wele devyse.  
 And some were brend and some were cut  
 the hals,*

*And some dreynkt, for they woldyn not be  
 fals;*

*For allè kepid they here maydynhed,  
 Or ellis wedlok, or here wedeweched.  
 And this thyng was nat kept for holynesse,  
 But al for verray vertu and clennesse,  
 And for men schuldè set on hem no lak;  
 And yit they werè hethene, at the pak,  
 That were so sore a-drad of allè schame. 300  
 These oldè wemen keptè so here name,  
 That in this world I trowe men shal nat  
 fynde*

*A man that cowlè be so trewe and kynde  
 As was the lestè woman in that tyde!  
 What seyth also the epistelle of Ovyde  
 Of trewè wywys and of here labour?  
 What Vincent in his Estorial Myrour?  
 Ek al the world of autourys maystow here,  
 Cristene and hethene, trete of swich matere,  
 It nedyth nat al day thus for to endite. 310  
 But yit I seye what evelyth the to wryte  
 The draf of storyis and forgete the corn?  
 Be Seynt Venus, of whom that I was born,  
 Althow [that] thow reney[ed] hast myn  
 lay,*

*As othere oldè folys manye a day,  
 Thow shalt repente it, that it schal be sene.  
 Thanne spak Alceste the worthyere queene,  
 And seyde, 'God, ryght of youre curteysye*

## SECOND VERSION, B

*Tho spake this lady, clothèd al  
 greene,*

*And seyde, 'God, ryght of youre curtes  
 Ye moten herken if he can replye  
 Agayns al this that ye have to him ment  
 A god ne sholdè nat be thus agreved,*

307. Vincent de Beauvais, in his *Miroir  
 Historial*.  
 313-323. Cp. B 338-347.  
 316. *that*, MS. so *that*.

## FIRST VERSION

notyn herken, if he can repley  
yns these poyntys that ye han to hym  
mevid.

320  
xI ne schulde not thus been agrevyd,  
of his deitee he schal be stable,  
therto ryghtful and ek mercyable.  
schal nat ryghtfully his yre wreke  
he have herd the tothyrt partye speke.  
is nat gospel that is to you pleynyd;  
god of love hereth many a tale i-feynyd.  
in youre court is many a losengeour,  
many a queynte totolour acusour,  
t tabouryn in youre eres manye a thyng,  
wite or for jelous ymagynnyng, 331  
for to han with you sum dalyaunce.  
ye—I preye to God yeve hire mys-  
chaunce—

avender in the gret court alway;  
sche ne partyth, neythir nyght ne day,  
of the hous of Cesar—thus seyth  
Dante—

oso that goth, alwey sche moté wante.  
s man to you may wrongly ben acused,  
re as be ryght hym oughté ben excusid.  
illis, sere, for that this man is nyce, 340  
may translate a thyng in no malyce  
for he usyth bokis for to make,  
t takyth non hede of what matere he  
take,

rfore he wrot the Rose and ek Crisseyde  
innocence, and myste what he seyle.

hym was bodyn maké thilké tweye  
sum persone, and durste it not withseye;  
he hath wreté manye a bok or this.

ne bath not don so greuously amys  
translaté that oldé clerkés wryte, 350  
thow that he of malyce wolde endyte  
pit of love, and hadde hymself  
i-wrought.

s schulde a ryghtwys lord han in his  
thought

I not ben lyk tyrauntis of Lumbardye  
it usyn wilfulhed and tyrannye.

he that kyng or lord is naturel  
m oughté nat be tyraunt and crewel,  
is a fermour, to don the harm he can.

322. deitee, MS. dede.

328-343. Cp. B 352-361, 350-351, 362-365.

346 sqq. Cp. B 366 sqq.

## SECOND VERSION, B

But of hys deitee he shal be stable,  
And therto gracious and merciable.

And if ye nere a god that knowen alle,  
Thanne myght it be as I yow tellen shalle;  
This man to yow may falsly ben accused,  
That as by right him oughté ben excused;  
For in youre courte ys many a losengeour,  
And many a queinte totelere acusour,  
That tabouren in youre erés many a soun,  
Ryght astir hire ymagynacioun,  
To have youre daliance, and for envie.  
Thise ben the causes, and I shal nat lye,  
Envie is lavendere of the court alway;  
For she ne parteth, neither nyght ne day,  
Out of the house of Cesar,—thus seith  
Dante;

360  
Whoso that goth, algate she wol nat  
wante.

And eke, parauntere, for this man is nyce,  
He myghté doon it, gessyng no malice;  
But for he useth thynges for to make,  
Hym rekketh noght of what matere he  
take;

Or him was boden maken thilké tweye  
Of somme persone, and durste it nat  
withseye

Or him repenteth outcly of this.  
He ne hath nat doon so greuously amys,  
To translaten that oldé clerkés writen,  
As thogh that he of malice wolde enditen,  
Despote of Love, and had himselfe it  
wrought.

372  
This sholde a ryghtwis lord have in his  
thought,

And nat be lyke tirauntes of Lumbardye,  
That han no réward but at tyrannye.

For he that kyng or lorde is naturel,  
Hym oghté nat be tiraunt ne crewel,  
As isa fermour, to doon the harme he kan;

351. *That*, so that; a better reading than the *Ther* of the earlier version.

354. *soun*, *F swoun*, wrongly.

357. A new line.

359. In the *Inferno*, xvii. 64-65, Invidia is called  
La meretrice, che mal dall' ospizio Di  
Cesue non torse gli occhi putti.

361. *wante*, be missing.

364. *But*, *F B om*.

368. A new line.

371. *As*, *F B* and *Pepys And*, wrongly.

374. *tirauntes of Lumbardye*, like the Visconti.



## FIRST VERSION

He muste thynke it is his ligé man.  
*And that hym owith o verry duétee,* 360  
*Schewyn his peple pleyne benygneté*  
*And wel to heryn here excusacyouns,*  
*And here compleyntys and petyciouns,*  
*In duewé tymé, whan they schal it profre.*  
 This is the sentens of the philosopre :  
 A kyng to kepe hise lygis in justice,  
 Withouten douté that is his offise,  
*And therto is a kyng ful depe i-sworn*  
*Ful manye an hunderede wyntyr here-*  
*be-forn,*

*And for to kepe his lordys hir degre,* 370  
 As it is ryght and skylful that they be  
 Enhaunsédeand honouréd [and] most dere  
 For they ben half goddys in this worldé  
 here.

*This schal be don bothé to pore [and]  
 ryche, etc.*

[For the rest of the Prologue and the  
 Legends the differences between this  
 MS. and the rest are slight enough  
 to be indicated in the notes.]

367. *Withouten*, MS. *which oughtyn*.

## SECOND VERSION, B

He mosté thinke it is his leegé man, 385  
 And is his tresour, and his gold in cofre.  
 This is the sentence of the philosopre :  
 A kyng to kepe his leegés in justice,  
 Withouten douté that is his office.  
 Al wol he kepe his lordés hire degre,  
 As it is ryght and skilful that they bee  
 Enhauncéd and honouréd, and mosté  
 dere,

For they ben half goddys in this worldé  
 here.—

Yit mote he doon bothe ryght, to poore and  
 ryche,

Al be that hire estaat be nat yliche,  
 And han of pooré folke compassyoun ; 390  
 For lo, the gentil kynde of the lyoun !  
 For whan a flye offendith him or biteth,  
 He with his tayle awaye the flye smyeth  
 Al esely ; for of his gentérye  
 Hym deyneth nat to wreke hym on a flye  
 As doth a curre, or elles another best.

In noble corage oughté ben arest,  
 And weyen every thing by equitye,  
 And ever have réwarde to his owne  
 degre.

For, syr, it is no maistrye for a lorde  
 To dampne a man, without answeré of  
 worde,

And for a lorde, that is ful foule to use.  
 And if so be he may hym nat excuse,  
 But asketh mercy with a dredeful herte,  
 And profereth him, ryght in his beth  
 sherte,

To ben ryght at your owen jugément,  
 Than oght a god, by short avysément,  
 Consydre his owne honour, and hys trespas.  
 For syth no cause of dethe lyeth in the  
 caas,

Yow oghte to benthe lyghter merciable.  
 Leteth youre ire, and beth sumwile  
 treftable !

The man hath servéd yow of his kunnyng  
 And furthréd wel youre lawe in his makyn

380. A new line.

384. *kepe*, i.e. keep for ; Trin. MS. reads :  
*well his lordes to kepe theyr degre.*

400. *no maistrye*, no difficult matter.

403. *if*, F<sup>2</sup> and Pepys *if*.

404. *dredeful*, Gg (390) *sorrowful*.

405. It was thus that, as late as 1420, Alexander  
 Lord of the Isles, presented himself to James I.

'Al be hit that he kan nat wel endite,  
et hath he madé lewde folke delyte  
o servé you, in preysinge of your name.  
e made the book that hight the Hous  
of Fame,  
nd eke the Deeth of Blaunché the  
Duchesse,  
nd the Parlément of Foulés, as I gesse, 419  
nd al the Love of Palamoun and Arcite  
if Thebés, thogh the storye ys known  
lyte ;

nd many an ympté for your halydayes,  
hat highten balades, roundels, vielayes.  
'And for to speke of other holynesse,  
ie with in prosé translated Boece,  
nd made the Lyfe also of Seynt Cecile.  
ie made also, gon ys a greté while,  
Origenes upon the Maudeleyne.  
Iym oughte now to have the lessé payne,  
ie hath made many a lay, and many a  
thyngé. 430

'Now as ye be a god, and eke a kyngé,  
I youre Alcesté, whilom queene of Tracce,  
I aské yow this man, ryght of youre grace,  
That ye him never hurte in al his lyve,  
And he shal sweren to yow, and that as  
blyve,

He shal no more agiltén in this wyse,  
But he shal maken, as ye wol devyse,  
Of wommen trewe in lovyng al hire lyf,  
Wher so ye wol, of mayden or of wyf,  
And forthren yow as muche as hemysseyde,  
Or in the Rose, or ellés in Creseyde.' 441

The god of Love answerede hire thus  
anoon,

'Madame,' quod he, 'it is so long agoon

414. *wel*, Gg omits. Gg (400-403) adds two lines and presents the next couplet in a different form:

*Whil he was yong he kepte youre estat ;  
I not wher he be now a renegat.  
But wel I wot with that he can endyte  
He hath makid lewede folk to delyte.*

421. *thogh the storye ys known lyte*, cp. *Anelida*, ll. 23, 24.

424. *other holynesse*, the religion of the church as opposed to that of Cupid.

425. Gg (414, 415) adds the lines :

*And of the Wrechede Engendryng of Mankynde,  
As man may in pope Innocent fynde.*

426. *Lyfe of Seynt Cecile*, now the Second Nun's Story in *Cont. Tales*.

428. *Origenes*, a homily, De Maria Magdalene, wrongly attributed to Origen.

That I yow knewe so charitable and trewe,  
That never yit, syn that the world was  
newe,

To me ne founde I better noon than yee :  
If that I woldé savé my degree,  
I may, ne wol, nat werné your requeste ;  
Al lyeth in yow,—dooth wyth hym what  
yow listé.

I al foryeve withouten lenger space ; 450  
For who-so yeveth a gifte, or doth a grace,  
Do it bytyme, his thank is wel the more ;  
And demeth ye what he shal do therfore.  
Go, thanké now my lady here,' quod he.

I roos, and doun I sette me on my knee,  
And seyde thus : 'Madame, the God above  
Foryeldé yow that ye the god of Love  
I kan maké him his wrathé to foryive,  
And yewe me grace so longé for to lyve,  
That I may knowé soothly what ye bee, 460  
That han me holpe, and put me in this  
degree.

But trewely I wende, as in this cas,  
Naught have agilt, ne doon to Love trespas ;  
For why, a trewe man, withouten drede,  
I hath nat to parten with a thev's dede ;  
Ne a trewe lover oughte me not blame,  
Thogh that I spake a fals loversom shame.  
They oughte rather with me for to holde,  
For that I of Creseyde wroot or tolde,  
Or of the Rose,—what-so myn auctour  
menté,— 470

Algate, God woot, it was myn entente  
To forthren trouthe in love, and it cheryce,  
And to ben war fro falsnesse and fro vice,  
By swiche ensample ; this was my men-  
yngé.'

And she answerde, 'Lat be thyn  
arguyngé,  
For Love ne wol nat countrepteté be  
In ryght ne wrong, and lerné that of me ;  
Thow hast thy grace, and holde the ryght  
therto.

Now wol I seyn what penance thou shalt do  
For thy trespas, and understonde it here :

447. *I, F ye.*

450. *I, Gg (440) And.*

459. *yewe me*, om. F4.

461. *this*, Gg (451) *swiche*.

466. *oghte me not*, MSS. *oght me not to*.

477. *that of*, Gg (467) *this at*.

473. *the, Lc. thee.*

Thou shalt while that thou lyvest, yere by yere <sup>481</sup>

The moste partye of thy tymè spende  
In makynge of a glorious Legende  
Of goodè wymmen, maydenès and wyves,  
That weren tref in lovynge al hire lyves;  
And telle of falsè men that hem bytraien,  
That al here lyf ne don nat but asayen  
How many women they may doon a shame,  
For in youre worlde that is now holde a game.

And thogh the lykè nat a lover bee, <sup>490</sup>  
Speke wel of love; this penance yive I the.  
And to the god of Love I shal so prey,  
That he shal charge his servantes, by any weye,

To forthen thee, and wel thy labour quyte:  
Gonow thy weye, thys penaunce is but lyte.  
And when this book is made, yive it the quene,

On my byhalfe, at Eltham, or at Sheene.<sup>497</sup>

The god of Love gan smyle, and than he sayde,

'Wostow,' quod he, 'wher this be wyf or mayde,

Or queene, or countesse, or of what degre,  
That hath so lytel penance yiven thee, <sup>501</sup>  
That hast deserved sorere for to smerte?  
But pite renneth soone in gentil herte:  
That maistow seen, she kytheth what she is.'

And I answerde, 'Nay, sire, so have I blys,  
Na more, but that I see wel she is good.'

'That is a trewe talè, by myn hood!'  
Quod Love, 'and that thou knowest wel, pardee,

If it be so that thou avisè the. <sup>509</sup>

Hastow nat in a book, lyth in thy cheste,  
The gretè goodnesse of the quene Alceste,  
That turned was into a dayèsye?  
She that for hire housbonde chees to dye,

<sup>487.</sup> Omitted in Fairfax, Tanner, and Bodley.  
<sup>490.</sup> the lyke, it pleases thee; Gg (480) the lestyke.

<sup>496, 497.</sup> New lines.

<sup>497.</sup> Eltham. Part of the royal house, built in the thirteenth century, but enlarged by Edward IV., still remains.

<sup>497.</sup> Sheene, now Richmond. It was at the palace at Sheen that Anne of Bohemia died.

<sup>502.</sup> sorere, Bodl. and Tann. sore.

<sup>503.</sup> Cp. Cant. Tales, A 1761.

<sup>508.</sup> that, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

And eke to goon to helle, rather than he,  
And Ercules rescowd hire, parde,  
And broght hir out of helle agayn to blys.

And I answerd ageyn, and sayde, 'Vñ,  
Now knowe I hire, And is this goode

Alceste,

The daysie, and myn owene hertès reste?

Now fele I weel the goodnesse of this wyf,

That both after hir deth, and in hire lyf, <sup>521</sup>

Hir gretè bountè doubleth hir renoun.

Wel hath she quyt me myn affeccion,

That I have to hire flour the dayèsye.

No wonder is thogh Jove hire stellyfe,

As telleth Agaton, for hire goodnesse,

Hire whité corowne berith of it witnesse

For also many vertues haddè shee,

As smalè flourons in hire corowne bee.

'In remembrance of hire and in honour

Cibella made the daysye and the flour <sup>53</sup>

Y-crowned al with white, as men may see

And Marsyfto hire corowne reede, parde

In stede of rubyes, sette among the white

Therwith this quene wex reed for sham

a lyte,

Whanne she was preysed so in hire presene

Thanne seyde Love, 'A ful grete negligenc

Was it to the, that ylkè tyme thou mad

'Hyd, Absolon, thy tresses' in balade,

That thou forgate hire in thy songe to sett

Syn that thou art so gretly in hire dette, <sup>5</sup>

And wost so wel that kalender ys she

To any woman that wol lover be:

For she taught al the crafte of fyne lovyn

And namely of wyfhode the lyvynge,

<sup>521.</sup> in, Gg (500) ek.

<sup>526.</sup> Agaton. Prof Hales has shown that reference is to Plato's *Symposium* (in which poet Agathon is one of the speakers), where story of Alceste is told.

<sup>528.</sup> hadde, so F<sup>4</sup> Pepys, Arch. Seld.; Gg Th hath.

<sup>531.</sup> Cibella, Cybele.

<sup>539-541, 543.</sup> New lines.

<sup>537-542.</sup> The Gg text (ll. 525-534) reads:

Than seyde Love, 'A ful grete negligenc  
Was it to the to write onstedfast-ness  
Of women, sithe thou knowist here goodnesse  
By pres and ek by storyis heraby-form.  
Let be the chaf and writ wel of the corn.  
Why noldist ihow han writyn of Alceste  
And latyn Criseide ben a-slepe and rest,  
For of Alceste schulde thy wrytyng be,  
Syn that thou wist that calandir is she  
Of goodnesse, for sche taughte of fyn lovynge

<sup>542.</sup> so, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

and al the boundés that she oghte kepe ;  
 by litel witte was thilké tyme aslepe.  
 But now I chargé the upon thy lyfe, 548  
 That in thy legendethou make of thys wyse,  
 Whan thou hast other smale-y-made before ;  
 And fare now wel, I chargé thee namore.  
 But er I go, thus muche I wol the tellé,  
 Ye shal no trewé lover come in hellic.

Thise other ladies sittinge here arowe  
 In thy baladé, if thou kanst hem knowe,  
 And in thy bookés alle thou shalt hem fynde ;  
 Ave hem in thy Legende now alle in  
 mynde,

nene of hem that ben in thy knowyng.  
 There ben twenty thousand moo sittinge  
 Anne thou knowest, and ben good  
 wommen alle, 560

And trewe of love foroght that may byfalle ;  
 Aké the metres of hem as the lest ;  
 Not goon home, the sonné draweth west,  
 Paradys, with al thise companye ;  
 And serve alwey the fresshé daycsyc.  
 Cleopatre I wole that thou begynne,  
 And so forthe, and my love so shalt thou  
 wyne ;

Or lat see now what man that lover be,  
 Old doon so stronge a payne for love as she.  
 Wot wel that thou maist nat al it ryme,  
 Hat swiché lovers dide in hiré tyme ; 571  
 Were to long to reden and to here ;  
 Sufficeth me thou make in this manere,  
 Hat thou reherce of al hir lyfe the grete,  
 For thise olde auctours lysten trete.

Or who-so shal so many a storye telle,  
 Shortly, or he shal to longé dwelle.  
 And with that worde my bokés gan I  
 take,  
 Ryght thus on my legende gan I make.

*Incipit Legenda Cleopatrie, Martiris,  
 Egipti Regine.*

After the deth of Tholome the kyng, 580  
 That al Egipte hadde in his govornyng,

<sup>2-565.</sup> New lines.

<sup>2-565, 568-577,</sup> not in the Gg text.

<sup>2.</sup> and ben, Trin. <sup>2</sup> and ; Arch. Seld. that ben ;

m.

<sup>5.</sup> trete, from Arch. Seld. ; F<sup>1</sup> for to trete ;

<sup>3</sup> to trete.

<sup>8.</sup> my bohes, etc., Gg of slep I gan awake.

<sup>9.</sup> Tholome, Ptolemy, probably the elder of

two sons of Ptolemy Auletes.

Regnéd hys queené Cleopataras ;  
 Til on a tyme befel ther swich a cas,  
 That out of Rome was sent a senatour,  
 For to conquéren regnès and honour  
 Unto the toun of Rome, as was usaunce,  
 To have the worldé at hir obéysaunce,  
 And sooth to seye, Antonius was his name.

So fil it, as Fortúne hym ought a shame,  
 Whanne he was fallen in prosperitee, 590  
 Rebel unto the toun of Rome is he.  
 And over al this, the suster of Cesar  
 He laste hir falsly, er that she was war ;  
 And wold algatés han another wyf ;  
 For which he took with Rome and Cesar  
 strif.

Natheles, forsooth, this ylké senatour  
 Was a full worthy gentil werreyour,  
 And of his deeth it was ful gret damage.  
 But Love had brought this man in swich  
 a rage,

And him so narwé bounden in his laas,  
 Al for the love of Cleopataras, 601  
 That al the worldé he sette at no value ;  
 Him thoughte ther was nothing to him  
 so due

As Cleopataras for to love and serve ;  
 Him roghté nat in armís for to sterve  
 In the defence of hir and of hir ryght.

This noble queene ek lovedé so this  
 knyght,

Thurgh his desert and for his chivalrye ;  
 As certeynly, but-if that bookés lye,  
 He was of persone, and of gentilesse, 610  
 And of discrecion, and of hardynesse,  
 Worthy to any wight that lyven may ;  
 And she was faire as is the rose in May.  
 And, for to maken shortly in the beste,  
 She wax his wif, and hadde him as hir  
 leste.

The weddyng and the festé to devyse,  
 To me that have y-také swich emprise,  
 Of so many a storye for to make,  
 It were to longe, lest that I sholdé slake  
 Of thing that beryth more effecte and  
 charge ; 620

For men may overlade a shippe or barge.

<sup>592.</sup> the suster of Cesar. Octavia, sister of  
 Octavianus Cesar, afterwards the Emperor  
 Augustus.

<sup>611.</sup> of (a), om. Arch. Seld. and Trin.

<sup>614.</sup> for, om. F.

And forthy to effect than wol I skyppe,  
And al the remenaunt I wol leté slyppe.

Octavyan, that woode was of this dede,  
Shoop him an ost on Antony to lede,  
Al outerly for his destruccioun,  
With stouté Romaynes, crewel as lyoun;  
To shippe they wente, and thus I let  
hem sayle. 628

Antonius, was war, and wol nat fayle  
To meten with thise Romaynes, if he may,  
Took eke his rede, and both upon a day,  
His wyf and he, and al his ost, forthe wente  
To shippe anon, no lenger they ne stente,  
And in the see hit happed hem to mete.  
Up goth the trumpe, and for to shoute  
and shete,

And paynen hem to sette on with the sonne;  
With grisly soun out goth the greté gonne,  
And heterly they hurtelen al attouns,  
And fro the top down cometh the greté  
stones. 639

In gooth the grapénel so ful of crokes,  
Amonge the ropés, and the sheryng hokes;  
In with the polax preseth he and he;  
Byhynde the maste begyneth he to fle,  
And out agayn, and dryveth hem over  
borde;

He stynteth hem upon his sperés orde;  
He rent the sayle with hokés lyke a sithe;  
He bryngeth the cuppe, and biddeth hem  
be blithe; 647

He poureth pesen upon the hacches slide;  
With pottés ful of lyme, they goon togidre;  
And thus the longé day in fight they spende,  
Til at the last, as every thing hath ende,  
Antony is shent, and put hym to the flyghte;  
And al his folke to-go, that best go myghte.

Fleeth ek the queene with al hir  
purple sayle,  
For strokés which that wente as thik as  
hayle;

623. *lete*, Gg; F<sup>5</sup> *let it*.

638. *heterly*, F<sup>4</sup> *hertely*.

642. *he* (s), Gg *sche*, as if the references were personal to Antony and Cleopatra!

644. *hem*, Trin., Pepys, and Add.; rest *hym*.

645. *styngeth hem*, Trin. and Add.; rest *styngeth hym*.

648. *pesen*, peas to make the decks slippery.

654. Chaucer here follows the 'regina cum aurea puppe veloque purpureo se in altum dedit' of Florus.

No wonder was she myght it nat endure,  
And whan that Antony saugh that aventure,  
'Allas,' quod he, 'the day that I was borne  
My worshippe in this day thus have I lorne!  
And for dispeyre out of his wytte he sterte  
And roof hymself anon throughout the herte  
Eg that he ferther went out of the place  
His wyf, that koude of Cesar have no grace  
To Egipte is fled, for drede and for dis-  
tresse.

But herkeneth ye that spoken  
kyndenesse.

Ye men that falsly swerén many an oth  
That ye wol dye if that your love be wroth  
Here may ye seen of women which a touth  
This woful Cleopatre hath made swi-  
routhe, 6

That ther nys tongé noon that may it tell  
But on the morowe she wol no lenger dwell  
But made hir subtil werkmen make a shry  
Of al the rubees and the stonés fyne  
In al Egipt that she koude espye;  
And putté ful the shryne of spicerye,  
And let the corps embawme; and for  
she fette

This dedé corps, and in the shryne it shet  
And next the shryne a pitte than de  
she grave,

And alle the serpentés that she myghté ha-  
She put hem in that grave, and thus  
seyde:

'Now, love, to whom my sorweful he  
obeyde

So ferforthly that fro that blysful hou  
That I yow swor to ben al frely youre  
I mené yow, Antonius, my knyght,—  
That never wakyng in the day or nyght  
Ye nére out of myn hertés rémembraunce,  
For wele or woo, for carole, or for daunce  
And in my self this covenaut made I tho  
That ryght swich as ye felten wele or wo  
As ferforth as it in my powere lay, 69  
Unréprováble unto my wifhood ay,  
The samé wolde I felen, life or deethe;  
And thilké covenaut, while me lasted  
breethe,

I wol fulfille; and that shal wel be seeme  
Was never unto hir love a trewer queene

662. Actium was fought in Sept. of 31 B.C.  
Antony killed himself the next year.

And wyth that worde, naked, with ful  
good herte,

monge the serpents in the pit she sterte;  
nd ther she chees to han hir buryinge.  
non the neddris gonne hir for to stynge,  
nd she hir deeth receveth with good chere,  
or love of Antony that was hir so deare.  
nd this is storial sooth, it is no fable. 702

Now er I fynde a man thus trewe and  
stable,

nd wolde for love his deeth so frely take,  
prey God lat oure hedës nevere ake !

*Explicit Legenda Cleopatre, Martyris*

*ncipit Legende Tesba Babilon, Martiris*

t Babiloyne whilom fil it thus,—  
whichë toun the queene Semyramus  
dichen al about, and wallës make  
hye, of hardë tilës wel y-bake : 709  
re werë dwellynge in this noble toun  
lordës, which that were of grete  
renoune,

wonëden so neigh upon a grene,  
t ther nas buta stoon wal hem betwene,  
ste in grettë tounës is the wone.  
sooth to seyn, that o man had a sonc,  
l that londe oon of the lustieste ;  
t other had a doghtre, the faireste  
t esteward in the worlde was tho  
dwellynge. 718

name of everychegan to others sprynge,  
vommen that wereneyghëbores aboute ;  
in that contre yit, withouten doute,  
dens ben y-kept for jelousye  
streytë, leste they diden somme folye.  
his yongë man was clepëd Piramus,  
l Tesbe highte the maide,—Naso scith  
thus.

l thus by rëporte was hir name y-shove,  
it as they wex in agë, wex hir love.  
l certeyn, as by reson of hir age, 728  
r myghte have ben betwex hem  
marlage,

that hir fadres nold it not assente,  
l both in love y-likë soore they brente,  
at noon of al hir frendës myghte it lette.

But prevely somtymë yit they mette  
Bysleight, and spoken somme of hir desire,  
As wre the gleie and hotter is the fire ;  
Forbeede a love, and it is ten so woode.

This wal, which that bitwixe hem bothë  
stooke,

Was cloven a-two, right fro the toppe  
adoun,

Of oldë tyme, of his foundacioun. 739

But yit this clystë was so narwe and lite  
It was nat seenë, deere ynogh a myte ;  
But what is that that love kannat espye ?

Ye lovers two, if that I shal nat lye,  
Ye founden first this litel narwë clifte,  
And with a sounë as softe as any shryfte,  
They leete hir wordës thurgh the clifte pace,  
And tolken, while they stoden in the place,  
Al hire compleynt of love, and al hire wo.  
At every tyme when they dorstë so.  
Upon the o syde of the walle stood he,  
And on that other sydë stood Tesbe, 751  
The swootë soun of other to receyve.

And thus here wardeyns woldë they  
disceyve,

And every day this walle they woldë threhte,  
And wisshe to God that it were down y-bete,  
Thus wolde they seyn : ' Allas, thou  
wikked walle !

Thurgh thyn envye thou us lettest alle !  
Why nyltow cleve, or fallen al a-two ?  
Or at the leestë, but thou wouldest so,  
Yit woldestow but onës let us meete, 760  
Or onës that we myghtë kyssen sweete,  
Than were we covered of oure carës colde.  
But nathëles, yit be we to thee holde,  
In as muche as thou suffrest for to goon  
Our wordës thurgh thy lyme and eke thy  
stoon ;

Yet oghtë we with the ben wel apayedë.' 770

And whan thesë idel wordës weren sayde,  
The coldë walle they wolden kysse of stoon,  
And take hir leve, and forth they wolden  
goon.

And this was gladly in the evëtyde, 770  
Or wonder erly, lest men it espyede.  
And longë tyme they wrought in this manere,  
Til on a day, whan Phebus gan to clere—

706-776. Missing in Pepps.

726. 6/-om. F3.

725. And, in Gg only.

741. deere ynogh a myte, ever so little.

747. they, Trin.3 ; rest that they.

770. And, F Allë.

Aurora with the stremes of hire hete  
 Had driéd uppe the dewe of herbés wet—  
 Unto this clyfte, as it was wont to be,  
 Come Piramus, and after come Tesbe.  
 And plighen trouthe fully in here faye,  
 That ilk samé nyght to steele awaye,  
 And to begile hire wardeyns everychone,  
 And forth out of the citee for to gone. 781  
 And, for the feeldés ben so broode and wide,  
 For to meete in o place at o tyde  
 They setté markes, hire metyng sholdé bee  
 Ther kyng Nynus was graven, under a  
 trec,—

For oldé payens, that ydóles heriede,  
 Useden tho in feeldés to ben beriede,—  
 And fasté by his gravé was a welle.  
 And, shortly of this talé for to telle, 789  
 This covenant was affermed wonder faste,  
 And longe hem thoghté that the sonnè laste,  
 That it nere goon under the see adoun.

This Tesbe hath so greete affeccioun,  
 And so grete lykyng Piramus to sec,  
 That whan she seigh hire tymé myghté bee,  
 At nyght she stale away ful prevély,  
 With hire face y-wympled subtilly.  
 For al hire frendés, for to save hire trouthe,  
 She hath forsake; alas, and that isrouthe,  
 That ever woman woldé be so trewe 800  
 To trusten man, but she thebet hym knewe!

And to the trees he goth a ful goode paas,  
 For love made hir so hardy in this caas;  
 And by the welle adoun she gan hir dresse.  
 Allas! than comith a wildé leonesse  
 Out of the woode, withouten more arreste,  
 With bloody mouth, of strangelynge of a  
 beste,

To drynken of the welle ther as she sat.  
 And whan that Tesbe had espyed that,  
 She ryst hir up, with a ful dreary herte, 810  
 And in a cave with dredful foot she sterte,  
 For by the moone she saugh it wel withalle.  
 And as she ranne, hir wympele leet she falle,  
 And tooke noon hede, so sore she was  
 awhaped,

And eke so gládé that she was escaped;  
 And ther she sytte, and darketh wonder  
 stille.

785. *Nynus*, the mythical founder of Nineveh,  
 for whom Semiramis built a tomb.

815. *glade*, Trin. *glad of*.

Whan that this lyonesse hath dronke hir  
 fille,

Aboute the wellé gan she for to wynde,  
 And ryght anon the wympele gan she fynde  
 And with hir bloody mouth it al to-rente  
 Whan this was don, no lenger she nestent  
 But to the woode hir wey than hath si  
 nome. 8

And at the laste this Piramus is com  
 But al to longe, alas, at home was hee  
 The mooné shone, men myghté wel y-se  
 And in his wey, as that he come ful fast  
 Hise eyen to the grounde adoun he cast  
 And in the sonde as he behelde adoun,  
 He seigh the steppés broode of a foun  
 And in his herte he sodeynly agroos, t  
 And pale he wex, therwith his heer aroo  
 And nere he come, and founde the wympe  
 torne.

'Allas,' quod he, 'the day that I was born  
 This o nyght wol us lovers bothé slee!  
 How shulde I axen mercy of Tesbee,  
 Whan I am he that have yow slayne, alla  
 My byddyng hath i-slayn yow in this caa  
 Allas, to bidde a woman goon by nygh  
 In placé ther as peril fallen myghte!  
 And I so slowe! alas, I ne haddé be t  
 Here in this place, a furlong wey or y  
 Now what lyon that be in this foreste,  
 My body mote he renten, or what best  
 That wilde is, gnawen mote he now  
 herte!'

And with that worde he to the wympe  
 sterte,  
 And kiste it ofte, and wepte on it ful so  
 And seyde, 'Wympele, alas! ther nys  
 more,

But thou shalt feelcas wel the blode of n  
 As thou hast felt the bledyng of Tesbe  
 And with that worde he smot hym to t  
 herte;

The blood out of the wounde as br  
 sterte

As water, whan the conduyte broken  
 Now Tesbe, which that wysté nat of it  
 But syttyng in hire drede, she thoghté th  
 'If it so fallé that my Piramus  
 Be comen hider, and may me nat y-fyn

852. *whan the conduyte broken is*. The m  
 phor is transferred from Ovid, *Mét.* iv. 122-124.

le may me holden fals, and eke unkynde.  
nd oute she comith, and after hym gan  
espian

othē with hire herte and with hire eyen;  
and thoughte, 'I wol him tellen of my  
drede,

lothe of the lyonesse and al my dede.  
and at the laste hire love than hath she  
founde,

lētynge with his helis on the grounde,  
al bloody; and therewithal abak she sterte,  
and lyke the wawes quappē gan hir herte,  
and pale as boxe she wax, and in a throwe  
vised hir, and gan him wel to knowe,  
that it was Piramus, hire hertē dere.

Who koudē writē which a dedely chere  
hath Tesbe now? and how hire heere she  
rente?

And how she gan hir-selvē to turmente?  
And how she lyth and swowneth on the  
grounde?

And how she wepe of terēs ful his wounde?  
How medleth she his blood with hir com-  
pleynte?

How with his blood hir-selven gan she  
peynte?

How clippeth she the dedē corps? allas!  
How doth this woful Tesbe in this cas?  
How kysseth she his frosty mouthe so  
colde?

'Who hath don this? and who hath ben  
so bolde

To sleen my leefe? O speckē, Piramus!  
I am thy Tesbe, that thee calleth thus!  
And therewithal she lyfeth up his heed.

This woful man, that was nat fully  
deed,

Whan that he herde the name of Tesbe  
crien,

On hire he caste his hevvy dedely eyen,  
nd down agayn, and yeldeth up the  
goste.

Tesbe rist uppe, withouten noyse or  
boste,  
and saugh hir wympel and his empty  
shethe,  
and eke his swerde, that him hath don  
to dethe.

866. *fals as boxe*, Ovid's 'oraque buxo Pallidi-  
na gerena', *Met.* iv. 134, 135.

Than spake she thus: 'Thy woful haunde,'  
quod she,

'Is strong ynogh in swiche a werke to me;  
For love shal me yive strengthe and  
hardynesse,

To make my woundē large ynogh, I gesse.  
I wole the folowen ded, and I wol be  
felawe and cause eke of thy deeth,' quod  
she.

'And thogh that nothingsave the deth only  
Myghte the fro me departē trewely,  
Thou shal no more departē now fro me  
Than fro the deth, for I wol go with the.

'And now, ye wrecched jelouse fadrēs  
oure,

Wē, that weren whilome children youre,  
We prayen yow, withouten more envye,  
That in o grave i-ferē we moten lye,  
Syn love hath broght us to this pitouse ende.  
And ryghtwis God to every lover sende,  
That loveth trewely, more prosperite  
Than ever haddē Piramus and Tesbe.

And let no gentile woman hire assure,  
To patten hire in swiche an aventure.  
But God forbedē but a woman kan  
Ben also trewe and lovyngē as a man,  
And for my parte I shal anon it kythe.  
And with that worde his swerde she took  
as swithe,

That warme was of hire lovēs blood, and  
hote,

And to the hertē she hire-selven smote.  
And thus are Tesbe and Piramus ago.  
Of trewē men I lyndē but fewe no

In al my bookēs, save this Piramus,  
And therefore have I spoken of hym thus  
For it is deyntee to us men to fynde  
A man that kan in love be trewe and  
kynde.

Here may ye seen, what lover so he be,  
A woman dar and kan as wel as he.

#### Explicit Legenda Tesbe

890. *Thy*, Gg corrects to *Myn*; but perhaps a  
couplet has fallen out. Chaucer is translating  
*Metamorphoses*, iv. 147-149:

Tua te manus. Inquit, amorque  
Periclit, infelix. Ist et mihi fortis in unum  
Hoc manus. est et amor, etc.

898. *F3* *noo more now depart*.

903. *i-ferē*, only in Trin. and Add.

904. *F* *hath us broght*.

911. *also*, Add. only; Trin. *als*; rent *as*.



*Incipit Legenda Didonis, Martiris,  
Carthaginis Regine*

Glorie and honour, Virgile Mantuan,  
Be to thy name ! and I shal, as I kan,  
Folowe thy lanterne as thou goste byform.  
How Eneas to Dido was forsworne—  
In thyne Eneyde and Naso wol I take 928  
The tenour, and the grete effectes make.

Whan Troye broght was to destruccione  
By Grekes sleight, and namely by Synon,  
Feynyng the hors offred unto Minerve,  
Thurgh which that many a Trojan moste  
sterve,

And Ector had after his deeth appered,  
And fire sowode it myghte nat ben stered,  
In al the noble tour of Ylion,  
That of the citee was the cheef dungeon;  
And al the contree was so lowe y-broght,  
And Priamus, the kyng, fordoon and noght;  
And Eneas was chargyd by Venus 940  
To fien away, he tooke Ascanius,  
That was his sone, in his ryght hande  
and fledde,

And on his bakke he baar, and with him  
ledde,

His oldé fader, clepéd Anchises;  
And by the wey his wyf Creusa he lecs,  
And mochel sorowe hadde he in his mynde,  
Er that he koude his felawshipp fynde.  
But at the lasté, whan he hadde hem  
founde,

He made him redy in a certeyn stounde,  
And to the see ful faste he gan him hye, 950  
And sayleth forth with al his companye  
Towarde Ytyle, as wolde his destanee.  
But of his aventurés in the see  
Nys nat to purpos for to speke of here,  
For it acordeth nat to my matere.  
But as I seyde, of hym and of Dydo  
Shal be my tale, til that I have do.

So longe he sayllid in the salté see,  
Til in Lybye unneth arryved he,  
With schepis sevene and with no more  
navye, 960

928. *Naso*, Ovid in his *Heroides*, Ep. vii.

931. *Synon*, cp. *Æneid*, ii. 57-198.

934. *Ector*. Hector's ghost warned Æneas to  
flee from Troy, cp. *Æn.* ii. 270-277.

952. *his*, om. *R<sup>6</sup>*.

960, 961. Only in *Gg* and *Pepya*.

And glad was he to londé for to hye,  
So was he with the tempest al to-shake.  
And whan that he the havene had y-take,  
He had a knyghte was calléd Achates,  
And him of al his felawshipp he ches  
To goon with him, the contree for tospy.  
He toke with him na more companye,  
But forth they goon, and lafte his shippes  
ride,

His fere and he, withouten any guyde.

So longe he walketh in this wilderness,  
Til at the last he mette an hunteresse; 971  
A bowe in hande, and arwes haddé shee;  
Hire clothés cuttid were unto the knee.  
But she was yit the fairest creature  
That ever was y-formed by nature;  
And Eneas and Achates she grette,  
And thus she to hem spak whan she hem  
mette,

'Sawe ye,' quod she, 'as ye han walkéd  
wide,

Any of my sustren walké yow besyde,  
With any wildé boor or other beste, 981  
That they han hunted to in this foreste,  
Y-tukked up, with arwés in hire cas?'

'Nay soothly, lady!' quod this Eneas  
'But by thy beaute, as it thynketh me,  
Thou myghtest never erthely woman be  
But Phebus suster artow, as I gesse.

And if so be that thou be a goddesse,  
I have mercy on oure labour and oure wo.'

'I nam no goddesse soothely,' quod  
she tho;

'For maydens walken in this contree  
here, 991

With arwés and with bowe, in this manere.  
This is the regne of Libie ther ye been,  
Of which that Dido lady is and queene.'

And shortly tolde al the occasioun  
Why Dido come into that regioun,  
Of which as now me listeth nat to ryme;  
It nedeth nat, it nere but los of tyme.

For this is al and somme; it was Venus,  
His owene moder, that spake with him  
thus;

971. *sqg.* Cp. *Æn.* i. 314-417.

973. *cuttid*, *R<sup>6</sup>* *knytte*. Virgil's 'nuda gens  
nodoque sinus collecta fluentis' might suggest  
either word.

982. *Y-tukked up*, etc., Virgil's 'succinctas  
pharetra.'

and to Cartage she had he sholde him  
dighte, <sup>1000</sup>

And vanysshed anoon out of his sighte.  
koudē folwe worde for worde Virgile,  
but it wolde lasten al to longē while.

This noble queene, that clepēd was  
Dido,

That whilom was the wife of Sitheo,  
That fairer was than is the bryghte sonne,  
This noble toun of Cartage hath begonne;  
in which she regneth in so grete honour,  
That she was holde of allē quenēs floure,  
Of gentillesse, of fredome, of beautee,  
That wel was him that myght hir onēs see.  
Of mynges and of lordēs so desired, <sup>1012</sup>  
That al the worlde hire beaute hadde  
y-fired,

she stode so wel in every wyghtēs gracc.

Whan Eneas was come unto that place,  
Unto the maistre temple of al the toun,  
Ther Dido was in hir devocioun,  
Ful prively his wey than hath he nome.  
Whan he was in the largē temple come,—  
I kannat seye if that hit be possible,—  
But Venus hadde him makēd invisible;  
Thus seith the booke, withouten any les.  
And whan this Eneas and Achates  
Hadden in this temple ben over-alle,  
Than foundē they depeynted on a walle  
How Troy and al the londe destroyed  
was.

‘Allas, that I was born!’ quod Encas.  
‘Thurghout the worlde oure shame is  
kid so wide,

Now it is peynted upon every side.  
Wē, that weren in prosperitee, <sup>1030</sup>  
Be now disclaundred, and in swiche degre,  
No lenger for to lyven I ne kepe.’  
And with that worde he braste out for to  
wepe

So tendirly that routhe it was to seene.

This fresshe lady, of the citee queene,  
Stode in the temple, in hire estat royalle,  
So richely, and eke so faire withalle,  
So yonge, so lusty, with hire eyen glade,  
That if that God, that hevne and erthe  
made,

Wolde han a love, for beaute and  
goodnesse, <sup>1040</sup>  
And womanhode, and trouthe, and  
semlynnesse.

Whom sholde he loven but this lady swete?  
Ther nys no woman to him halfe so mete.  
Fortune, that hath the worlde in  
governance,

Hath sodcynly broght in so newe a chaunce,  
That never was ther yet so fremde a cas.  
For al the compaignie of Eneas,  
Which that he wende han loren in the see,  
Aryved is, noght for fro that citee. <sup>1049</sup>  
For which the grettest of his lordēs, some,  
By aventure ben to the citee come,  
Unto that samē temple, for to seke  
The queene, and of hire socour hir beseke;  
Swich réowne was ther spronge of hir  
goodnesse.

And whan they hadde tolde al hire  
distresse,  
And al hir tempest and hire hardē cas,  
Unto the queene apperēd Encas,  
And openly beknew that it was he.  
Who hadde joyē thanne but his meynce,  
That hadden founde hire lord, hire  
governour? <sup>1060</sup>

The queenē saugh they dide him swich  
honour,

And had herde ofte of Eneas er tho,  
And in hir hertē she hadde routhe and wo,  
That ever swiche a noble man as hee  
Shal ben disherited in swiche degre.  
And saugh the man, that he was lyke a  
knyghte,

And suffisaunt of persone and of myghte,  
And lyke to ben a verray gentilman.  
And wel his wordēs he besettē kan, <sup>1069</sup>  
And hadde a noble visage for the nones,  
And formēd wel of brawnēs and of bones;  
For after Venus hadde he swich fairenesse,  
That no man myghte be half so faire, I gesse,  
And wel a lorde he semede for to be.  
And for he was a straunger, somewhat she  
Lýkēd him the bette, as, God do bote,  
To somme folke often newē thinge isswote.

<sup>1046.</sup> never was ther yet, so Trin. and Thynne;  
Arch. Seld. never yet was sene; Add. om. yet!  
rest om. ther.

<sup>1074.</sup> he, so Gg Add. Pepys; rest him.

<sup>1005.</sup> Sitheo, Sichemus.

<sup>1006.</sup> is, om. all but Gg and Add.

<sup>1030.</sup> weren, Trin. and Add. were whilom.

Anon hire herte hath pitee of his wo,  
And with that pitee, love come in also;  
And thus for pitee and for gentillesse,  
Refreshed mote he ben of his distresse.

She seyde, certes, that she sory was  
That he hath had swich peril and swiche  
cas;

And in hire frendely speche, in this manere  
She to him spake, and seyde as ye may here.

'Be ye nat Venus' sone and Anchises'?  
In good faythe, al the worshippe and encres  
That I may goodly doon yow, ye shal have:  
Youre shippes and youre meynce shal I  
save.'

And many a gentil worde she spake him to,  
And comaunded hire messagers to go  
The same day, withouten any faylle, 1092  
His shippes for to seke and hem vitaylle.  
Ful many a beeste she to the shippes sente,  
And with the wyne she gan hem to presente,  
And to hire royall paleys she hire spedde,  
And Eneas alway with hire she ledde.  
What nedeth yow the feste to discryve?  
He never better at ese was in his lyve.  
Ful was the feste of deyntees and richesce,  
Of instruments, of songe, and of gladnesce,  
And many an amoureuse loking and devys.

This Eneas is comen to Paradyse  
Out of the wolowe of helle; and thus in joye  
Remembreth him of his estaat in Troye.  
To daunsyng chambres, ful of parements,  
Of rich beddes, and of ornaments,  
This Eneas is laddle after the mcete.  
And with the queene whan that he  
hadde seete 1109

And spices parted, and the wyne agon,  
Unto his chambres was he lad anon  
To take his ease, and for to have his reste  
Withal his folke, to doon what so hem leste.

Ther nas boursere, wel y-bridled, noon,  
Ne stede for the justyng wel to goon,  
Ne large palfrey, esy for the nonces,  
Ne jewel fretted ful of rich stones,  
Ne sakkès ful of gold, of large wyghte,  
Ne rubee noon that shynede by nyghte,

1099. Gg *He nevere at ese was betyr in al hese lyve.*

1107. ornaments, so Gg Trin. Add.; F<sup>6</sup> *pave-*

ments. 1110. *shynede*, Gg Trin. Pepys; Add. *shone*; F<sup>6</sup> *shineth*.

Ne gentil hawteyn fawkonè haterher,  
Ne hound for hert, or wilde boor or deer,  
Ne coupe of golde, with floryns newe  
y-bette, 1122

That in the londe of Lybye may ben gette,  
That Dido ne hath hit Eneas i-sente;  
Ank al is payed, what that he hath spente,  
Thus gan this queene honoure hir gester  
talle,

As she that kan in fredome passen alle.

Eneas soothly eke, withouten leas,  
Hath sent unto his shippe by Achates  
After his sone, and after ryché thynges,  
Both ceptre, clothes, broches, and eke  
rynges; 1131

Somme for to were, and somme for to  
presente

To hire, that alle these noble thynges  
him sente;

And bad his sone how that he shold make  
The presentyng, and to the queene it take.

Repeyred is this Achates agayne,  
And Eneas ful blyful is and fayne,  
To seyn his yongé sone Ascanius.

But natheles our autour tellith us 1139

That Cupido, that is the god of love,  
At prayere of hys moder hys above,

Hadde the liknesse of the childe y-take,  
This noble queen enamoured to make

On Eneas. But as of that scripture  
Be as he may, I make of it no cure.

But sooth is this, the queene hath made  
swich chere

Unto this childe that wonder is to here;  
And of the present that his fader sente,  
She thankéd him ful ofte in goode intente.

Thus is this queene in pleasaunce and  
in joye, 1150

With al these newe lusty folke of Troye.  
And of the dedes hath she more enquired  
Of Eneas, and al the storie lered

1126. MSS. read *Thus kan* (Add. *ganne*) *this honourable queene hir gester* (Pepys, *giftes*) *call*, where *call* is plainly a misreading of the complimentary epithet *talle*. This would make the verb *honoure* impossible, and so lead to the substitution of *honourable*. Another possible restoration would be *Thus gaf this noble queene hir giftes talle*. The reading *talle* is due to Dr. Heath.

1139. So Gg and Pepys; F<sup>4</sup> *For to him yt was reported thus*; other variants show that the line was corrupted.

ye; and al the longé day they tweye  
deden to speken and to pleye.

ich ther gan to breden swich a fyge,  
sely Dido hath now swich desire  
Eneas, hir newé geste, to deele,  
she hath loste hire hewe and eke  
hire heele.

w to theffecte, now to the fruyt of al,  
I have tolde this storye, and tellen  
shal,

us I bygynne: It fil upon a nyght,  
that the moone upreysed had hire  
lyght,

noble queene unto hire resté wente.  
maketh sore, and gan hire - selfe  
turmente;

maketh, walwithe, maketh many a  
brayde,  
on thise lovers, as I have herde  
sayde;

at the laste, unto hire suster Anne  
made hir mone, and ryght thus  
spoke she thanne.

deré suster myn, what may it be  
me agasteth in mydreme? quod she.  
ilké Trojane is so in my thoughte,

at methinketh he is so wely-wroughte,  
eke so likly for to ben a man,  
therwithal so mykel good he kan,

al my love and lyf lyth in his cure.  
ye nat herde hym telle his aventure?  
certes, Anne, gif that ye redé me,

dé fayne to him y-wedded be; 1170  
s theffect; what sholde I moré seyn?  
m lith alle, to dop me lyve or deyn.

suster Anne, as she that kouth  
hire goode,  
as hire thought, and somdel it  
withstoode.

erof was so longe a sermonyng,  
re to longe to maké rehersyng.  
finally, it may nat be withstonde:

woll love, for nowyght wol it wonde.  
e dawenyng upryst oute of the see;  
amorous queene chargeth hire  
meynee

So Gg; rest *For to speke and for to*

hire, Gg *his*.

for, om. F<sup>8</sup>.

rede, Gg *rede it*.

The nettés dresse, and sperés brood and  
kene; 1190

An huntynge wol this lusty fressshé queene,  
So prieth hire this newé joly wo.

To hors is al hire lusty folke y-go;  
Unto the courte the houndés ben  
y-broughte,

And upon coursers, swyfte as any thoughte,  
Hir yongé knyghtés hoven al aboute,  
And of hir women eke an hugé route.

Upon a thikké paltrey, paper white, 1198  
With sadel rede, enbroudet with delyte,  
Of golde the barrés up emboséd heighe,

Sitte Dido, al in golde and perrey wreighe.  
And she is faire as is the bryghté morwe,  
That heeleth seké folkes of nyghtés sorwe.

Upon a coursere, startlyng as the fire,—  
Men myghté turne him with a lytel wire,—  
Sitte Eneas, like Phebus to devyse,

So was he fressh arrayéd in his wyse.  
The fomy bridel, with the bitte of golde,  
Governeth he, ryght as himselfe hathe  
wolde.

And forth this noble queene, this lady, ride  
On huntynge, with this Trojan by hire syde.  
The herde of hertés fouden is anon,

With 'Hay!' 'Go bet!' 'Prieth thou!'  
'Lat gon, lat gon!'

'Why nyl the lyoun comen, or the bere,  
That I myght hym onés meten with this  
spere?'

Thus seyn thise yongé folke, and up they  
kylle

The wildé hertes, and han hem at here wille.  
Amonges al this, to romblen gan the  
hevene;

The thonder rored with a grisly stevene;  
Doun come the rayne, with haile and  
sleet, so faste, 1200

With hevenes fire, that it so sore agaste  
This noble queene, and also hire meynee,  
That yche of hem was glad away to fle;

And shortly, fro the tempest hire to save,  
She fled hire-selfe into a lytel cave,  
And with hire wente this Eneas also.

I not with hem if ther went any mo;  
The auctour maketh of hit no mencionioun.  
And here beganne the depe affeccioun

Betwix hem two; this was the firsté morwe

1195. *coursers, F<sup>8</sup> coursers.*

Of hire gladnesse, and gynnynge of hir  
sorwe. 1231

For there hath Eneas y-kneléd so,  
And tolde hir al his herte and al his wo,  
And sworne so depé to hire to be trewe  
For wele or wo, and chaungé for no newe,  
And, as a fals lover, so wel kan pleyne,  
That sely Dido rewéd on his peyne,  
And toke hym for housbonde, and became  
his wife

For evermor, while that hem lasté lyfe.  
And after this, whan that the tempest  
stente, 1240

With myrth, out as they comé, home they  
wente.

The wikked fame up ros, and that anon,  
How Eneas hath with the queene y-gon  
Into the cave, and deméd as hem liste.  
And whan the kyng that Yarbás hight  
hit wiste,

As he that had hire lovéd ever his lyfe,  
And wowéd hire to have hire to hys wife,  
Swiche sorowe as he hath makéd, and  
swiche chere,

It is a swethe and pitee for to here.  
But as in love alday it happeth so, 1250  
That oon shal lawghen at anotherés wo;  
Now lawgheth Eneas, and is in joye,  
And more richés than ever was in Troye.

O sely woman, ful of innocence,  
Ful of pitee, of trouthe, and conscience,  
What makéd yow to men to trusten so?  
Have ye suche rewthe upon hir feynéd wo,  
And han suche olde ensaumplies yow  
beforne?

Se ye nat allé how they ben forsworne?  
Where se ye oon that he ne hath laste  
his leefé? 1260

Or ben unkynde, or don hir some  
myscheefe?

Or pilléd hir, or bosted of his dede?  
Ye may as wel hit seen as ye may rede.  
Take hede now of this greté gentilman,  
This Trojan, that so wel hire pléscé kan,  
That feyneth him so trewe and obeysinge,  
So gentil, and so privy of his doynge;  
And kan so wel doon al his obeysaunces,

And waytyn hir, at festés and at daunces  
And whan she gooth to temple, and hom  
ageyne, 1270

And fasten til he hath his lady seyne;  
And beren in his devyses for hire sake  
Wot I not what; and songés wolde he  
make,

Justen, and doon of armés many thynges,  
Sénd hire letrés, tokens, brochés, rynges,  
Now herkneth how he shal his lady serve

Ther as he was in peril for to sterve  
For hunger and for myscheef in the see,  
And desolate, and fledde fro his contré,  
And al his folke with tempeste al to-drive  
She hath hir body and eke hir reame yive  
Into his hande, theras she myghte have  
bene

Of other lande than of Cartage a queene  
And lyved in joy ynogh; what wolde  
more?

This Eneas, that hath thus depe y-swore  
Is wery of his crafte within a throwe;  
The hooté erneste is al overblowe.

And privly he doth his shippés dyghte,  
And shapeth him to steale away by nyghte

This Dido hath suspesion of this, 1280  
And thoughté wel that hit was al amy,  
For in his bedde he lytha nyght and siketh  
She asketh him anon what him mysliketh

'Myderé herté, which that I love moste  
Certés,' quod he, 'thys nyght my sadré  
goste

Hath in my slepe so soré me turmentede  
And eke Mercure his message hath pre  
sentede,

That nedés to the conqueste of Ytaley  
My destany is sooné for to sayle,  
For whiche me thynketh brosten is my  
herte.' 1290

Therwith his falsé teerés oute they sterte  
And taketh hir within his armés two,  
'Is that in ernest?' quod she; 'wol  
so?

I have ye nat sworne to wifé me to take  
Allas, what woman wol ye of me make  
I am a gentil woman, and a queene;  
Ye wol nat fro your wyfe thus foulé fience  
That I was borne, allas! What shal I do

1235. *chaunge*. Gg and Ppys *challenge* *hirs*.

1242. *The wikked fame*. Virgil's 'Fama,  
malum que non aliud velocius ullum,' *Æn.* iv. 174.

1260. *And waytyn*, Gg only; Trin.<sup>s</sup> *do*  
*pleyn*; rest *To*.

In short, this noble queene Dido  
h halwes, and doth sacrifice;  
eth, crieth, that routh is to  
vyse; 1311

him, and profereth him to be  
his servant, in the lest degree.  
h him to foote, and swowneth  
ere,

y with hire bryghte gilt here,  
h, 'Have mercy! let me with  
ow ryde;

ies, which that wonien me besyle,  
estroien only for youre sake.

e wole now me to wif take,  
sworn, than wol I yive yow leve  
me with your swerd now soone  
eve; 1321

shal I yet dien as youre wif.  
a childe, and yive my childe his  
fe!

rde, have pitee in youre thought!  
this thing awayleth hire ryght  
ught,

nyght sleping he let hir lye,  
away upon his companye,  
traytour forthe he gan to sayle  
the large contree of Italye.

he lefte Dido in wo and pyne,  
did there a lady highte Lavyne.  
he lefte, and eke his swerde  
ondynge, 1332

fro Dido staal in hire slepyng,  
bir beddes hed: so gan he hyc,  
that he staal away to his navye.  
cloth, whansely Didogan awake,  
it kyste ful oft for hys sake;

e, 'O swete cloth, while [Jove]  
t leste,

v my soule, unbynde me of this  
reste; 1339

om. F<sup>8</sup>.

ve, Gg *havyth*.

ve thus he lefte, Trin.<sup>3</sup>; Gg. Thus he  
F<sup>4</sup> And thus hath he lefte.

in.<sup>3</sup> om. *swete*, but Chaucer is trans-  
'Dulces exuvia, dum fata deusque  
f. *Ben.* iv. 651, and, like 'dulces, *swete*  
c. To mend the line I read *Jove* for  
MSS.

u, om. F<sup>8</sup>.

bynde me, Virgil's 'accipite hanc  
aque his exsolvit curis'; Gg reads and

I have fulfilled of fortune al the cours.  
And thus, allas, withouten his socours,  
Twentytyme-sworned hath she thanne.  
And whan that she unto hir suster Anne  
Compleyned had, of which I may not write,  
So greté routh I have hit for to endite,  
And bad hir noryce and hir sustren gon  
To fêché fire, and other thinges anon,  
And seyde that she woldé sacrifice,—  
And whan she myght hir tyme wel cspye,  
Upon the fire of sacrifice she sterte, 1350  
And with his swerde she roof hire to the  
herte.

But, as myn auctour seythe, yit thus she  
seyde,

Or she was hurte, beforne or she deide,  
She wroot a letter anon, that thus biganne.

'Ryght so,' quod she, 'as that the whit  
swanne

Ayent his deeth begynneth for to synge,  
Ryght so to yow I make my compleynynge,  
Nat that I trowe to geten yow agayne,  
For wel I woot that hit is al in wayne,  
Syn that the goddys ben contrary to me.  
But syn my name is loste thurgh yow,'  
quod she, 1361

'I may wel leese a worde on yow, or letter,  
Albeit I shal be never the better.  
For thilk wynde that blew your ship away,  
Thesamé wynde hath blowe away your fay.'  
But who wol al this letter have in mynde,  
Rede Ovyde, and in him he shal hit fynde.

*Explicit Legenda Didonis, Martiris,  
Cartagenis Regine*

*Incipit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee,  
Martiris*

Thou roote of falsé lovers, duke Jason!  
Thou slye devourer, and confusyon  
Of gentil women, gentil créatures! 1370  
Thou madest thy reclaymyng and thy lured  
To ladies of thy staately aparaunce,  
And of thy wordés farséd with plesaunce,

1352. *myn auctour*, now Ovid (*Heroides*, vil.).  
1360. *contrary*, F<sup>4</sup> *contrarious*.

1366. *who wol al*, so Pepys and Tan.; Gg F<sup>8</sup>  
Th. *whoso wol al*; Trin.<sup>3</sup> *who that wyl*; Ar.  
Seld. *whoso wol*.

1367. Pepys MS. stops here.

1370. So F<sup>4</sup> and P; Gg for first and Trin.<sup>3</sup> for  
second *gentil* read *londre*.

And of thy feyned trouthe, and thy manere,  
With thyne obeyssaunce and humble chere,  
And with thy countrefeted peyn and wo!  
Ther other falsen oon, thou falseste two!  
O, oft sworn thou that thou woldest deye  
For love, when thou ne felteste maladeye,  
Save foule deleyte, which that thou callest  
love!

1380

If that I lyve, thy namé shal be shove  
In Englyssh, that thy sleight shal be  
knowe;  
I have at the, Jason! now thy horn is  
blowe!

But certés, it is bothé routhe and wo,  
That love with falsé lovers werketh so;  
For they shalle have wel better and gretter  
chere

Than he that hath a-boughte his love ful  
dure,

Or had in armés many a bloddy box.  
For ever as tender a capon eteth the fox,  
Though he be fals, and hath the foule  
betrayed,

1390

As shal the good man that therfor hath  
payed;

Al have he to the capon skille and ryghte,  
The falsé fox wil have his part at nyghte.  
On Jason this ensample is wel y-scene,  
By Isiphile and Médea the queene.

In Tessalye, as Guido telleth us,  
Ther was a kyng that highté Pelléus,  
That had a brother whiche that hight Eson;  
And when for age he myghteunneths gon,  
He yaf to Pelléus the governynge  
Of al his regne, and made him lorde and  
kyngé.

1400

Of whiche Eson this Jason geten was,  
That in his tyme in al that lande ther nas  
Nat suche a famouse knyghte of gentilesse,  
Of fredome, and of strengthe, and lusty-  
nesse.

After his fader deeth he bar him so,  
That ther nas noon that lysté ben his fo,

1387. *a-boughte*, F<sup>3</sup> *bought*. *his*, om. F<sup>4</sup>.

1391. *hath*, Gg only; rest om.

1392. *Al have he*, F<sup>2</sup> *Allé thof he have*.

1395. *Isiphile*, Hypsipyle.

1396. *Guido*, i.e. Guido delle Colonne in his *Historia Trojana*; F<sup>4</sup> *Oryde*.

1397. *kyng*, F<sup>3</sup> *knyght*.

1405. *and of strengthe*, etc., all but Gg read *of strengthe and of lustynesse*.

But dide him al honour and companye.  
Of which this Pelléus hath grete envye,  
Imagynge that Jason myghte be  
Enhaunced so, and put in suche degre,  
With love of lordés of his regioun,  
That from his regne he may be put adoun.

And in his witte a-nyghte compasséd he  
How Jason myghte beste destroyéd be,  
Withouté sclander of his compassément.  
And at the laste he tooke avysément,  
To senden him into some fer contre,  
There as this Jason may destroyéd be.  
This was his witte, al made he to Jason  
Grete chere of love and of affeccioun,  
For dredé lest his lordés hyt espyd.

So felle hyt, so as famé renneth wide,  
Ther was suche tidynge overal, and such  
los,

That in an ile that calléd was Colcos,  
Beyondé Troyé, estwarde in the see,  
That ther a ram was that men myghte see  
That had a flees of gold, that shoon s  
bryghte,

That no-wher was ther suche anoth  
sighte,

But hit was kept alway with a dragoun,  
And many other mervels up and down;  
And with two boles maked al of brms,  
That spitten fire; and muché thinge the  
was.

14

But this was eke the talé, nathéless,  
That who-so woldé wynné thilké flees,  
He mosté both—or hehyt wynné myghte  
With the bolés and the dragoun fyghte:  
And kyng Oetes lorde was of that ile.  
This Pelléus bethoughte upon this wile,  
That he his newewe Jason wolde enhorté  
To saylen to that londé, him to disporte  
And seydé, 'Newewe, if hyt myghte be,  
That suché worshippe myghte fallé the,  
That thou this famous tresor mygh'  
wynne,

And bryngyn hit my regyoun withinne,  
It were to me grette plesaunce and honoure  
Thanne were I holde to quyte thy labour  
And al the cost I wol my-selfé make:

1413. *may*, Gg and Arch. Seld. *might*.

1418. *To*, F<sup>3</sup> *That to*.

1425. *Colcos*, Colchis.

1438. *Oetes*, *Æetes*.

se what folke that thou wilt with  
the take.

nowe, darstow taken this viage?<sup>1449</sup>  
was yonge, and lusty of corage,  
dertooke to doon this ilke emprise.  
Argus his shippes gan devyse.

Jason wente the stronge Hercules,  
ny another that he with him ches.  
o-so axeth who is with him gon,  
redé 'Argonauticon,'  
wol telle a talé longe ynoughe.  
es anon the sayle up droughe,  
hat the wynde was good, and gan  
him hye

his contree calléd Tessalye.  
e he sayléd in the salté see,  
he ile of Lemnon arryvd he,  
his not rehersed of Guydo,  
th Ovyde in his Epistles so;  
this ilé lady was, and queene,  
ré yonge Ysiphilé, the shene,  
hilom Thous daughter was, the  
kyngé.

nylè was goon in hire pleyngé,  
nyngé on the clyvcs by the see.  
a brake anoon espicde she  
hat the shippe of Jason gan arryve.  
goodnesse adoun she sendeth blyve,  
en, if that any straungé wyghte  
mpest thiderwere y-blowa-nyghte,  
n hem socour, as was hir usunne  
threm every wyghte, and don  
plesaunce

bountee, and of curteysie.  
messagere adoun him gan to hye,  
nde Jason and Ercules also,  
a cogge to londé were y-go,  
refreschen, and to take the eyr.  
rwényng atemprée was and fair,  
his wey this messenger hem mette:  
nyngely these lordes two he grette,  
l his message, askyngé hem anon  
were broken, or ought wo-begon,

*that*, all but Gg and Arch. Seld. om.  
*Argus*, the builder of the Argo.  
*rede*, Trin.<sup>2</sup> go rede.  
*Argonauticon*, i.e. the imitation of  
as Rhodius by Valerius Flaccus.  
*Philotetes*, Philoctetes.  
*that*, all but Gg and Trin.<sup>2</sup> om.  
*Lemnon*, Lemnos.  
*that* . . . of, F<sup>4</sup> lay . . . that.

Or haddé nede of lodesmen or vitayle;  
For of socoure they shuldé no thinge fayle,  
For it was outrély the quenés wille.

Jason answerdè mekely and stille:  
'My lady,' quod he, 'thanke I hertely  
Of hir goodnesse: us nedeth trewely  
Nothing as now, but that we very be,  
And comé for to pley out of the see,  
Til that the wynde be better in oure weye.

This lady rometh by the clytte to pleye  
With hire meynée, end longe the stronde,  
And fyndeth this Jason and thyse other  
stonde

In spekyngé of this thinge, as I yow tolde.

This Ercules and Jason gan beholde  
How that the quene it was, and faire hir  
grette,

Anonryght as they with this lady mette.  
And she toke hede, and knew by hire  
manere,

By hire array, by wordés, and by chere,  
That hit were gentil men of grete degree.  
And to the castel with hir ledeth she

These straunge folke, and doth hem grete  
honour;

And axeth hem of travayle and labour  
That they han suferd in the salté see;  
So that withynne a day, or two or three,  
She knew by folke that in his shippes be,  
That hit was Jason, full of renomee,  
And Ercules, that hadde the grete los,  
That soughten the aventurés of Colcus.  
And did hem honour more than before,  
And with hem doted ever lenger the more,  
For they ben worthy folke, withouten les.  
And, namely, she spake most with Ercules;  
To him hir herte bare, he shuldé be  
Sed, wise, and trewe, of wordés avyse,  
Withouten any other affeccoun  
Of love, or evyl ymaginacioun.

This Ercules hath so this Jason preysed,  
That to the sonne he hath hym up areysed,  
That halfe so trewe a man ther nas of love  
Under the cope of hevenc, that is above;  
And he was wyse, hardy, secré, and ryche;

<sup>1472</sup>. Fairfax, Tanner, and Bodley MSS. omit  
this line.

<sup>1512</sup>. folke, so Gg and Arch. Seld.; F<sup>6</sup> the  
folke or folkes.

<sup>1523</sup>. evyl, all but Gg any other.

<sup>1525</sup>. areysed, all but Gg reysed.



Of these thre poyntes there nas noon hym  
liche.

Of fredome passèd he, and lustihede, 1530  
Allè tho that lyven, or ben dede.

Therto so grete a gentil-man was he,  
And of Tessaie likly kyng to be.  
Ther nas no lakke, but that he was agaste  
To love, and for to speke shamefaste;  
He haddè lever himselfe to mordre and dye,  
Than that men shulde a lover him espye.  
'As wolde almychty God that I hadde yive  
My bloode and flessch, so that I myghte lyve,  
With the nones that he hadde oughe-where  
a wife 1540

For his estaat ! for suche a lusty lyfe  
She sholdè ledè with this lusty knyghte !  
And all this was compassèd on the nyghte  
Betwix him Jason, and this Ereules.  
Of thesè two here was a shrewde les,  
To come to house upon an innocent !—  
For, to bedote this queene was here assent.

This Jason is as coy as is a mayle;  
He loketh pitously, but nought he sayde,  
But freely yaf he to hir counselleres 1550  
Yiftes grete, and to hire officeres,  
As God wolde that I leyser had and tyme,  
By processe al his wooyng fur to ryme !  
But in this house if any fals lover be,  
Ryght as him-selfe now doth, ryght so  
did he,

With feynynge, and with every sotil dede.  
Ye gete no more of me, but ye wol rede  
The original that telleth al the cas.

Thesomme is this, that Jason woldid was  
Unto this queene, and toke of hire sub-  
stance 1560

What-so him lystè unto his purveyaunce;  
And upon hir begat he children two,  
And drough his saylle, and saugh hir  
never mo.

A letter sentè she to hym certeyn,  
Which were to longe to written and to  
seyn;

1538. *almychty*, Arch. Seld. only; probably the scribe's insertion to mend the line.

1540. *With the nones*, on condition.

1547. *assent*, F<sup>4</sup> and Ar. Seld. *intent*.

1551. *in this house*. The phrase points to the poem being read aloud, possibly at court.

1558. *The original*, Ovid, *Iher. Ep. vi.*, from which he translates closely in ll. 1564-29.

1559. *summe*, F<sup>4</sup> *sothe*; Ar. Seld. *text*.

And him repreveth of his grete untrouthe.  
And prayeth him on hir to have some  
routhe.

And of his children two, she sayede him  
this:

That they be lyke of allè thinge, y-wis,  
To Jason, save they couthe nat begile. 1570  
And prayede God, or hit were longe  
while,

That she that had his herte y-rafte hir fro  
Most fynden him to hir untrewe also:  
And that she mostè both hir children spille,  
And allè tho that suffreth hym his wille.  
And trewe to Jason was she al hir lyf,  
And ever kept hir chaste, as for his wyf.  
Ne never hadde she joyè at hir herte,  
But dyed for his love of sorwès smerte.

To Colcos comen is this duke Jason,  
That is of love devoured and dragoun, 1580  
As mater appetiteth forme alwey,  
And from forme into forme it passen may.  
Or as a welle that wrè botomles,  
Ryght so kan fals Jason have no pes,  
For to desiren, thurgh his appetite,  
To doon with gentil wymmen his delyte.  
This is his luste, and his felicitye.

Jason is romed forth to the cite,  
That whylom clepèd was Jaconitos, 1590  
That was the maister toun of al Colcos,  
And hath y-tolde the cause of his comyng  
Unto Oetes, of that contree kyng;  
Prayinge him that he moste doon his assent  
To gete the fiese of golde, if that he may  
Of which the kyng assentith to his bond.  
And doth him honour as hyt was to done  
So ferforth, that his doghtre and his cye  
Medea, which that was so wise and feyn,  
That feyrer saugh ther never man with y.  
He made hire doon to Jason companye  
At mete, and sittè by him in the hall. 1600

Now was Jason a semely man withall  
And like a lorde, and had a grete renowne  
And of his loke as rial as a lyoun,  
And goodly of his speche, and famuler  
And koude of love al crafte and al  
plenece

1582. *mater*, F *nature*. Chaucer takes his  
philosophy from Guido.

1590. *Jaconitos* (F<sup>4</sup> *Jasonicos*), Jaconites;  
Colchia.

1597. *was*, F<sup>4</sup> *is*.

Withouté boke, with everyche observaunce.  
And as fortune hir oughte a foule mes-  
chaunce.

She wek enamoured upon this man. 1610

'Jason,' quod she, 'for ought I se or kan,  
As of this thinge the whiche ye ben aboute,  
Ye, han your-selfe y-put in mochê doute;  
For who-so wol this aventure acheve,  
He may nat wele asterten, as I leve,  
Withouten dethe, but I his helpê be.

But nathelesse, hit is my wille,' quod she,  
'To furtheren yow, so that ye shal nat dye,  
But turne sounde home to youre Tessalye.'

'My ryghtê lady,' quod thys Jason,  
• 'tho, 1620

That ye han of my dethe, or of my wo,  
Any rewardc, and doon me this honour,  
I wote wel that my myght, ne my labour,  
May not deserve hit in my lyvcs day;  
God thankê yow, ther I ne kan nor may.  
Youre man am I, and lowly yow beseche  
To ben my helpe, withouté morê speche;  
But certês for my dethe shal I not spare.'

Tho gan this Médea to him declare  
peril of this case, fro poynt to poynt  
is bataylê, and in what disjoynt 1631  
motê stonde; of whiche no créature,  
only she, ne myght his lyfe assure.  
shortely, to the poynt ryght for to go,  
y been accorded ful betwex hem two,  
Jason shal hir wedde, astrewê knyght,  
terme y-sette to comê soone at nyght  
to hir chambre, and make there his  
othe

in the goddys, that he for leve ne lothe  
hulde hire never falsen, nyght ne day,  
en hir husbonde while he lyvê may,  
that from his dethe hym savêd there.  
And here-upon at nyght they mete yfere,  
doth his othe, and goth with hir to  
bedde, 1644  
on the morwê upwarde he him  
spedde,  
he hath taught him how he shal not  
faile

lese to wyne, and stynten his batayle;  
savêd him his lyfe and his honour,

And gat a name ryght as a conquerour,  
Ryght thurgh the sleighte of hir en-  
chauntémēt. 1650

Now hath Jason the fleese, and home  
is went

With Médea, and tresourês ful grete  
woon;

But unwiste of hir fader she is goon  
To Tessalye, with duke Jason hir leefe,  
That afterwarde hath brought hir to  
myscheffe.

For as a traytour he is from hire go,  
And with hir lestê yongê children two,  
And falsly hath betrayêd hir, allas!  
And ever in love a cheffe traytour he was;  
And wedded yet the thriddê wife anon,  
That was the doghtre of the kyngc Creon.

This is the mede of lovyngc and  
guerdoun, 1662

That Médea receyvêd of Jason  
Ryght for hir trouthe, and for hir kyndê-  
nesse,

That loved hym betere thane hir-selfe, I  
gesse;

And left hir fadir and hire heritage.  
And of Jason this is the vassallage,  
That in his dayes nas never noon y-founde  
So fals a lover goyngc on the grounde.  
And therfore in her letter thus she sayde,  
First of his falsnesse whan she hym up-  
brayde. 1671

'Why lykêde me thy yelow heere to see,  
More than the boundês of myn honeste?  
Why lykêde me thy youthe and thy faire-  
nesse,

And of thy tonge the infinite gracious-  
nesse?

O, haddest thou in thy conquest ded y-be,  
ful mykel trouthe had ther dyed with  
the!'

Wel kan Ovyde hir letter in verse endyte,  
Which were as now to longe for me to  
write.

*Explicit Legenda Ysiphile et Medee,  
Martirum*

1650. a cheffe traytour, Gg a thef and tray-  
tour; Trin. a thyef traytour; Add. 3 traytour  
and theffe.

1670. in her letter, Ovid, *Her. Ep.* xii. 20. 11

1608. with, Gg and.  
1640. Add. 3 begins here.  
1643. Omitted in F<sup>3</sup>.

*incipit Legenda Lucretie, Rome, Martiris*

Now mote I sayne the exilynge of kynges  
f Romé, for here horrible doynges ; 1681  
f the laste kyng Tarquinius  
s sayth Ovyde, and Titus Lyvius.  
ut for that causé telle I nat this story,  
ut for to preyse, and drawn to memory  
heverray wife, theverray trewe Lucresse,  
hat for hir wifeshode, and hir stedfast-  
nesse,

iat only that these payens hir comende,  
ut he that y-cleped is in oure legende 1689  
hegrete Austyne hath grete compassyoun  
of this Lucresse that starf at Romé toun.  
and in what wise I wol but shortly trete,  
and of this thyng I touché but the grete.

Whan Ardea beseged was aboute  
With Romaynes, that ful sterné were and  
stoute,

ful longé lay the sege, and lytel wroghte,  
so that they were halfe ydel, as hem  
thoghte.

And in his pley Tarquinius the yonge  
Tan for to jape, for he was lyghte of tonge,  
And sayde that hyt was an ydel lyfe, 1700  
No man dide ther no more than his wife.  
'And lat us speke of wiv's that is best ;  
Preise every man his owné, as him lest,  
And withourespech let us ease oure herte.'

A knyght, that highté Colatyne, up  
sterre,

And sayde thus : 'Nay, for hit is no nede  
To trowen on the worde, but on the dede.  
I have a wife,' quod he, 'that as I trowe  
Is holden good of al that ever hir knowe.  
Go we to Rome, to nyght, and we shul se.'  
Tarquinius answerde, 'That lyketh me.'

To Romé be they come, and faste  
hem dighte 1712

To Colatyn's house, and down they lyghte,  
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatyne.

The housbonde knewe the estres wel  
and syne,

And ful prevely into the house they goon,

1683. *Ovyde*, Ovid, *Fasti* ii. 685, 721-852.

1683. *Lyvius*, Livius, i. 57-58.

1684. *telle*, Gg *ne telle*.

1686. *trewe*, Gg only ; rest om.

1701. *no* (2), Gg only ; rest om.

1716. *ful*, Trin.<sup>3</sup> om.

For at the gaté porter was there noon :  
And at the chambre doré they abyde.

This noble wyfe sat by hir beddys syde  
Disshevelé, for no malice she ne thoghte,  
And softé wolfe saith our boke that  
she wroghte, 1721

To kepen hir fro slouthé and ydilnesse ;  
And bad hirservantes doon hir besynesse ;  
And axeth hem, 'What tydynges heren ye ?  
How sayne men of the sege ? how  
shal it be ?

God wolde the wallés weren falle adoun  
Myn housbonde is to longe out of this toun,  
For which the dredé doth me so to smerte ;  
Ryght as a swerde hyt styngeth to myn  
herte, 1729

Whan I thinke on the sege, or of that place.  
God save my lorde, I pray him for his grace !

And therewithal ful tendirly she wepe,  
And of hir werke she toke no more kepe,  
But mekely she let hire eyen falle,  
And thilké semblant sat hir wel withalle,  
And eke the teer's ful of honeste  
Embelyshéd hire wifely chastitee.

Hire countenance is to her herté digne,  
For they acordeden in dede and signe.

And with that worde hir husbonde  
Colatyne, 1736

Ors he of him was ware, comestertynggyne,  
And sayéle, 'Drede the noght, for  
I am here !'

And she anon up roos, with blysful chere  
And kyssed hym, as of wyv's is the wone

Tarquinius, this prowld kyng's sone,  
Conceyved hath hir beaute and hir chere  
Hire yelow heer, hir shap, and hire manere  
Hir hewe, hir word's that she had  
compleyned,

And by no craft hire beaute was not feyned  
And kaughté to this lady suche desire,

That in his herté brent as any fire 1742  
So wodely that his witté was forgeten,

For wel thoghte he she shuld nat be geten  
And ay the more that he was in dispain

1721. *our boke*, Thynne (wrongly) *Liui*; Gg or  
Perhaps Chaucer wrote *Ovyde* (cp. *Fasti* ii. 74  
742).

1730. *the sege*, Trin.<sup>4</sup>; F<sup>4</sup> *these, this*; C  
corrupt.

1736. *honeste*, F<sup>3</sup> *herryte*; Tan. and Th. *her-  
nesse*. Ovid has 'lacrimas cecidere pudice.'

1753. (Gg) *For he wote wel she wolde*.

The more he covetyth, and thought hir faire;  
His blyndé lust was al his covetyng.

On morwé, whan the brid began to syng,  
Unto the sege he cometh ful pryvely,  
And by himselfe he walketh sobrelly,  
The ymage of hir recordyng alwey newe:  
'Thus lay hir heer, and thus fressh  
was hir hewe; 1761  
Thus sate, thus spake, thus spanne,  
this was hir chere;  
Thus faire she was, and thys was hir  
manere.'

Al this conceyte his herte hath new y-take,  
And as the see, with tempeste al to-shake,  
That after, whan the storme is al ago,  
Yet wol the watir quappe a day or two,  
Ryght so, thogh that hir formé were absent,  
The plesaunce of hir formé was present.

But nathéles, nat plesaunce, but delyte,  
Or an unryghtful talent with dispite,—  
'For mawgree hir, she shal my leman  
be:

Happe helpeth hardy man alway,' quod  
he,

'What endé that I make, hit shal be so !'  
And gyrt hym with his swerde, and  
gan to go,

And forth he rit til he to Rome is come,  
And al alone his way than hath he nome  
Unto the hous of Colatyne ful ryght.

Down was the sonne, and day hath  
lost his lyght, 1779

And inne he come, unto a prevy halke,  
and in the nyght ful thefely gun he stalke,  
Vhan every wyght was to his resté broght,  
Iceno wyghte had of tresoun suche a thought.  
Whether by wyndow, or by other gynne,  
With swerde y-drawe, shortly he cometh  
ynne

Here as she lay, thys noble wyfe Lucrese,  
and as she woke, hir bed she felté presse.  
What best is that,' quod she, 'that  
weyeth thus?'

I am the kyngés sone, Tarquinius,'  
quod he, 'but and thow crye, or  
noysé make, 1790

if thou any créature awake,  
e thilké God that formede man on lyve,  
his swerd thurghout thyn herté shal  
I ryve.'

And therewithal unto hir throte he sterte,  
And sette the swerde al sharpe unto  
hir herte.

No worde she spake, she hath no  
myght therto;  
What shal she sayne? hir wytte is al ago!  
Ryght as a wolfe that fynt a lomb alone,  
To whom shal she compleyne or  
maké mone?

What! shal she fyghté with an hardy  
knyghte? 1800

Wel woté men a woman hath no myghte.  
What! shal she crye, or how shal she sterte  
That hath hir by the throte, with swerde  
at herte?

She axeth grace, and seyde al that she kan.  
'Ne wolt thou nat?' quod tho this  
cruelle man,

'As wisly Jupiter my soulé save,  
As I shal in the stable slec thy knave,  
And lay him in thy bed, and lowdé crye,  
That I the fynde in suche avowtrye;  
And thus thou shalt be ded, and also lese  
Thy namé, for thou shalt non othir chese.'

Thise Romaynes wyfés loveden so  
hir name 1812

At thilké tyme, and dredden so the shame,  
That, what for fere of sklaundre, and  
drede of dethé,

She lost attonés bothé wytte and brethe;  
And in a swowgh she lay, and woxe so ded,  
Men myghten smyten of hir arme or hed,  
She felceth nothinge, neither foule ne feyre.

Tarquinius, thou art a kyngés eyre, 1819  
And sholdest, as by lynage and by ryght,  
Doon as a lorde and as a verray knyght;  
Why hastow doon dispite to chevalrye?  
Why hastow doon thys lady vylanye?  
Allas, of the thys was a vilenous dede!

But now to the purpose; in the  
story I rede

Whan he was goon and this myschaunce  
is falle.

Thys lady sent aftir hir frendés alle,  
Fáder, moder, housbonde, alle y-fere,

1798. *fynt a lomb*, F<sup>4</sup> (many of whose bad  
readings are passed over) here have *feyneth a  
love!*

1805. *tho*, Trin. only; Gg<sup>4</sup> *he*, rest om.

1815. *attonnes bothe* Gg only; rest *both attonnes*.

1821. *verray*, Gg *worthi*.

And al dysshevelce with hir heerè clere,  
In habyte suche as wymmen usede tho  
Unto the buryinge of hir frendès go, 1831  
She sytte in hallè with a sorowful syghte.  
Hir frendès axen what hir aylen myghte,  
And who was deale, and she sytte  
aye wepyng.

A worle for shame ne may she forthe  
out brynge,

Ne upon hem she durstè nat beholde,  
But attè laste of Tarquyn she hem tolde  
Thisrewful case, and al thysthing horribel.

The wo to telle hyt were an impossible  
That she and al hir frendès made attones.  
Al haddè folkès hertys ben of stones, 1841  
Hyt myght have makèd hem upon hir rewe,  
Hire hertè was so wyfely and so trewe.  
She sayde that for hir gylt, ne for hir blame,  
Hir housbonde shulde nat have the  
foulè name,

That noldè she nat sulfren by no wey.  
And they answerd alle upon hir fey,  
That they foraf hyt hyr, for hyt was ryght;  
Hyt was no gylt; hit lay not in hir myght,  
And seyden hire ensamples many oon.  
But al for noght, for thus she seyde anon:  
'Be as be may,' quod she, 'of foryfyng;  
I wol not have no foryift for nothings.'  
But pryvely she kaughtè forth a knyfe,  
And therewithal she rafte hir-selfe hir lyfe;  
And as she felle adoun she kaste hire lokene,  
And of hir clothès yet she hedè toke;  
For in hir fallynge yet she haddè care,  
Lest that hir fete or suchè thyng lay bare,  
So wel she lovèdè clennessè, and eke  
trouthe! 1860

Of hir had al the toun of Romè routhe,  
And Brutus by hir chastè bloodè hath sworn,  
That Tarquyn shulde y-banysshed be  
therfore,

And al his kynne; and let the peple calle,  
And openly the tale he tolde hem alle;  
And openly let cary her on a bere  
Thurgh al the toun, that men may  
see and here 1867

The horribel dede of hir oppressoun.  
Ne never was ther kynge in Romè toun  
Syn thilkè day; and she was holden there  
A seynt, and ever hir day y-halwèd dere,

1836-1907. Missing in Gg.

As in hire lawe. And thus endeth Lucrece  
The noble wyfe, as Titus beryth wittnesse.

I telle hyt, for she was of love so trewe,  
Ne in hir wille she chaungèdè for no newe;  
And for the stable hertè, sadde and kynde,  
That in these wymmen men may al  
day fynde;

Ther as they kaste hire hertè, then  
it dwelleth.

For wel I wot that Criste himselfè telleth,  
That in Israel, as wyde as is the londe,  
Nat so grete feythè in al that londe  
he fonde, 1880

As in a woman; and this is no lye.  
And as for men, loketh which tyrannye  
They doon al day,—assay hem who  
so lystè,

The trewest is ful brotil for to triste.

*Explicit Legenda Lucrecie, Rome,  
Martiri*

*Incipit Legenda Adriane de Athens*

Juge infernal Mynos, of Cretè king,  
Now cometh thy lotte, now comestow  
on the ryngè!

Nat only for thy sake writen is this story,  
But for to clepe ageyn unto memory 1880  
Of Theseus, the grete untrewè of love,  
For which the goddis of the heven above  
Ben wrothe, and wreche han takè for  
thy synne.

Be rede for shame! now I thy lyfe begynne  
Mynos, that was the myghty kynge  
of Cretè,

That wan an hundred citees stronge  
and grete,

To scole hath sent his sone Androgeus  
To Athenes, of the which hyt happeth thus  
That he was slayne, lernynge philosophie  
Ryght in that citee, nat but for envye.

The gretè Mynos, of the whiche I speke,  
His sonès dethe is comè for to wreke,  
Alcathoès besegeth harde and longe; 1902  
But nathelès, the wallès be so stronge,

1872. *As in hire lawe*, in their religion.

1881. *Nat*, Trin.<sup>3</sup>; rest *that*.

1881. *he*, all but Add. *he ne*.

1902. *Alcathoès*, the name of the western  
acropolis of Megara.

And Nysus, that was kyng of that citee,  
 so chyvalrous, that lytel dredeð he;  
 Of Mynos or his oste toke he no cure.  
 Til, on a day, befel an aventure,  
 That Nisus doghtre stode upon the walle,  
 And of the segé sawe the maner alle. 1909  
 so happede hyt that at a skarmysshynge,  
 she caste hir hert upon Mynos the kyng,  
 for his beaute, and for his chevalerye,  
 so soré, that she wendé for to dye.

And, shortly of this processe for to pace,  
 she madé Mynos wynnen thilké place,  
 so that the citee was al at his wille,  
 to saven whom hym lyst, or éllys spille.  
 But wikkidly he quytte hir kyndéncsse,  
 and leth hir drenchen in sorowe and distresse,  
 were that the goddys had of hir pite; 1920  
 but that tale were to longe as now for me.

Athénés wanne this kyngé Mynos also,  
 as Alcatheo and other tounés mo;  
 and this theffect, that Mynos hath so dryven  
 hem of Athénés, that they mote hym yiven  
 to yere to yere hir owene children dere  
 for to be slayne, as ye shal after here.

Thys Mynos hath a monstre, a wikked  
 beste,

that was so cruelle that, withoute areste,  
 than that a man was brought in his  
 presence, 1930

he wolde hymete; ther helpeth no defence.  
 and every thriddé yere, withouten doute,  
 they casten lotte, and as hyt came aboute  
 on ryche, on pore, he most his soné take,  
 and of his childe he mosté present make  
 to Mynos, to save him or to spille,  
 for lat his best devoure him at his wille.  
 and this hath Mynos doon right in dyspite;  
 to wreke his sone was sette all his delyte,  
 and maken hem of Athénés his thralle  
 to yere to yere, whille that he lyven shalle;  
 and home he saileth whan this toun is  
 wonne 1942

this wikked custome is so longe y-ronne,  
 til that of Athénés kyngé Egéus  
 moste senden his owne soné Théséus,  
 with that the lotte is fallen hym upon,  
 to be devoured, for grace is ther non.

1936. Trin.<sup>2</sup> botch this line by reading *unto* for  
 (1), Arch. Seld. by *for* to instead of *to* (2), Gg  
 as *To Théséus* for *To Mynos*.

And forth is lad thys woful yongé knyght  
 Unto the court of kyngé Mynos full ryght,  
 And in a prison fetred faste is he, 1950  
 Til thilké tyme he shulde y-freten be.

Wel maystow wepe, O woful Théséus,  
 That art a kyng's sone, and dampned thus!  
 Me thynketh this, that thou were depe  
 y-holde

To whom that savéd the fro carés colde!  
 And now, if any woman helpé the,  
 Wel oughtestow hir servant for to be,  
 And ben hir trewé lover yere by yere!  
 But now to come agayn to my matere.  
 The tour, ther as this Théséus is throwe,  
 Down in the bothome derke, and wonder  
 lowe, 1962

Was joynyng in the walle to a foreyne,  
 And hyt was longynge to the doghtren  
 tweyne

Of kyng Mynos, that in hire chambres grete  
 Dwelten above, toward the maystré strete  
 Of Athénés, in joy and in solace.

Wot I not how, hyt happédé parcase,  
 As Théséus compleynéd hym by nyghte,  
 The kyng's doghter Adriane that hyghte,  
 And eke hir suster Phedra, herden alle  
 Ilis compleynt, as they stoden on the walle,  
 And lokédén upon the bryghté moone;

Hem listé nat to go to beddé sone. 1973  
 And of his wo they hadde compassyoun;  
 A kyng's sone to be in swiche prisoun,  
 And be devoured, thoughte hem grete  
 pitee.

Than Adriane spake to hir suster free,  
 And seydé, 'Phedra, levé suster dere,  
 This woful lord's sone may ye not here,  
 How pitously compleyneth he his kynne,  
 And eke his pore estate that he is ynne,  
 And giltéles? now certés hit is routhe!  
 And if ye wol assenté, by my trouthe,  
 He shal be holpen, how so that we do.'

Phedra answerde, 'Y-wys, me is as wo  
 For him, as ever I was for any man;

1949. *court*, F<sup>4</sup> *contree*.

1949. *ful ryght*, F<sup>4</sup> *ful of myght*.

1964. *kyng*, Arch. Seld. only, probably an  
 emendation. Here again Gg has *Théséus* for  
*Mynos*.

1966. *Athenes*, probably Chaucer's own alip;

T<sup>2</sup> in *mocheill myrthe*.

1973. *sone*, F<sup>4</sup> Trin.<sup>2</sup> so *sone*.

1986. Add. stops here.

And to his helpe the bestè rede I kan,  
Is, that we doon the gayler prively  
To come and speke with us hastely,  
And doon this woful man with him to come;  
For if he may the monstre overcome, 1991  
Than were he quyte; ther is noon other  
bote!

Lat us wel taste him at hys herte-rote,  
That if so be that he a wepne have,  
Wher that he dar, his lyfe to kepe or save,  
Figheten with this fende and him defende.  
For in the prison, ther he shal descende,  
Ye wote wel that the best is in a place  
That nys not derke, and hath roume and  
eke space

To welde an axe, or swerde, or staffe, or  
knyffe. 2000

So that, me thenketh, he shuldè save his  
lyffe;

If that he be a man, he shal do so.

'And we shal make him ballés eke also  
Of wexe and towe, that, whan he gapeth  
faste,

Into the bestès throte he shal hem caste,  
Tosleke his hunger, and encombre his teeth.  
And ryght anon whan that Theseus seeth  
The beste akokèd, he shal on hym lepe  
To sleen hym or they comen more to-hepe.  
This wepen shal the gayler, or that tyde,  
Ful prively within the prisoun hyde: 2011  
And for the house is crynkled to and fro,  
And hath so queyntè weyès for to go,  
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought,  
Therto have I a remedy in my thought,  
That by a clewe of wyne, as he hath gon,  
The samè way he may returne anon,  
Folwyng alway the threde, as he hath  
come.

And whan that he this beste hathe over-  
come, 2019

Thanne may he fleen away out of this drede,  
And eke the gayler may he wyth him lede,  
And him avaunce at home in his contree,  
Syn that so grette a lordès sone is he.  
Thys is my rede, if that ye dar hyt take;  
What shulde I lenger sermoun of hyt make?"

1995. So Gg; F *wher that hys lyfe he dar kepe*;  
rest vary.

1999. Gg and hath bothe roum and space.

2020. drede, F<sup>4</sup> stede.

2024. *ye*, so Trin.<sup>2</sup> and Th.; rest *he*.

The gayler cometh, and with hy  
Theseus;

Whan thesè thyngès ben acordèd thus,  
Adoun sytte Theseus upon his knee, 2021  
'The ryghtè lady of my lyfe,' quod he,  
'I sorwful man, y-dampned to the deth,  
Froyow, whiles that me lasteth lyf or breth  
I wol not twynne afir this aventure.  
But in youre servise thus I wol endure;  
That asa wrecche unknowe I wol yow serv  
For evermore, til that myn hertè sterve.  
Forsake I wol at home myn herytage,  
And, as I sayde, ben of youre courte a page  
If that ye vouchèsafe that in this place,  
Ye grauntè me to have so gret a grace,  
That I may have not but my mete an  
drinke; 2031

And for my sustenance yet wol I swynk  
Ryght as yow lyst; that Mynos, ne i  
wyght,

Syn that he sawe me never with eyen sygt  
Ne no man ellès shal me konne espye,  
So slyly and so wel I shal me gye,  
And me so wel disfigure, and so lowe,  
That in this worlde ther shal no man i  
knowe,

To han my lyfe, and to have the preser  
Of yow, that doon to me this excellen  
And to my fader shal I sendè here 2  
This worthy man that is now your gayle  
And him to-guerdone that he shal wel l  
oon of the grettest men of my contree.  
And if I durstè sayne, my lady bryght  
I am a kyngès sone and eke a knyght,  
As woldè God, if that hyt myghtè bee  
Ye weren in my contree allè thre,  
And I with yow, to bere yow company  
Than shulde ye seen if that I therof lye  
'And if I profre yow in lowe manere  
To ben youre page and serven yow rygt  
here, 23

But I yow serve as lowly in that place,  
I prey to Mars to yevè me suche grace  
That shames deth on me ther motè fall  
And dethe and povertè to my frendès all  
And that my spiritè be nyghtè motè go  
After my dethe, and walkè to and fro,

2048. *to have the*, so Add.<sup>2</sup>; F<sup>4</sup> *to have*; C  
*for to have*.

2051. *now*, only Gg.

Thát I mote of traytoure have a name,  
For which my spirite goth to do meshame !  
And if I ever clayme other degre, <sup>2070</sup>  
But of ye vouchésafe to yeve hyt me,  
As I have seyde, of shamés deth I deye !  
And mercy, lady ! I kan nat ellés seye.'

A semely knyght was Theseus to <sup>acc</sup>,  
And yongé, but of twenty yere and three.  
But whoso hadde y-seen his contaunce,  
He wolde have wepte for routhe of his  
penaunce ;

For which this Adriane in this manere  
Answerde hym to his profre and to his chere.  
'A kyngés sone, and eke a knyght,' quod <sup>she</sup>, <sup>2080</sup>

'To ben my servant in so lowe degre,  
God shelde hit, for the shame of wymmen  
alle,

nd lene me never suche a case befallé !  
ut sende yow grace and sleight of herte  
also

ow to defende and knyghtly sleen your fo !  
nd lene hereaftir that I may yow fynde  
o me and to my suster here so kynde,  
hat I repenté not to yeve yow lyfe !

'Yet werhyt better that I were your wife,  
n that ye ben as gentil borne as I, <sup>2090</sup>  
nd have a realmé nat but fasté by,  
hen that I suffrede yow gyltles to sterve,  
r that I lete you as a pagé serve ;  
yt is no profre, as unto youre kynrede.  
ut what is that man wol not do for drede ?  
nd to my suster, syn that hyt is so,  
hat she mote goon with me, if that I goo,  
r ellés suffre deth as wel as I,  
hat ye unto your sone, as trewely, <sup>2099</sup>  
oon hir be welded at your home comynge.  
his is the final ende of al this thyngé ;  
e, swere hit here, upon al that may be  
sworne !'

'Yee, lady myn,' quod he, 'or ellés torne  
ote I be with the Minotawre to morowe !  
nd have here-of myn herté-bloode to  
borowe,  
that ye wol ! If I hadde knyfe or spere,  
wolde hit laien out, and theron swere,  
r then at erst I wote ye wol me leve.

<sup>2092</sup>. yow gyltles, F4 your gentillesse.

<sup>2094</sup>. no profre, etc., i.e. no proffer suitable to  
ur birth ; F4 not profet.

By Mars, that is the chefe of my beleve,  
So that I myghté lyven, and nat fayle  
To morowe for to achevé my batayle, <sup>2111</sup>  
I noldé never fro this placé flee,  
Til that ye shulde the verray prefé see.  
For now, if that the sothe I shal yow saye,  
I have y-lovéd yow ful many a daye,  
Thogh ye ne wiste it nat, in my contree,  
And aldermoste desiréd yow to see  
Of any erthely lyvyng creature.

Upon my trouthe I swere, and yow assure,  
These seven yere I have your servant bee.  
Now have I yow, and also have ye mee,  
My deré herte, of Athenés duchesse !'

This lady smyleth at his stedfastnesse,  
And at his hertely wordys, and his chere,  
And to hir suster sayde in this manere :

'Al softlyl now, suster myn,' quod she,  
'Now be we duchesses, both I and ye,  
And sykered to the regals of Athenes,  
And both hereaftir lykly to be queches,  
And savéd fro his deth a kyngés sone,  
As ever of gentil wymen is the wone <sup>2131</sup>  
To save a gentilman, enforthe hir myght,  
In honest cause, and namely in his ryght.  
Me thinketh no wyght ought us here-of  
blame,

Ne beren us therfore an evel name.'

And shortly of this matere for to make,  
This Theseus of hir hath leve y-take,  
And every poynt was performéd in dede,  
As ye have in this covenant herdeme rede ;  
His wepne, his clew, his thing that I  
have sayde, <sup>2140</sup>

Was by the gayler in the house y-layde,  
Ther as this Mynatour hath his dwelling,  
Ryght fasté by the dorre at his entryngé ;  
And Theseus is laddle unto his deth ;  
And forthe unto this Mynataure he geth,  
And by the techynge of thys Adriane,  
He overcome thys beste and was his bane,  
And oute he cometh by the clewe agayne  
Ful prively, when he thys beste hath  
slayne ;

And by the gayler gotten hath a barge, <sup>2150</sup>  
And of his wivés tresure gan it charge,  
And tok his wif, and eke hir suster free,  
And eke the gayler, and wyth hem alle  
three

Is stole away out of the londe by nighte,



And to the contree of Ennopye hym dyghte,  
There as he had a frende of his knowynge.  
There festen they, there dauncen they  
and synge,

And in his armés hath thys Adriane,<sup>a</sup>  
That of the beste hath kepte him from  
his bane. 2159

And gate him there a newé barge anon,  
And of his cowntre-folke a ful grete woon,  
And taketh his leve, and homewarde  
sayleth hee;

And in an yle, amydd the wildè see,  
There as ther dwelleth créature noon  
Save wildè bestes, and that ful many oon,  
He made his shippe a-londè for to sette,  
And in that ile halfe a day he lette,  
And sayde that on the londè he moste  
him reste.

His maryners han don ryght as hym  
leste;

And, for to tellè shortly in thys cas, 2170  
Whanne Adriane his wyfe aslepè was,  
For that hir suster fairer was than she,  
He taketh hir in his honde, and forth gooth  
he

To shyppe, and as a traytour stale his way,  
While that thys Adriane aslepè lay,  
And to his contree-wardè he sayleth  
blyve,—

A twenty devel way the wynde him  
dryve!—

And fonde his fader drenchèd in the see.  
Me lyste no more to speke of hym, *pardèe!*  
These falsè lovers, poyson be he bane!

But I wol turne ageyne to Adryane,  
That is with slepe for werynesse y-take;  
Ful sorwfully hir hertè may awake. 2183  
Allas, for the myn hertè hath pitee!  
Ryght in the dawényngè awaketh she,  
And gropeth in the bed, and fonde ryght  
nogh.

'Allas,' quod she, 'that ever I was  
wroght:

I am betrayéd,' and hir heer to-rente,  
And to the strondè barefote faste she wente,  
And cryede, 'Theseus! myn hertè swete!

<sup>2155.</sup> *Ennopye*, 'Ennopia, another name for *Ægina* (Skeat); Gilman suggests *Enope* in *Messenian*.

<sup>2184.</sup> *pítee*, *Gg now pítee*; *Trin.* <sup>3</sup> *gret pítee*.

<sup>2188.</sup> *hir heer*, *Gg al hir here*.

Where be ye, that I may not wyth yow  
mete?

And myghtè thus with bestes ben y-slayne.' 2191

The holower roches answerde hir agayne.  
No man she sawe, and yet shynède the  
mone,

And hye upon a rokke she wentè sone,  
And saw his bargè saylyng in the see.  
Colde waxe hir herte, and ryght thus  
saydè she:

'Meker than ye fynde I the bestès  
wilde!—

Hadde he not synné that hir thus be-  
gyldè!—

She cried, 'O turne agayne for rothe  
and synne, 2200

Thy bargè hath not al his meyn y-nne.'  
Hir kerche on a pole up stykede she,  
Ascauncè that he shulde hyt wel y-see,  
And hym remembre that she was behynde,  
And turne agayne, and on the strondè  
hir fynde.

But al for noght; his wey he is i-noon,  
And doun she felle a-swowne upon a stoon;  
And up she ryste, and kyssed in al hir care  
The steppès of his fete, there he hath fare,  
And to hir bedde ryght thus she speketh  
tho: 2210

'Thow bedd,' quoth she, 'that hast  
receyved two,

Thow shalt answer of two and not of oon,  
Where is thy gretter parte away i-noon?  
Allas, whershal I wreched wyght become!  
For though so be that shyp or boot here  
come,

Home to my contree dar I not for drede:  
I kan my-selfè in this case not rede.'

What shulde I tellè more hir compleyn-  
ynge?

Hyte is so longe hyt were an hevvy thyngè.  
In hyr Epistil Naso telleth alle; 2220

But shortly to the endè tel I shalle.  
The goddys have hir holpen for pitee,  
And in the sygne of Taurus men may see  
The stonès of hir crowne shynè clere;  
I wol no morè speke of thys matere.

<sup>2215.</sup> *ship or boot*, *Trin.*; *Arch. Seld.* *am*  
*Add.* *any lode*; *Gg boot here ne*; *F4 bot*  
*moon here*. *Ovid*:

*Pinge, dari comitesque mihi, ventosque, ratemque.*

But thus this falsé lover kan begyle  
His trewe love, the devel quyte hym his  
while !

*Explicit Legenda Adriane de Athenes*

*Incipit Legenda Philomene*

Thow yiver of the formés, that hast  
wroght

The faîré worlde, and bare hit in thy thought  
Eternally or thow thy werke beganne, <sup>2230</sup>  
Why madest thou unto the sklaunder of  
manne,

Or<sup>2</sup>—al be that hyt was not thy doynge,  
As for that fyne to maké suche a thyng,—  
Why suffrest thou that Tercús was bore,  
That is in love so fals and so forswore,  
That fro thys worlde up to the firsté hevene  
Corrupteth, whan that folke his namé  
nevene ?

And as to me, so grisly was his dede,  
That than that I this foulé story rede,  
Myn eyen wexen foule and sore also ; <sup>2240</sup>  
Yet laste the venym of so longe ago,  
That it infecteth hym that wolde beholde  
The story of Tereús, of which I tolde.

Of Trasé was he lorde, and kynne to  
Marte,

The cruelle god that stante with bloody  
darte,

And wedded hadde he, with a blisful chere,  
King Pandýónés faîré doghter dere,  
That hyghté Proygne, floure of hir contree ;  
Thogh Juno lyst nat at the festé bee,  
Ne Ymeneus, that god of weddyng is. <sup>2250</sup>  
But at the festé redy ben, y-wys,  
The Furies thre, withal hire mortel bronde,  
The owle al nyght about the balkés wonde,  
That prophete is of wo and of myschaunce.  
This revel, ful of songe, and ful of daunce,  
Lasteth a fourtényght or lytel lasse.

But shortly of this story for to passe,—  
For I am wery of hym for to telle,—  
Fyve yere his wyfe and he togedir dwelle ;  
Til on a day she gan so soré longe <sup>2260</sup>  
To seen hirsuster, that she saugh not longe,

That for desyre she nysté what to seye,  
But to hir husbonde gan she for to preye  
For Goddys love, that she moste onés gon  
Hir suster for to seen, and come anon.  
Or ellés, but she mosté to hyr wende,  
She preyde hym that he wolde aftir hir  
sende.

And thys was day be day al hir prayere,  
With al humblesse of wyfchode, worde  
and chere. <sup>2269</sup>

This Tercús let make his shippés yare,  
And into Grece hymselfe is forthe y-fare,  
Unto his fader in lawe, and gan hym preye,  
To vouchésafe that for a moneth or tweye,  
That Philomene, his wyfés suster, myghte  
On Proigne his wyfe but onés have a syghte ;  
' And she shal come to yow agayne anon,  
Myselfe with hyr, I wil bothe come and  
gon,

And as myn hertés lyfe I wol hir kepe.'

Thys oldé Pandéon, thys kynge, gan  
wepe

For tendernesse of herté for to leve <sup>2280</sup>  
His doghter gon, and for to yive hir leve ;  
Of al thys worlde he lovede nothings so ;  
But at the lasté leve hath she to go.

For Philomene with salté terés eke  
Gan of hir fader grácé to beseke,  
To seen hir sustre that she loveth so,  
And hyn embraceth with hir armés two.  
And ther-with-alle so yonge and faire was  
she, <sup>2288</sup>

That whan that Tercús saugh hir beaute,  
And of array that ther nas noon hir lyche  
(And yet of beaute was she two so ryche),  
He caste his fiery hert upon hir so,  
That he wol have hir, how-so that hyt go,  
And with his wilés kneled and so preyde,  
Til at the lasté Pandéon thus seyde :

' Now, sone,' quod he, ' that arte to  
me so dere,

I the betake my yongé doghtre here,  
That bereth the key of al myn hertés lyfe.  
And greté wel my doghter and thy wyfe,  
And yeve hir leve sometymé for to pleye,  
That she may seen me onés or I deye.'  
And sothely he hath made him ryché feste,  
And to his folke, the moste and eke the leste,

<sup>2228.</sup> *yiver of the formes*, 'Deus dator formarum,' Bodley gloss.

<sup>2256.</sup> *Lasteth*, Arch. Seld. *Lastith*; rest *Laste*.

<sup>2286.</sup> *she loveth*, F<sup>4</sup> *hir longest*.

<sup>2291.</sup> *beaute*, F<sup>2</sup> *bounte*.

That with him come ; and yaf him yestes grete,

And him conveyeth thurgh the maist strete  
Of Athenes, and to the see him broghte,  
And turneth home ; no malyce he ne thoghte.

The ores pulleth forth the vessel faste,  
And into Trace arryeth at the laste ;  
And up into a forest he hir ledde, <sup>2310</sup>  
And to a cavé pryvely hym spedde,  
And in this derké cavé, yif hir leste,  
Or lesté noght, he bad hir for to reste ;  
Of which hir hert agrose, and seyde thus :

' Where is my suster, brother Tercus ?  
And therewithal she wepte tendirly,  
And quoke for feré, pale and pitously,  
Ryghte as the lambe that of the wolfe is byten,

Or as the colver that of the egle is smyten,  
And is out of his clawis forthe escaped,  
Yét hyt is aferd and awshapd <sup>2321</sup>  
Lest hit be hent eftsones : so sate she.

But utterly hyt may none other be,  
By forcé hath this traytour done a dede,  
That he hath refte hir of hur maydenhede  
Maugree hir hede, by strengthe and by his myght.

Lo, here a dede of men, and that aryght !  
She crieth ' Suster ! ' with ful loudé stevene,  
And ' Fader dere ! ' and ' Helpe me,  
God in hevене ! '

Al helpeth nat. And yet this falsé thefe  
Hath doon thys lady yet a more myschefe,  
For ferde lest she sholde his shamé crye,  
And done hym openly a vilanye, <sup>2333</sup>  
And with his swerde hire tonge of ker-  
veth he,

And in a castel made hir for to be  
Ful privily in prison evermore,  
And kept hir to his usage and to his store,  
So that she myghte hym nevermore asterte.

O sely Philomene, wo is in thyn herte !  
God wreke the, and sendé the thy bone !  
Now is hyt tyme I make an endé sone.

This Tercus is to his wyfe y-come,  
And in his armes hath his wyfe y-nome,

And pitously he wepe, and shoke his hede,  
And swore hire that he fonde hir  
suster dede ;

For whiche thesely Proigne hath suche wo,  
That nyghe hire sorwful hert brake a-two,  
And thus in terés lat I Proigne dwelle,  
And of hir suster forthe I wol yow telle.

This woful lady y-learnéd had in yowthe,  
So that she werken and enbrowden  
kowthe, <sup>2351</sup>

And weven in hire stole the radevore,  
As hyt of wymmen hath ben y-wovéd yore.  
And, shortly for to seyn, she hath hir fille  
Of mete and drynke, and clothyng at  
hire wille,

And kouthe eke rede and wel ynogh endyte,  
But with a penné kouthe she nat write ;  
But letteres kan she wevé to and fro.

So that by that the yere was al ago,  
She hadlé woven in a stames large, <sup>2360</sup>  
How she was broght from Athenes  
in a barge,

And in a cavé how that she was broght,  
And al the thinge that Tercus hath wrought,  
She wote hyt wel, and wrote the  
story above,

How she was servél for hir suster love.  
And to a knave a ryng she yaf anon,  
And prayéd hym by signés for to goon  
Unto the queene, and beren hir that clothe ;  
And by signés swor hym many an othe,  
She shulde hym yevé what she geten  
myghte. <sup>2370</sup>

Thys knave anon unto the queene  
hym dyghte,  
And toke hit hir, and al the maner tolde.  
And whanne that Proigne hath this  
thing beholde,

No worde she spake, for sorwe and  
eke for rage,

But feynéd hyr to goon on pilgrymage  
To Bachus temple. And in a lytel stounde  
I hire dombé suster syttyng hath she founde  
Wépyng in the castel, hir-self allone.

Allas, the wo, the compleynt, and the  
mone

<sup>2350</sup>. *hire*, F<sup>3</sup> om.

<sup>2353</sup>. *ben y-wovéd*, so Arch. Seld. ; rest *be wovéd*.

<sup>2360</sup>. *signes*, F<sup>4</sup> *signe*.

<sup>2369</sup>. *hym*, Gg only ; Trin. *she* ; rest om.

<sup>2350</sup>. *and* (2), om. F<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>2332</sup>. *For ferde* Gg<sup>3</sup> *For fere*.

<sup>2338</sup>. F<sup>3</sup> om. and invert the spurious line *Huge*  
*ben thy sorwes and wonder smerte* after <sup>2339</sup>.

That Proigne upon hir dombé suster  
maketh ! <sup>2380</sup>

n armés everych of hem other taketh ;  
and thus I lat hem in her sorwé dwelle.

The remenant is no chargé for to telle,  
for this is al and some,—thus was  
she served,

That never harm agyltē ne deservede  
into this cruelle man, that she of wyste.

He may be war of men, yif that yow lyste.  
For al be that he wol not for his shame

oon as Tereus, to lese his name, <sup>2389</sup>

he serve yow as a morderere or a knave,  
ful lytel while shul ye trewe hym have,—

that wol I seyne, al were he now  
my brother,—

but hit so be that he may have non other.

*Explicit Legenda Philomene*

*Incipit Legenda Phillis*

By preve, as wel as by auctorite,  
That wikked frute cometh of a wikked tree,  
That may ye fynde, if that hyt liketh yow.

But for this ende I speke this as now,  
To tellē yow of falsē Demophon.

In love a falsē herde I never non,  
But if hit were hys fader Theseus ; <sup>2400</sup>

God, for his gracc, fro suche oon kepe us !  
Thus thesē wyemen prayen that hit here ;

Now to theffet turne I of my matere.  
Dystroyēd is of Troyē the citee ;

This Demophon come saylyng in the see  
Towardē Athēnēs to his jaleys large.

With hym come many a shippe and  
many a large

Ful of folke, of whiche ful many on  
is wounded sore, and seke, and wo begon,

And they han at a segē longe y-layne.  
Byhynde him come a wynde and eke

a rayne, <sup>2411</sup>

That shofe so sore his saylle ne myghtē  
stonde,

Hym werē lever than al the worlde a-londe,  
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro !

So derke hyt was, he kouthē no-where go,

<sup>2388.</sup> *his*, Gg only.

<sup>2400.</sup> *if*, F<sup>2</sup> om.

<sup>2408.</sup> *folke*, Gg *his folk*.

And with a wawē bposten was his stere.  
His shippe was rent so lowe, in suche  
manere,

That carpentere ne koude hit nat amende.

The see by nyght as any torchē brende  
For wode, and posseth hym now up now  
doun ; <sup>2420</sup>

Til Neptune hath of hym compassyoun,  
And Thetis, Chorus, Triton, and they alle,

And maden him upon a londe to falle,  
Wherof that Phillis lady was and quene,

Lycurgus doghtre, fayrer on to sene  
Than is the floure ageyn the bryghtesonne.

Unneth is Demophon to londe  
y-wonne,

Wayke and ekewery, and his folke forpynd  
Of werynesse, and also enfamyned, <sup>2429</sup>

And to the dethe he was almoste y-dreven.  
His wisē folke to counseyle han hym yeven,

To seken helpe and socour of the quene,  
And loken what his graccē myghtē bene,

And maken in that londe some chevis-  
saunce,

To kepen hym fro wo and fro myschaunce.  
For seke he was, and almoste at the dethe ;

Unnethē myght he speke, or drawē brethe,  
And lyeth in Rhodopeya hym for to reste.

Whan he may walke, hym thoght hit  
was the beste

Unto the court to seken for socoure. <sup>2440</sup>  
Men knewe hym welle and diden hym  
honoure ;

For at Athēnēs duke and lorde was he,  
As Theseus his fader hath y-be,

That in his tymē was of grete renoun,  
No man so grete in al his regioun ;

And lyke his fader of face and of stature,  
And fals of love ; hyt came hym of nature,

As doth the fox Renarde, the foxes sone,  
Of kynde he koude his oldē fadrēs wone

<sup>2420.</sup> *now up now down*, F<sup>4</sup> *up and down*.

<sup>2422.</sup> *Chorus*. So Thynne (the MSS. read *Thorus*), probably a misunderstanding of 'Et senior Glauci chorus' in *Æn.* v. 823-825, where Thetis, Triton 'and they all' ('exercitus omnis') are mentioned. See Skeat's note and Bech in *Anglia*, vol. v.

<sup>2435.</sup> *To*, F<sup>4</sup> *And*.

<sup>2438.</sup> *Rhodopeya*, a mountain in Thrace.

<sup>2440.</sup> *court*, F<sup>4</sup> *contree*.

<sup>2441.</sup> *diden*, so Gg (*dedym*) ; F<sup>4</sup> *dyd* ; Trin.<sup>3</sup> *did him gret* ; Add. 2 *hym they dede*.

<sup>2442.</sup> *at*, Gg *of*.

Withouté lore, as kana drakēs swymme 2450  
Whan hit is kaught and caried to the  
brymme.

Thys honourable quenē doth him chere,  
Hir lyketh wel his porte and his manere.  
But for I am agroteyd here beforene,  
To write of hem that ben in love forsworne  
And eke to hastē me in my Legende,  
Which to performē, God me gracē sende;  
Therefore I passē shortly in thys wyse.

Ye have wel herde of Thesēus devise,  
In the betraysyng of faire Adriane, 2460  
That of hir pitee kepte hym fro his bane.  
At shortē wordēs, ryght so Demophon,  
The samē way, the samē path hath gon,  
That did his falsē fairer Thesēus.  
For unto Phillis hath he sworn thus,  
Towedden hir, and hir his trouthe plyghte,  
And pikēd of hyr al the good he myghte,  
Whan he was hole and sounde, and had  
his reste,

And doth with Phillis what-so that him  
leste,

As wel kouthe I, gif that me lestē so, 2470  
Tellen al his doynge, to and fro.

He sayde unto his contree moste he  
sayle,

For ther he wolde hire weldyng apparayle  
As fille to hir honour and his also,  
And openly he tok his levē tho,  
And to hir swore he woldē not sojourne,  
But in a moneth ageyn he wolde retourne.  
And in that londe let make his ordynauce,  
As verray lordē, and toke the obeisaunce  
Wel and homely, and let his shippidyghte,  
And home he gooth the nextē wey he  
myghte. 2481

For unto Phillis yet ne come he noght,  
And that hath she so harde and sorey-boght,  
Allas, that as the storyes us recorde,  
She was hir ownē dethe ryght with a corde,  
Whanne that she segh that Demophon  
her trayede.

But to hym firste she wrote, and faste hym  
prayxle

He wolde come and hir delyver of peyne,

As I rehersē shal oo worde or tweyne.  
Me lystē nat vouch-safe on him to swynke,  
Ne spend on hym a pennē ful of ynke, 2491  
For fals in love was he, ryght as his syre;  
The devel set hire soules both a-fire!  
But of the letter of Phillis wol I wryte  
A worde or tweyne, althogh hit be but lyte.

'Thyn hostesse,' quod she, 'O thou  
Demophon,

Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,  
Of Rhodopey, upon yow mot compleyne,  
Over the termē sette betwix us tweyne,  
That ye ne holden forwarde, as ye seyde.  
Your anker, which ye in oure haven leyde,  
Hyght us that ye wolde comen out of Joute,  
Or that the monē went onēs aboute;  
But tymēs foure the mone hath hid hir face  
Syn thylkē day ye wentē fro this place;  
And foure tymēs lyghte the worlde ageyn.  
But for al that, yet I shal soothly seyn,  
Yet hath the streme of Sithon nat i-broght  
From Athenēs the shippe; yet cometh  
hit noght.

And if that ye the termē reknē wolde, 2500  
As I or other trewē lovers sholde,  
I pleynē nat, God wot! before my day!  
But al hir letter wroten I ne may  
By ordre, for hit were to me a charge;  
Hir letter was ryght longe, and therto large.  
But here and there in ryme I have hyt layde,  
There as me thoughtē that she hath wad  
sayde.

She seyde, 'Thy sayllēs cometh nat  
ageyn,

Ne to the worde there nys no fey certeyn:  
But I wote why ye comē nat,' quod she:  
'For I was of my love to yow so fre. 2510  
And of the goldys that ye han for-wore,  
If hire vengeauncē fal on yow therefore,  
Ye be nat suffisaunt to bere the peyne.  
To muchē trusted I, wel may I pleyne,  
Upon youre lynage and youre fairē tonge  
And on youre terēs falsēly out-wronge.  
How kouthe ye wepē so be crafte?' quod  
she;

2491. *Ne spend*, F<sup>4</sup> *Dispenden*.

2496. *thou*, Trin. and Arch. Seld. only.

2508. *Sithon*, the name of the father of Phillis  
the King of Thrace.

2511. *lovers*, F<sup>4</sup> *lovers*.

2513. *If*, F<sup>4</sup> *That*.

2459. *devise*, F<sup>3</sup> *the nyse*; Thynne *the gyse*.

2460. *homely*, 1<sup>an</sup> *humble*; Thynne *humblly*.

2480. *let*, Gg only; rest om.

2482. *For*, Trin. *But*.

'Máý there suchê teres i-feynede be ?  
Now certes gif ye wolde have in memorye,  
Hyt oughte to be yow but lytel glorie, <sup>2531</sup>  
To have a sely maydê thus betrayed !  
To God,' quod she, 'prey I, and ofte  
have prayed,

That hyt be nowe the grettest prise of alle,  
And moste honour that ever yow shal  
befalle.

And when thynolde auncetres peynted be,  
In which men may her worthynessê se,  
Then pray I God, thou peynted be also,  
That folke may reden, for-by as they go, —

"Lo, this is he; that with his slaterye  
Betrayed hath, and doon hir vilanye, <sup>2541</sup>  
That was his trewê love in thoghte and  
dede."

But sothely of oo poynt yet may they  
rede,

That ye ben lyke youre sader, as in this ;  
For he begiled Adriane, y-wis,  
With suche an arte, and suchê soteltee,  
As thou thy-selven hast begiled me.  
As in that poynt, although hit be nat feire,  
Thou folwest hym certeyn, and art his  
eyre.

But syn thus synfully ye me begile, <sup>2550</sup>  
My body mote ye seen, within a while,  
Ryght in the havene of Athenês sleyng,  
Withouten sepulture and buryng,  
Though ye ben harder then is any stone.

And whan this letter was forthe sent  
anone,

And knew how brotel and how fals he was;  
She for dispeyre forlode hir-self, allas !  
Suche sorowe hath she, for she beset hires o!  
Be war, ye wymmen, of youre sotile fo !  
Syns yet this day men may ensample se,  
And, as in love, trusteth no man but me.

*Explicit Legenda Phillis*

*Incipit Legenda Ypermystre*

In Grece whilom weren brethren two  
Of which that oon was callêd Danao, <sup>2563</sup>  
That many a sone hath of his body wonne,  
As suchê falsê lovers oftê konne.

Among his sonês allê there was oon,  
That aldermoste he loved of everychon.

And whan this childe was borne, this Danao  
Shope hym a name, and callêd hym Lyno.

That other brother callêd was Egiste,  
That was in love as fals as ever hym lyste.  
And many a doghtre gat he in his lyfe ;  
Of which he gat upon his ryghtê wife <sup>2573</sup>  
A doghter dere, and did hir for to calle  
Ypermystra, yongest of hem alle.  
The whichê childe, of hir natyvite,  
To allê goodê thewês borne was she,  
As lykêde to the goddess, or she was borne,  
That of the shefe she shuldê be the corne.

The Wyrdes, that we clepen Destanye,  
Hath shapen hir, that she moste nedês be  
Pitousê, saddê, wise, and trewe as stele.  
And to this woman hyt acordeth wele ;  
For though that Venusyaf hir grete beaute,  
With Jupiter compouned so was she,  
That consciencê, trouthe, and drede of  
shame,

And of hir wyfchode for to kepe hir name,  
This thoghte hire was felicitê as here.  
And redê Mars was that tyme of the yere  
So feble, that his malice is him rafte ; <sup>2590</sup>  
Repressêd hath Venûs his cruelle crafte ;  
And with Venûs, and other oppressyoun  
Of houses, Mars his venym is adoun,  
That Ypermystra dare not handel a knyfe  
In malyce, thogh she shuldê lese hir lyfe.

But natheles, as heven gan tho turne,  
To badde aspectes hath she of Saturne,  
That made hir for to dyen in prisoun,  
As I shal after makê menciou.

To Danao and Egistes also, <sup>2600</sup>  
Al thogh so be that they were brethren  
two,

For thilkê tyme nas sparêd no lynage,  
Hyt lyketh hem to maken mariage  
Betwixê Ypermestre and hym Lyno,  
And casten suche a day hyt shal be so,  
And ful accorded was hit wittirly.

The array is wrought, the tyme is fastê by,  
And thus Lyno hath of his fadres brother  
The doghter wedded, and eche of hem  
hath other.

<sup>2582.</sup> *aut.* Trin.<sup>2</sup> only.

<sup>2592.</sup> *And with,* Gg<sup>4</sup> *That* (Thynne *And*)  
*what with.*

<sup>2598.</sup> *dyen.* MSS. *dy, dye.*

<sup>2599.</sup> *As,* F<sup>4</sup> *And.*

<sup>2601.</sup> *Al,* F<sup>5</sup> *And.*

The torches brennen, and the lampes  
bryghte,

2610

The sacrifices ben ful redy dyght,  
Thencence out of the fire reketh sote,  
The flour, the lefe, is rent up by the rote,  
To maken garlandes and coronés hye ;  
Ful is the place of sounde of mynstralcy,  
Of songes amoureuse of mariage,  
As thilké tymé was the pleyne usage.  
And this was in the paleys of Egiste,  
That in his house was lorde, ryght as hym  
lyste.

And thus that day they driven to an ende ;  
The frendes taken leve, and home they  
wende ;

2621

The nyght is comen, the bride shal go to  
bedde.

Egiste to his chambre fast hym spedde,  
And prively he let his doghter calle,  
Whanne that the hous was voyded of hem  
alle.

He lokéd on his doghter with glad chere,  
And to hir spak as ye shal after here.

'My ryghté doghtér, tresour of myn  
herte,

Syn firste that day that shapen was my  
sherte,

2629

Or by the fatale sustren hadde my dome,  
So ny myn herte never thinge me come  
As thou, myn Ypermystra, doughter dere !  
Take hedé what thy fader seyth the here,  
And wirke after thy wiser ever mo.

For alderfirsté, doghter, I love the so  
That al the world to me nys half so lefe,  
Ne I noldé reldé the to thy myschefe,  
For al the good under the coldé moone ;  
And what I meene, hyt shal be seyde  
ryght soone,

2639

With protestacioun, as seyn these wyse,  
That, but thou do as I shal the devyse,  
Thou shalt be ded,—by hym that al hath  
wrought !

At shorté wordés thou ne scapest nought  
Out of my paleys or that thou be dede,  
But thou consente and werke aftir my rede ;  
Take this to the for ful conclusioun.'

2612. *myn*, Gg only ; Trin.<sup>2</sup> have *my* before  
doughter.

2633. *what*, Gg *what* I.

2637. *I noldé*, F<sup>4</sup> *noldé* ; Trin. *wold* ; Add.  
*woldé* I.

This Ypermystra caste hir eyen doun,  
And quoke as doth the lefe of aspé grene ;  
Ded wex hir hewe, and lyke an ashe to sene ;  
And seyde, 'Lorde and fader, al youre wille,  
After my myght, God wote I shal fulfille,  
So hit to me be no confusioun.'

2652

'Inyl,' quod he, 'have noon excepcioun ;  
And out he kaughte a knyfe as rasour kene.  
'Hyde this,' quod he, 'that hyt be not  
i-sene,

And whan thyn housbonde is to beddè go,  
While that he slepeth kut his throte atwo ;  
For in my dremés hyt is warnéd me,  
How that my newew shal my hané be,  
But which I not ; wherefore I wol be slyker.  
Gif thou say nay, we two shal have a byker,  
As I have seyde, by him that I have sworne !'

This Ypermystre hath nygh hire wytte  
forlorne,

2663

And, for to passen harmlesse of that place,  
She graunted hym ; ther was noon other  
grace.

And therewithal a costrel taketh he  
And seyde, 'Hereof a draught, or two, or  
thre,

Yif hym to drynké, whan he gooth to reste,  
And he shal slepe as long as ever the leste ;  
The narcotikes and opies ben so stronge.  
And go thy way, lest that hym thynke to  
longe.'

2671

Oute cometh the bride, and with ful  
sobre chere,

As is of maidenes ofté the manere,  
To chambre is broght with revel and with  
songe.

And shortly, leste this talé be to longe,  
This Iyno and she beth i-broght to bedde,  
And every sight out at the dore hym  
spedde.

The nyght is wasted and he felle aslepé ;  
Ful tenderly begynneth she to wepe ;  
Sheristehirup, and dredefully she quaketh,  
As doth the braunché that Zepherus  
shaketh,

2681

2649. *an*, F<sup>4</sup> *as*.

2666. *he*, F<sup>4</sup> add *the*, omitting *or thre* in next  
line.

2676. Trin. mends this line by reading *beth som*  
*for beth*, but Trin. and Arch. Seld. have *hané*  
*for Lino*, and this metre-saving slip may be  
Chaucer's own.

## TO ROSEMOUNDE—THE FORMER AGE (ÆTAS PRIMA)

nd hussht were alle in Argone that citee.  
 s colde as eny froste now wexeth she,  
 or pite by the herte hir streyneth so,  
 nd drede of dethe doth hir so moche wo,  
 hat thriës doun she fil in swich a were,  
 1eryst hirupandstakereth hereandthere,  
 nd on hir handës fastë loketh she. •  
 Allas, and shal myn handës blodly be?  
 am a mayde, and as by my nature, 2690  
 nd by my semblant, and by my vesture,  
 lyn handës ben nat shapen for a knyfe,  
 s for to revë no man fro his lyfe!  
 /hat devel have I with the knyfe to do?  
 nd shal I have my throtë korve a-two?  
 han shal I blede, allas, and me be-shende!  
 nd nedës-coste thys thing mot have an  
 ende;

r he or I mot nedës lese oure lyfe.  
 ow certës, 'quod she, 'syn I am his wyfe,  
 nd hathe my feythe, yet is hyt bet for me  
 or to be ded in wyfely honeste, 2701  
 han be a traytour lyvyng in my shame.  
 e as be may, for erneste or for game,  
 e shal awake and ryse and go his way  
 ut at this goter, or that hyt be day.'

And wepte ful tendirly upon his face,  
 And in hir armës gan hym to embrace,  
 And hym she roggeth and awaketh softe,  
 And at the wyndow lepe he fro the lofte,  
 Whan she hath warnëd hym and doon  
 hym bote. 2710

This Lyno swyftë was and lyght of fote,  
 And from his wif he ranne a ful goode pas.  
 This sely womman ys so wayke, allas!  
 And helples, so that er that she fer wente  
 Her crewel fader did her for to hente,  
 Allas! Lyno, why art thou so unkynde?  
 Why ne haddist thou remembred in thy  
 mynde  
 And taken hir and ledde hir forthe with  
 the?

For when she sawe that goon away was he,  
 And that she mightë not so fastë go, 2720  
 Ne folowen hym she sat hir doun ryght tho,  
 Til she was caught and fetere in prysoun.  
 This talc is seyde for this conclusioun.

2717. *his wif he, F<sup>4</sup> hir.*

2723. At this point Chaucer, after showing many signs of tiredness, seems to have abandoned the *Legend* altogether.

## LATER MINOR POEMS

### TO ROSEMOUNDE

#### A BALADE

ADAME, ye ben of al beauté [the] shryne  
 fer as cerclëd is the mappemounde,  
 as the cristal glorious ye shyne  
 nd lykë ruby ben your chekës rounde.  
 1erwith ye ben so mery and so jocounde  
 at at a revel whan that I see you daunce,  
 is an oynement unto my wounde,  
 ough ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

r though I wepe of terës ful a tyme, 9  
 t may that wo myn hertë nat confounde;  
 1ursemly voys that ye so smal out-twyne  
 sketh my thought in joye and blis  
 habounde.

curteisly I go, with lovë bounde,  
 at to myself I sey, in my penaunce,

• MS. Rawl. Poet. 163 omits *the*.

1. MS. reads *semy*; and *small* (i.e. *final*)  
*small*, according to Skeat.

Suffyseth me to love you Rosemounde,  
 Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Nas never pyk walwëd in galauntyn  
 As I in love am walwëd and y-wounde,  
 For which ful ofte I of my-self dyvyne  
 That I am trewë Tristam the secounde, 20  
 My love may not refreyd be nor afounde;  
 I brenne ay in an amorous plesaunce.  
 Do what you lyst, I wyl your thral be  
 founde

Though ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

TREGENTIL.

CHAUCER.

### THE FORMER AGE

#### (ÆTAS PRIMA)

A BLISFUL lyf, a paisible and a swete,  
 Ladden the peplës in the former age;



They held hem paid of fruitès that they  
ete,

Whiche that the feldès yave hem by usage,  
They ne werè nat for-pampred with out-  
rage.

Unknown was the quern and eek the melle,  
They eten mast, hawès, and swych pounage,  
And dronken water of the coldè welle.

Yit nas the ground nat wounded with  
the plough,  
But corn up-sprong, unsowe of mannès  
hond,

The which they gnodde and eete nat half  
y-nough;

No man yit knew the forwès of his lond;  
No man the fyr out of the flynt yit fonde;  
Unkorven and ungrobbéd lay the vyne;  
No man yit in the morter spices grond  
To clarrè, ne to sause of galentyne.

No mader welde, or wood no litèstere  
Neknew; the flees was of his former hewe;  
No flesh ne wyste offence of egge or spere;  
No coyn ne knew man which was fals or  
trewe;

No ship yit karf the wawès grene and blewe;  
No marchaunt yit ne fette outlandish ware;  
No trompès for the werrès folk ne knewe,  
Ne towrés hey and wallès rounde or square.

What sholde it han avayléd to werreye?  
Ther lay no profit, ther was no richesse;  
But curséd was the tyme, I dar wel seye,  
That men first dide hir swety besynesse  
To grobbe up metal lurkyng in darknesse,  
And in the ryverès fyrst gemmès soghte;  
Allas! than sprong up al the cursédnesse  
Of covetyse that fyrst our sorwè broughte!

Thise tyrants putte hem gladly nat in  
pres

No wyldnesse ne no busshès for to wynde.  
Ther poverte is, as seith Diogenes,  
Ther as vitale is eek so skars and thinne,  
That noght but mast or apples is ther-inne;  
But ther as baggès been and fat vitale  
Ther wol they gon and sparè for no synne  
With al hir ost the cyte *forto* asayle.

3. Both MSS. read *the fruites*.

34. It reads *places wyldnesse*; Hh *place of wyldnesse*.

Yit were no paleis chaumbrès, ne no  
halles;

In cavès and [in] wodès softe and swete,  
Slepten this blisséd folk withowtè walles,  
On gras or leves in parfit joye and quiète  
No down of fetherès, ne no blechéd shete  
Was kid to hem, but in seurtee they slepte  
Hir hertès were al oon withoutè galles,  
Everich of hem his feith to other kepte.

Unforgéd was the hauberke and the  
plate;

The lambish peple, voydéd of alle vyce,  
Haddén no fantasyè to debate,  
But ech of hem wolde other wel cheryce  
No pridè, non envye, non avaryce;  
No lord, no taylage by no tyranye,  
Humbleste, and pes, good feith, the  
emperice,

Yit was nat Jupiter the likerous,  
That first was fader of delicacye,  
Come in this world, ne Nembrot desyrè  
To reynen had nat maad his tourès hye.  
Allas! alas! now may men wepe and  
crye!

For in our dayès nis but covetyse,  
[And] dowblenesse, and tresoun,  
envye,

Poyson, manslaughter, and mordre  
sondry wyse.

## FORTUNE

### *Ballades de visage sans Peinture*

#### I.—LE PLEINTIF COUNTE FORTUNE

THIS wrecchéd worldès transmutacioun,  
As welc or wo, now povre and now honou  
Withouten ordre or wys discrecioun  
Governéd is by Fortunès errour;  
But nathèles the lak of hir favour

42. Both omit *in* before *wodes*.

44. *quiète* is slurred so as to be practical monosyllabic or dissyllabic if the final vowel pronounced. Cp. *B. of D.* l. 330 *Medea*.

56. This line is wanting in the MSS.

59. *Nembrot*, Nimrod.

63. Both omit first *And*.

We may not don me singen, though I dye.  
*Jay tout perdu mon temps et mon labour* :  
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye.

It is me left the, light of my resoun  
 To knowen frend fro so in thy mirour. 10  
 So muche hath yit thy whirlyng up and down  
 Taught me for to knowen in an hour.  
 But trewely, no force of thy reddour  
 To him that over him-self hath the maystrye  
 My suffisauncé shal be my socour :  
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye.

O Socrates, thou stedfast champioun,  
 He never mighte be thy tormentour ;  
 Thou never dreedest hir oppressioun  
 He in hir cheré founde thou no savour. 20  
 Thou knewe wel the deceit of hir colour  
 And that hir mosté worshipec is to lye.  
 Know hir eek a fals dissimulour :  
 For fynally, Fortune, I thee defye !

## II.—LA RESPONSE DE FORTUNE AU PLEINTIF

No man is wrecched, but him-self it wene  
 And he that hath him-self hath suffisaunce.  
 Why seystow than I am to thee so kene  
 That hast thy-self out of my governaunce ?  
 Why thus : 'Graunt mercy of thyn habound-  
 aunce  
 That thou hast lent or this.' Why wol  
 thou stryve ? 30  
 That wostow yit how I thee wol avaunce ?  
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve !

Have thee taught divisioun bi-twene  
 And of effect, and frend of countenaunce ;  
 Se nedeth nat the galle of noon hyéne,  
 At cureth yen derke fro hir penaunce ;  
 Wseestow cleer, that were in ignoraunce.  
 halt thyn ancre, and yit thou mayst  
 arryve  
 At bountee berth the keye of my sub-  
 stance : 39  
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve !

<sup>1</sup> All but Ii read *turnyng* for *whirlyng*.  
<sup>2</sup> All but Ii read *Thou shalt not stryve*.

How many have I refuséd to sustene  
 Sin I thee fostred have in thy plesauce !  
 Woltow than make a statute on thy quene  
 That I shal been ay at thyn ordinaunce ?  
 Thou born art in my regne of variaunce,  
 Aboute the wheel with other most thou  
 dryve.

My lore is bet than wikke is thy grevaunce :  
 And eek thou hast thy besté frend alyve !

## III.—LA RESPONSE DU PLEINTIF COUNTRE FORTUNE

Thy lore I dampne, hit is adversitec.  
 My frend maystow nat reven, blynd  
 goddése ! 50  
 That I thy frendes knowe, I thanke it thee.  
 Tak hem agayn, lat hem go lye on presse !  
 The negardye in kepyng hir richesse  
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir tour assayle ;  
 Wikke appetyt comth ay before seknesse :  
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

## IV.—LA RESPONSE DE FORTUNE COUNTRE LE PLEINTIF

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitee,  
 For I thee lente a drope of my richesse,  
 And now me lyketh to withdrawé me.  
 Why sholdestow my realtee oppresse ? 60  
 The see may ebbe and flowen more or lesse ;  
 The welkne hath might to shyné, reyne  
 or hayle ;  
 Right so mot I kythen my brotelnesse :  
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

Lo, the execution of the magestee  
 That al purveyeth of his rightwysnesse  
 That samé thyng 'Fortuné' clepen ye,  
 Ye byndé bestés, ful of lewédnesse !  
 The hevene hath propretee of sikernessee ;  
 This world hath ever restéles travayle ; 70  
 Thy lasté day is ende of myn intresse :  
 In general, this reulé may nat fayle.

## LENGVOY DE FORTUNE

Princes, I prey you of your gentillesse  
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye and  
 pleyne,

52. Ii to for it.

And I shal quyte you your bisynesse 75  
At my requeste, as three of you or twayne ;  
And but you list releve him of his peyne,  
Preyeth his bestē frend, of his noblesse  
That to som better estat he may atteyne.

## TRUTH

### BALADE DE ROY CONSEYL

FLEE fro the prees, and dwelle with soth-  
fastnesse  
Suffice unto thy thyng though hit be smal ;  
For hord hath hate and clymbyng tikel-  
nesse,  
Prees hath envye, and welc blent overal ;  
Savour no more than thee bihovē shal ;  
Werk wel thy-self, that other folk canst  
rede,  
And trouthe shall delivere, it is no drede.

Tempest thee nocht al crokēd to redresse  
In trust of hir that turneth as a bal :  
Greet restē stant in lile besynesse ; 10  
An eek be war to sporne ageyn an al ;  
Strive nocht, as doth the crokke with the  
wal.

Daunte thy-self, that dauntest other's dede,  
And trouthe shall delivere, it is no drede.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,  
The wrastring for this worlde axeth a ful.  
Her nis non boom, her nis but wildernesse.  
Forth, pilgrim, forth ! Forth, beste, out  
of thy stal,

Know thy contree, look up, thank God  
of al ;

Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee  
lede, 20

And trouthe shall delivere, it is no drede.

### ENVOY

Therefore, thou vache, leve thyn old  
wrecchednesse

Unto the world ; leve now to be thral ;  
Crye him mercy, that of his hy goodnesse

76. Only in li. The meaning is doubtful.

20. *Hold the hye wey*, Harl. F<sub>1</sub> F<sub>2</sub> L. Cx. T<sub>1</sub> T<sub>2</sub>  
Seld. *Weye thy lust* ; Kk *Reull thi self*.

23. *world* is dissyllabic as in O.E.

Made thee of nocht, and in especial  
Draw unto him, and pray in general  
For thee, and eek for other, hevenli  
mede ;

And trouthe shall delivere, it is no drede.

*Explicit le bon conseil de G. Chaucer.*

## GENTILESSE

### MORAL BALADE OF CHAUCER

THE firstē stok and fader of gentilesse,  
What man that claymeth gentil for to be  
Moste folwe his trace and alle his witte  
dresse

Vertu to sewe and vycēs for to flee.  
For unto vertu longeth dignitee,  
And nought the revers, sauflly dar I deme,  
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

This firstē stok was ful of rightwysnesse,  
Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous and fre,  
Clene of his goste and lovēd besynesse, a  
Ageynst the vycē of slouthe, in honeste,  
And but his heir love vertu, as dide he  
He nisnought gentil though he richē seme  
Al were he mitre, croune, or diademe.

Vycē may wel be heyr to old richesse,  
But there may no man, as ye may wel  
see,

Bequethe his heyr his vertuous noblesse  
That is appropriēd unto no degree,  
But to the firstē fader in magestee,  
That maketh his heyr him that wol hit  
queme,  
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

## LAK OF STEDFASTNESSE

### BALADE

SOM tyme this world was so stedfast an  
stable

That mannēs word was obligacioun,  
And now hit is so fals and deceivable  
That word and deed, as in conclusioun,

1. A *The first fader and founder* ; H *sch*  
and *fynder* ; Harl. *fader fynder*.

2. T H C Ha. *desireth* ; Add. *coneyteth*.

## LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN

en no-thing oon, for turned up so doun  
at this world through mede and wilful-  
nesse

at al is lost for lak of stedfastnesse.

hat maketh this world to be so variable  
it lust that folk have in dissensioun?  
or now adayes a man is holde unable<sup>10</sup>  
it if he can, by som collusioun,  
on his neighbour wrong or oppressioun.  
hat causeth this, but wilful wrecched-  
nesse

at al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse?

rough he is put down, resoun is holden fable,  
ertu hath now no dominacioun,  
tee exyled, no wyght is merciablen.  
hrough covetyse is blent discrecioun;  
he world hath mad a permutacioun  
to right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikel-  
nesse,  
at al is lost, for lak of stedfastnesse.<sup>20</sup>

### LENVOY TO KING RICHARD

prince, desire for to be honourable,  
erish thy folk and hate extorcioun!  
iffre no thyng, that may be reprevable  
to thyn estat, don in thy regioun.  
new forth thy swerd of castigacioun,  
red God, do law, love trouthe and  
worthynesse,  
nd dryve thy folk ageyn to stedfastnesse.

*Explicit.*

### LENVOY DE CHAUCER A SCOGAN

To-BROKEN been the statutes hyc in  
hevene,  
at créat were eternally to dure,  
th that I see the bryghte goddès sevene

5. Ct. F Harl. 7578 *Is no thing lyke*; Add.  
*nothing like.*

10. Tr. Th. Ct. F Add. Harl. 7578 *For amonge*  
; Bann. *Among us now.*

17. Harl. 7578 Ct. F *man for wyght.*

28. Harl. 7578 Ct. F Tr. Th. *And wed.*

Mowe wepe and wayle, and passioun  
endure,

As may in erthe a mortale créature.

Allas! fro whennés may this thing pro-  
cede?

Of whiche errour I deye almost for drede.

By worde eterne whilom was it y-shape,  
That fro the fifté cercle, in no manére,  
Ne myghte a drope of terés doun eschape.  
But now so wepeth Venus in hir spere, 11  
That with hir terés she wol drenche us  
here.

Allas, Scogan! this is for thyn offence!  
Thou causeth this deluge of pestilence.

I last thou not seyde in blasphemé of this  
goddès,  
Through pride, or through thy greté  
reckelnesse,  
Swich thing as in the lawe of love forbode  
is?

That, for thy lady saw nat thy distresse,  
Therfor thou yave hir up at Michelmesse?  
Allas, Scogan! of oldé folk ne yonge, 20  
Was never erst Scogan blamed for his  
tonge.

Thou drowe in scorn Cupide eek to  
reorde  
Of thilké rebel word that thou hast spoken,  
For which he wol no lenger be thy lord.  
And, Scogan, thogh his bowé be nat  
broken,  
He wol nat with his arwés been y-wroken  
On thee, ne me, ne noon of our figure;  
We shul of him have neyther hurte ne cure.

Now certés, frend, I drede of thyn  
unhappe,  
Leste for thy gilte the wreche of love  
procede 30  
(On alle hem that ben hore and rounde of  
shape,  
That ben so lykly folk in love to spede.  
Than shul we for our labour han no mede;  
But wel I wot, thou wilt answeré and seye,  
'Loo, tholdé Grisellist to ryme and pleye!'

4. *wepe and wayle.* Probably a reference to  
the heavy rains and floods of 1393.

Nay, Scogan, say not so, for I meexcuse,  
Gpd helpe me so ! in no ryme doutlees,  
Ne thinke I never of sleep to wake my  
    muse, 38  
That rusteth in my shethè stille in pees ;  
While I was yong I put hir forth in prees ;  
But al shal passèn that men prose-or ryme,  
Take every man his turne as for his tyme.

ENVOY

Scogan, that knelest at the stremès hede  
Of grace, of alle honour, and worthy-  
    nesse !  
In thende of which streme I am dul as  
    dede,  
Forgete in solitarie wilderness ;  
Yet, Scogan, thenke on Tullius kyndè-  
    nesse ;  
Mynnè thy frend ther it may fructifye,  
Far-wel, and lok thou never est love defye.

THE COMPLEYNT OF VENUS

I

THERE nys so hy comfort to my  
    plesaunce,  
Whan that I am in any hevynesse,  
As for to have leyser of remembraunce  
Upon the manhod and the worthynesse,  
Upon the trouth and on the stedfastnesse  
Of him whos I am al, whil I may dure.  
Ther oghtè blamè me no creature,  
For every wyght preiseth his gentilesse.

In him is bountee, wysdom, govern-  
    aunce, 9  
Wel more then any mannès wyt can gesse ;  
For grace hath wold so ferforth him  
    avaunce,  
That of knyghthode he is parfit richesse ;  
Honour honoureth him for his noblesse ;  
Therto so well hath formed him Nature.  
That I am his for ever, I him assure,  
For every wyght preiseth his gentilesse.

And not-withstandyng al his suffisaunce  
His gentil herte is of so greet humbleesse

47. Tullius kyndenesse, a reference to M.  
Tullius Cicero's *De Amicitia*.

To me in word, in werk, in contenaunce,  
And me to serve is al his besynesse, 20  
That I am set in verrey sikirnesse.  
Thus oghte I blessè wel myn aventure,  
Sith that him list me serven and honoure,  
For every wyght preiseth his gentilesse.

II

Now certès, Love, hit is right covènable,  
That men ful derè bye the noble thyng,  
As wake a-bedde, and fasten at the table,  
Wepying to laughe and singe in com-  
    pleynyng,  
And down to castè visage and loking, 29  
Often to chaungèn hewe and countenaunce,  
Pleyne in slepyng, and dremèn at the  
    daunce,  
Al the revers of any glad felyng.

Jalousyè be hangèd by a cable !  
She wolde al knowè through her espyng.  
Ther doth no wyght nothing so resonable,  
That al nys harm in her ymagynyng.  
Thus dere aboute is Love in his yevyng,  
Which ofte he yiveth withoutèn ordy-  
    aunce,  
As sorw ynogh, and litel of plesaunce,  
Al the revers of any glad felyng. 36

A litel tyme his yift is agréable,  
But ful encombèrous is the usyng ;  
For subtil jalosye, the deceyvable,  
Ful often-tymè causeth destourhyng.  
Thus be we ever in drede and sufferyng ;  
In nouncerteyn we languisshe in penaunce,  
And han ful often many an harde mys-  
    chaunce,  
Al the revers of any glad felyng.

III

But certès, Love, I sey not in such wyse  
That for tescape out of your lace I mente  
For I so longe have been in your servyse, 5  
That for to lete of, wol I never assente.  
No fors ! thogh jealousyè me tormentè ;  
Sufficeth me to see him when I may ;  
And therfor certès to myn endyng-day,  
To love him best, ne shal I never repente

31. Granson *plaindre en dormant* ; MS  
*pleye*.

And certès, Love, whan I me wel avyse  
On any estat that man may represente,  
Then have ye makèd me, through your  
franchise,  
Chesè the beste that ever on erthè wente.  
Now love wel, herte, and look thou never  
stente,  
And let the jelouse put it in assay,  
That for no peynè wol I not sey nay;  
To love him best, ne shal I never repente.

Hertè, to thee hit oghte y-nogh suffyse  
That Love so hy a gracè to thee sente  
To chese the worthiest in allè wyse,  
And most agreable unto myn entente.  
Sechè no ferther, neyther way ne wente,  
Sith I have suffisaunce unto my pay,—  
This wol I endè this complaynt or lay,  
To love him beste ne shal I never repente.

LENGVOY

Princess I receyveth this Complaynt in  
gree,  
Unto your excellent benigneite,  
Direct after my litel suffisaunce.  
For eld, that in my spirit dulleth me,  
Hath of endyng al the subtilte  
Wel ny bereft out of my remembraunce;  
And eek to me hit is a greet penaunce,  
Syth rym in English hath swich scarsitee,  
To folwè word by word the curiositee  
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make  
in Fraunce!

LENGVOY DE CHAUCER A  
BUKTON

THE COUNSEL OF CHAUCER TOUCH-  
ING MARRIAGE, WHICH WAS SENT  
TO BUKTON

My maister Bukton, whan of Criste  
our kyng  
s axed, What is trouthe or sothfast-  
nesse?

<sup>2</sup> Sir Oto de Graunson, a knight of Savoy, lived an annuity from Richard II. in 1393 for fees to the king.

He nat a word answerde to that axyng,  
As who saith, 'No man is al trewe,' I  
gesse.

And therfor, thogh I hightè to expresse  
The sorwe and wo that is in mariage,  
I dar not wryte of hit no wikkednesse,  
Lest I my-self falle eft in swich dotage.

I wol nat seyn how that hit is the  
cheyne  
Of Sathanas, on which he gnaweth  
ever;  
But I dar seyn, were he out of his  
peyne,  
As by his wille he wolde be boundè  
never.  
But thilkè dotèd fool that eft hath lever  
V-cheynèd be than out of prison crepe,  
God lete him never fro his wo dissever,  
Ne no man him bewaylè thogh he wepe!

But yit, lest thou do worsè, tak a wyf;  
Bet is to wedde than brenne in worsè  
wyse,  
But thou shalt have sorwe on thy flesh,  
thy lyf,  
And ben thy wyvès thral, as seyn these  
wyse,  
And if that holy writ may nat suffyse,  
Experience shal thee techè, so may happe,  
That thee were lever to be take in Fryse  
Than eft to falle of weddyng in the trappe.

LENGVOY

This litel writ, proverbès, or figure  
I sendè you, tak kepe of hit, I rede:  
Unwys is he that can no wele endure.  
If thou be siker, put thee nat in drede.  
The Wyf of Bathe I pray yow that ye  
rede  
Of this matèrè that we have on honde.  
God grauntè you your lyf frely to lede  
In fredom; for ful hard is to be bonde.

Explicit.

<sup>23</sup> Fryse. An expedition in which Englishmen took part was launched against Friesland in 1396. The Frieslanders refused to ransom their countrymen when captured, so no exchange was possible, which gives force to Chaucer's line.

THE COMPLEYNT OF  
CHAUCER TO HIS PURSE

To you, my purse, and to noon other wyght  
Compleyne I, for ye be my lady dere !  
I am so sory now that ye been light ;  
For, certès, but ye make me hevy chere,  
Me were as leef be leyd upon my bere,  
For whiche unto your mercy thus I crye,—  
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dye !

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be  
nyght, <sup>8</sup>

That I of you the blisful soun may here,  
Or see your colour lyk the sonnè bright,  
That of yelownesse haddè never pere.  
Ye be my lyf ! ye be myn hertès stère !  
Quene of comfort and of good compagne !  
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dye.

Now, purse, that be to me my lyvès light  
And savèour, as doun in this worlde  
here,

Out of this toyn help me throgh your  
myght,

Syn that ye wole not been my tresorère ;  
For I am shave as nye as is a frere. <sup>19</sup>

<sup>19. as is a, Harl. 7331 P. Add. Harl. 2251 *als*  
*nyghe as any; Ff shave as ys any.*</sup>

But yet I pray unto your curtesye,  
Beth hevy ageyn, or ellès mot I dye !

## L'ENVOYE DE CHAUCER

O conquerour of Brutès Albion,  
Which that by lyne and free eleccioun  
\*Ben verray kyng, this song to you  
sende,

And ye that mowen al myn harmamende  
Have mynde upon my supplicacioun !

## PROVERBE OF CHAUCER

## I

WHAT shul these clothes thus many  
folde,

Lo, this hotè somers day ?  
After greet heet cometh colde ;  
No man caste his pilche away.

## II

Of al this worlde the large compas  
Hit wol not in myn armès tweyne ;  
Whoso mochel wol embrace,  
Litel therof he shal distreyne.

## DOUBTFUL MINOR POEMS

## MERCILES BEAUTE

## A TRIPLE ROUNDEL

## I

YOUR yen two wol slee me sodenly ;  
I may the beautee of hem not sustene,  
So woundeth hit through-out my hertè kene.

And but your word wol helen hastily  
My hertès woundè, while that hit is grene.

<sup>1. P reads *Youre two yen*, but cp. ll. 6 and 11.  
<sup>2. *through-out*, *out* is in the margin.</sup></sup>

Your yen two wol slee me sodenly ;  
I may the beautee of hem not sustene

Upon my trouthe I sey you feithfully  
That ye ben of my lyf and deeth the  
quene ;

For with my deeth the trouthe shal be  
sene. <sup>11</sup>

Your yen two wol slee me sodenly ;  
I may the beautee of hem not sustene,  
So woundeth it through-out my hertè  
kene.

## II

o hath your beautee fro your herté chaced  
 Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;  
 For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

Sittles my deeth thus han ye me purchaced;  
 sey you sooth, me nedeth not to feyne;  
 So hath your beautee fro your herté  
 chaced 19  
 Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne.

Ilas! that nature hath in you compassed  
 greet beautee, that no man may atteyne  
 o mercy, though he stervé for the peyne.  
 So hath your beautee fro your herté  
 chaced

Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;  
 For Daunger halt your mercy in his  
 cheyne.

## III

in I fro Love escapéd am so fat  
 never think to ben in his prison lene;  
 in I am free, I counte him not a bene.

le may answer, and seye this or that; 30  
 do no fors, I speke right as I mene.  
 Sin I fro Love escapéd am so fat  
 I never think to ben in his prison lene.

ove hath my namey-strike out of his scat,  
 and he is strike out of my bokés clene  
 or evermo; [ther] is non other mene.  
 Sin I fro Love escapéd am so fat  
 I never think to ben in his prison lene;  
 Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

*Explicit.*

## BALADE

## AGAINST WOMAN UNCONSTANT

ADAMÉ, for your newe-fangleness  
 lany a servaunt have ye put out of grace.  
 take my leve of your unstedfastnesse,  
 or wel I wot, whyl ye have lyvys space,

P this is; Skent ther is.

F Ct. Stowe's ed. of your.

Ct. Stowe's ed. to lene have; Harl. lync  
 space.

Ye can not love ful half yeer in a place;  
 To newe thyng your lust is ay so kene;  
 In stede of blew, thus may ye were al  
 grene.

Right as a mirour nothyng may enpresse  
 But, lightly as it cometh, so mot it pace,  
 So fareth your love, your werkés bereth  
 witness. 20

Ther is no feith that may your herte  
 embrace;  
 But, as a wedercok, that turneth his face  
 With every wynd, ye fare, and that is sene;  
 In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

Ye might be shrynéd, for your brotelnesse,  
 Bet than Dalyda, Creseide, or Candace;  
 For ever in chaungyng stant your  
 sikernesse,

That tache may no wyght fro your  
 herte arace;

If ye lese oon, ye can wel tweyn purchase;  
 Al light for somer, ye woot wel what I  
 mene, 20

In stede of blew, thus may ye were al grene.

*Explicit.*

## COMPLEYNT DAMOURS

I, WHICH that am the sorwfullesté man  
 That in this world was ever yit lyvyng  
 And leest recoverer of him-selven can  
 Beginne thus my deedly compleynnyng  
 On hir, that may to lif and deeth me  
 brynge,  
 Which hath on me no mercy ne no  
 rewthe  
 That love hir best, but sleeth me  
 for my trewthe.

6. Ct. Harl. *ever so*; Stowe's ed. (1562)  
 omits *so*.

8. Ct. Harl. Stowe *that nothyng*.

16. Ct. *better, rest better*. *Dalyda*, Delilah.  
*Creseide*, the heroine of Chaucer's *Troilus*.  
*Candace*, Queen Candace, who tricked Alex-  
 ander.

17. *stant*, all *standeth*.

4. F B insert *right* before *thus*.



Can I noght doon ne seye that may you lyke?

Ne, certes, now, alas! alas! the while!  
Your plesaunce is to laughen whan I syke,  
And thus ye me from all my blisse exile.  
Ye han me cast in thilké spitous ile.<sup>12</sup>  
Ther never man on lyve ne mighte asterte;  
This have I for I love you beste, swete  
herte!

Sooth is, that wel I woot, by lyklinesse,  
If that it were a thing possible to do  
For to acompte your beautee and good-  
nesse

I have no wonder thogh ye do me wo;  
Sith I, thunworthisst that may ride or go  
Durste ever thynken in so hy a place,<sup>20</sup>  
What wonder is, thogh ye do me no grace?

Allas! thus is my lif brought to an ende,  
My deeth, I see, is my conclusioun;  
I may wel singe 'in sory tyme I spende  
My lif'; that song may have confusioun!  
For mercy, pitee, and deep affeccioun,  
I sey for me, for al my deedly chere,  
Alle thise diden, in that, me love you dere.

And in this wyse and in dispaire I lyve  
In lové; nay, but in dispaire I dye!<sup>30</sup>  
Bút shal I thus you my deeth for-yive,  
That causéles doth me this sorwé drye?  
Ye, certés, I! For she of my folye  
Hath nought to done, although she  
do me sterve;  
Hit is not with hir wil that I hir serve!

8. Harl. om. *doon*; F B *doon to seyn that you may like*.

9. So all MSS. *Ne* is the strong accented negative.

14. F B om. *beste*.

15. Harl. om. *that*.

20. F *newer*; perhaps rightly.

22. F *myschele*; B *mysche*/for *my lif*.

24. F om. all after *tyme*.

25 ff. B reads:

that 'ong is my confusioun!  
For mercy and pite and my saluacioun,  
I sey for me, I have trouen felie,  
All thes diden me in dispaire to melte.

F om. all after *song* in l. 25.

26. F om. and before *pitce* and all after second and.

27. F om. all after *me*.

28. F om. all after *diden*.

31. F *thanne* for *thus*.

Than sithen I am of my sorwe the cause,  
And sith that I have this, withoute hir  
reed,

Than may I seyn, right shortly in a clause.  
It is no blame unto hir womanheed.

Though swich a wrecche as I be for hir  
deed;

Yit alwey two thinges doon me dye,  
That is to seyn, hir beautee and myn ye

So that algates she is the verray rote  
Of my disease, and of my duthe also;  
For with oon word she mighté be my bote  
If that she vouchéd sauf for to do so.  
Bút than is hir gladnesse at my wo?  
It is hir wone plesaunce for to take,  
To seen hir servaunts dyen for hir sake!

But certés, than is al my wonder yng—  
Sithen she is the fayrest créature  
As to my dom that ever was lyvyng,  
The benignest and beste eek that nature  
Hath wrought or shal, whyl that the  
world may dure,—

Why that she lefté pitee so behynde?

It was, y-wys, a greet default in kynde.

Yit is al this no lak to hir, pardee,  
But God or nature hem sore wolde I blame;  
For, though she shewe no pitee unto me  
Sithen that she doth otheré men the same,  
I ne oughté to despise my lady's game;  
It is hir pley to laugh when that mensykeh  
And I assente, al that hir list and lyketh

Yit wolde I, as I dar, with sorwful hert  
Biseche un-to your meké womanhede  
That I now dorste mysharpesorwéssment  
Shewé by worde that ye wolde onés red

36. Harl. *sith* for *sithen*.

37. F B *sithen* for *sith* and om. *that*.

43. F B om. *the*.

44. B om. second of.

45. F B a for *oon*.

48. B ins. *to before plesaunce*.

49. B *servaunte*.

51. B *sith*.

55. F B all for *so*.

57. F B om. *at*.

58. F B om. *sore*.

62. Harl. om. *hir*. F B om. *that*.

64. Harl. *Yeo* for *Yit*.

66. F B om. *now*. Harl. *shewes* for *sorwes*.

re compleynt of me, which fulsore I drede  
 at I have seid here, through myn  
 unconnyng,  
 any worde to your displeyng. 70

threst of anything that ever was loth  
 ere me, as wysly God my soul save  
 o seyn a thyng through which ye  
 mighte be wroth;  
 nd, to that day that I be leyd in grave,  
 trewer servaunt shulle ye never have;  
 nd, though that I on you have pleyned  
 here,  
 cryveth it me, myn owne herte dere!

ver have I been, and shal, how-so I  
 wende  
 utherto lyve or dye, your humble  
 trewe;  
 e been to me my gynnyng and myn  
 ende,  
 none of the sterre so bright and clere  
 of hewe,  
 lwey in oon to love you freshly newe,  
 y God and by my trouthe, is myn entente;  
 o lyve or dye, I wol it never repente!

his compleynt on seynt Valentyn's day,  
 'han every foughel chesyn shal his make,  
 o hir whos I am hool, and shal alwey,  
 his woful song and this compleynt I  
 make,  
 hat never yit wolde me to mercy take;  
 nd yit wol I evermore hir serve 90  
 nd love hir best, although she do me  
 serve.

*Explicit.*

68. Harl. *the which I fulle*, etc.  
 69. Harl. *unconnyng*. F B om. *here* and  
 m.  
 70. This line seems short unless *worde* is  
 syllabic, which is improbable; cp. ll. 31, 47,  
 86, 90, which are short in all MSS.  
 71. F *Lothe* for *Lothest*.  
 72. Harl. *myne owne lady so dere*.  
 73. F *Bower (owyr) the sterre bright of hewe*.  
 74. Harl. *And I ay oon*.  
 75. F B ins. *this before is*.  
 76. If *foughel* (fowl) is not dissyllabic this is  
 other nine-syllabled line. F *soule*, B *foule*.  
 77. F B om. *hool*.  
 78. F *though* for *although*.

# BALADE OF COMPLEYNTE

COMPLEYNE ne coude, ne mighte myn  
 herte never  
 My peyn's halve, ne what torment I have,  
 Though that I sholde in your presence  
 ben ever,  
 My herte's lady, as wisely he me save  
 That bountee madé, beautee list to grave  
 In your persone, and bad hem bothe in-fere  
 Ever tawayte, and ay be wher ye were.

As wisely he gye alle my joy's here  
 As I am your's, and to you sad and trewe,  
 And ye, my lif and cause of my good chere  
 And deeth also, whan ye my peyn's newe,  
 My world's joye, whom I wol serve  
 and sewe, 12  
 My heven hool, and al my suffisaunce,  
 Whom for to serve is set al my plesaunce.

Beseching yow in my most humble wyse  
 Taccepte in worth this litel povre dyte  
 And for my trouthe my service nat despyte,  
 Myn observaunce cek have nat in despyse,  
 Ne yit to long to suffren in this plyte,  
 I you beseche, myn herte's lady dere, 20  
 Sith I you serve, and so will yeer by yere.

# BALADE THAT CHAUCIER MADE

So hath myn herte caught in remembraunce  
 Your beautee hool and stedfast govern-  
 aunce,  
 Your vertues allé and your hie noblesse,  
 That you to serve is set al my plesaunce.  
 So wel me liketh your womanly  
 contenance,  
 Your fresshé fetures and your comlynesse,  
 That whiles I lyve, myn herte to his  
 maistresse

16. MS. *porr*.  
 20. *dere*, MS. *here* by mistake.  
 3. MS. *al* for *alle*.

You hath wel chose in trewe perséveraunce  
Never to chaunge for no maner distresse.

And sith [that] I shal do this observaunce  
Al my lif [long] withouten displeaunce,  
You for to serve with al my besynesse,  
And have me somewhat in your  
souvenaunce, 13

My woful herte suffreth greet duresse,  
And [hoveth humbly] with al sym-  
plesse;

My wyl I conforme to your ordynaunce  
As you best list, my peynes for to redresse;

Considryng eek how I hange in balaunce,  
In your servicc, swich lo! is my chaunce,  
Abidyng grace whan that your gentillesse,  
Of my grete wo listeth don alleggaunce,

8. MS. *triste*  
10. MS. om. *that*.  
11. MS. om. *long*.  
15. MS. *And how humbly*.

And wyth your piteemesom wyseavaunce,  
In ful rebatyng of myn hevynesse, 23  
And thynketh by resoun that womanly  
noblesse

Shulde nat desiré for til do the outrance  
Ther as she fyndeth non unbuxomnesse.

#### LENVOYE

Auctour of norture! Lady of plesaunce!  
Soveraigne of beautee! flour of woman-  
hede,

Take ye non hede unto my ignoraunce,  
But this receyveth of your goodlihedede,  
Thenkyng that I have caught in  
remembraunce,

Your beautee hool, your stedfast  
goveaunce.

24. Perhaps *And* should be *Me*, otherwise the construction of this stanza, like that of the preceding one, is very loose.

29. *Take ye* should probably be *Taketh*; cp. *receyveth* in next line.

## A TREATISE ON THE ASTROLABE

LYTE LOWYS my sone, I aperceyve wel  
by certeyne evidences thyn abilite to  
lerne sciences touching nombres and  
proportiouns; and as wel considre I thy  
bisy praiser in special to lerne the Tretys  
of the Astrolabic. Than for as mochel  
as a philosofre saith, 'he wrappith him  
in his frende, that condescendith to the  
rightfull praisers of his frende,' therefore  
have I yeven the a sufficient Astrolabic as  
for oure orizonte compownded after the  
latitude of Oxenforde; upon which, by  
mediacioun of this lital tretys, I propose to  
teche the a certain nombre of conclusions  
perteynyng to the same instrument. I seie  
a certain of conclusions for thre causes.

B<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> have title *Breile and milke for children*.

2. R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> add the *werkynge of before a suffi-*  
*sant*.

The first cause is this: truste wel that alle  
the conclusions that han be founde, or  
ellys possibly might be founde in so noble  
an instrument as is an Astrelabic bet  
unknowe parfitly to eny mortal man in  
this region, as I suppose. Another cause  
is this, that sothly in any tretis of the  
Astrelabic that I have seyn there be somme  
conclusions that wol not in alle thinges  
parformen her bihestes; and somme of hem  
ben to harde to thy tendir age of x yere to  
conceyve. [5]

This tretis, divided in 5 parties, wol I  
shewe the under full light reules and naked  
wordes in Englishe, for Latyn canst thou

5. *and somme of hem, etc.*, i.e. the third cause.  
5. *to thy, etc.*, R<sub>1</sub> to *understonde and to con-*  
*cryue to the tender age of he.*  
5. *naked, simple*; cp. Shak. *Two Gent. II*  
*iv. 142.*

but small, my litel sone. But natheles  
fise to the these trewe conclusions in  
glishe as wel as sufficith to these noble  
erkes Grekes these same conclusions in  
eke; and to Arabiens in Arabike, and  
Iewes in Ebrewew, and to the Latyn folk  
Latyn; whiche Latyn folke had hem  
st oute of othere dyverse langages, and  
iten hem in her owne tunge, that is to  
yn in Latyn. And god woot that in  
e these langages and in many moo han  
se conclusions ben suffisantly lerned and  
ight, and yit by diverse reules; right as  
erse pathes leden diverse folke the right  
y to Rome. Now wol I preie mekely  
ry discret persone that redith or herith  
is litel tretys to have my rule endityng  
excused, and my superfluite of wordes,  
two causes. The first cause is for that  
rouse endityng and harde sentence is  
hevy at onys for such a childe to lerne.  
id the secunde cause is this, that sothly  
semith better to writen un-to a childe  
yes a gode sentence, than he forgete  
onys. [11]

And Lowys, yf so be that I shewe the  
my light Englishe as trewe conclusions  
ching this mater, and not onoly as trewe  
as many and as subtile conclusions,  
ben shewid in Latyn in eny commune  
tys of the Astrelabie, konne me the more  
unke. And preie god save the king,  
it is lorde of this language, and alle that  
n feithe berith and obeieith, everiche in  
degre, the more and the lasse. But  
nside wel that I ne usurpe not to have  
nden this werke of my labour or of myn  
syn. I nam but a lewde compiler of  
labour of olde astrologiens, and have  
ranslatid in myn Englishe onoly for thy  
ctrine. And with this swerde shal I  
en envie. [15]

*Prima pars.*—The firste partie of this  
tys shal pcherse the figures and the  
mbres of thyn Astrelabie by cause that  
u shalt have the gretter knowing of  
n owne instrument.

*Secunda pars.*—The secunde partieshal  
hen the worken the verrey practik of  
sufficith. We should expect suffice, cp. 23.

the forseide conclusiouns as ferforth and  
as narwe as may be shewed in so small an  
instrument portatif aboute. For wel woot  
every astrologien that smallest fraccions ne  
wol not be shewid in so small an instrument  
as in subtile tables calculated for a cause.

*Tertia pars.*—The thirde partie shal  
contene diverse tables of longitudes and  
latitudes of sterres fixe for the Astrelabie,  
and tables of the declinacions of the sonne,  
and tables of longitudes of citees and  
townes; and tables as well for the gover-  
naunce of a klokke, as forto fynde the  
altitude meridian; and many a nothir  
notable conclusioun after the kalenders of  
the reverent clerkes, frere I. Somer and  
frere N. Lenne. [20]

*Quarta pars.*—The fourthe partie shal  
ben a Theorike to declare the moevyng of  
the celestiall bodies with the causes. The  
whiche fourthe partie in speciall shal  
shewen a table of the verrey moevyng of  
the mone from houre to houre every day  
and in every signe after thyn almenak.  
Upon whiche table ther foleweth a canoun  
suffisant to teche as wel the manere of the  
worchyng of the same conclusioun as to  
knowe in oure orizonte with whiche degre  
of the zodiak that the mone ariseth in any  
latitude, and the arisyng of any planete  
after his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne.

*Quinta pars.*—The fifthe partie shal be  
an Introductory, after the statutes of oure  
doctours, in whiche thou maist lerne a gret  
parte of the generall rewles of theorik in  
astrologie. In whiche fifthe partie shalt  
thou fynden tables of equaciouns of houses  
after the latitude of Oxenforde; and tables  
of dignitees of planetes, and othere notefull  
thinges, yf God wol vouches saaf and his  
Moder the Maide moo then I behete. [25]

## PART I

### Here begynneth the descripcioun of the Astralabie

1. *Annulus.*—Thyn Astrolabie hath a  
ringe to putten on the thombe of thi right

18. *smallest, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> the smale; A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> smale.*

25. Chaucer abandoned his task before he had  
finished Part II.

bonde in taking the height of thinges. And take kepe, for from henes forthward I wol clepen the heighte of any thinge that is taken by the rewle 'the altitude' withoute moo wordes.

2. *Ans.*—This ryngge renneth in a maner toret fast to the moder of thyn Astrolabie in so rowme a space that it distourbith not the instrument to hangen after his right centre.

3. *Mater.*—The Moder of thin Astrolabye is thickest plate perced with a large hool, that reseiveth in hir wombe the thynne plates compowned for diverse clymates and thy reet shapen in manere of a nett or of a webbe of a loppe.

4. This moder is divided on the bakhalf with a lyne that cometh descending fro the ringe down to the netherist bordure. The whiche lyne, fro the for-seide ringe unto the centre of the large hool amiddle, is clepid the Southe Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Meridional. And the remenaunt of this lyne down to the bordure is clepid the North Lyne, or ellis the Lyne of Midnyght. [32]

5. Overthwart this for-seide longe lyne ther crossith him a nother lyne of the same lengthe from est to west. Of the whiche lyne, from a litel cros (+) in the bordure unto the centre of the large hool, is clepid the Est Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Orientale. And the remenaunt of this lyne, fro the for-seide centre unto the bordure, is clepid the West Lyne, or ellis the Lyne Occidentale. Now hast thou here the four quarters of thin Astrolabie divided after the four principales plages or quarters of the firmament.

6. The est syde of thyn Astrolabie is clepid the right syde, and the west syde is clepid the lefte syde. Forgete not thys, litel Lowys. Putte the ryngge of thyn Astrolabie upon the thombe of thi right honde, and than wol his right side

be toward thi lifte side, and his lefte side wol be toward thy right side. Take this rewle generall, as wel on the bak as on the wombe syde. Upon the ende of this est lyne, as I first seide, is marked a litel cros (+) where as evere moo generally is considerid the entring of the first degre in whiche the sonne ariseth. [40]

7. Fro this litel cros (+) up to the ende of the Lyne Meridionall, under the ryngge, shalt thou fynden the bordure divided wit 90 degrees; and by that same proportion is every quarter of thin Astrolabie divided. Over the whiche degrees there ben nombres of Augrym that dividen thilke same degres fro 5 to 5, as shewith by longe strikes bitwene. Of whiche longe strikes the space bitwene contenith a myle wey, and every degre of the bordure conteneth 4 minutes, this to seien mynutes of an houre.

8. Under the compas of thilke degrees ben writen the names of the Twelve Signes: as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces. And the nombre of the degrees of thoo signes be writen in augrym above, and with longe divisious fro 5 to 5, dyvidid fro tyme that the signe entrieth unto the last ende. [45] But understonde wel that these degres of signes ben everiche of hem considred of 60 mynutes, and every mynute of 60 secondes, and so furthe into smale fraccions infinite as saith Alkabucius. And therefore knowe wel that a degre of the bordure contenith 4 minutes, and a degre of a signe conteneth 60 minutes, and have this in mynde.

9. Next this folewith the Cerche of the Daies, that ben figured in manere of degres that contenen in nombre 365, dividid also with longe strikes fro 5 to 5, and the nombre in augrym writen under that cerche.

10. Next the cerche of the daies folewith the Cerche of the Names of the Monthes, that is to sayn Ianuarius, Februarius, Marcus, Aprilis, Maius, Iunius, Iulius, Augustus, September, October, November, December. The names of these monthes

30. In early editions and A<sub>2</sub> § 3 is preceded by a gloss on *mater*.

30. *thickest plate* (late MSS. *the thickest*, etc.), like *smallest fractions*, 18, seems to be a Latinism, and to mean 'very thick plate.'

35. *centre* is reading of R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub>; R<sub>1</sub> *hool*, A<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Br. Ed. *oriental*, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> have +.

43. *myle way*, 20 minutes; cp. *Tales*, A 363b for temporal use of *furlang*.

ere clepid somme for her propirtees  
 and somme by statutes of lordes Arabiens,  
 somme by othre lordes of Rome. [50]  
 ke of these monthes as liked to Iulius  
 Cesar and to Cesar Augustus somme were  
 compouned of diverse nombres of daies,  
 as Iulie and August. Than hath Januarie  
 31 daies, Februarie 28, Marche 31, Aprill  
 30, May 31, Iunius 30, Iulius 31, Augustus  
 31, September 30, October 31, November  
 30, December 31. Natheles all though  
 that Iulius Cesar toke 2 daies oute of  
 everer and putte hem in his monthe of  
 Iyll, and Augustus Cesar clepid the  
 monthe of August after his name and  
 decreed it of 31 daies, yit truste wel that  
 he sonne dwellith therfore nevere the  
 more nelle in oon signe than in a nother.

11. Than folewen the names of the Iulys  
 aies in the Kalender, and next hem the  
 letters of the A B C on whiche thei fallen.

12. Next the forside cercle of the A B C,  
 under the crosse lyne, is marked the Skale  
 manere of 2 squyres, or ellis in manere  
 of ladders, that serveth by his 12 pointes  
 and his dyvisiouns of ful many a subtil  
 conclusion. Of this forside skale fro the  
 crosse lyne unto the verrey angle is clepid  
 Umbra Recta, or ellis Umbra Extensa, and  
 the nether partie is clepid Umbra Versa.

13. *Regula*.—Than hast thou a brode  
 rule, that hath on either ende a square  
 hole perced with certein holes, somme more  
 than somme lesse, to receyve the stremes of  
 the sonne by day, and eke by mediacion  
 of the thin eye to knowe the altitude of sterres  
 at night. [57]

14. *Axis*.—Than is there a large Pyn  
 manere of an extre, that goth thorough  
 the hole that halt the tables of the clymates  
 and the riet in the wombe of the moder.  
*Equus*.—Thorough whiche pyn ther goth

a litel wegge, whiche that is clepid the  
 Iiors, that streynith all these parties to  
 hepe. Thys forside grete pyh in manere  
 of an extre is ymagyned to be the Pool  
 Artik in thyn Astralabie. [60]

15. *Secunda pars astrolabii: Venter*.—  
 The wombe syde of thyn Astrelabie is also  
 divided with a longe croys in 4 quarters  
 from est to west, fro southe to northe, fro  
 right syde to left side, as is the bak-  
 side.

16. The bordure of whiche wombe side  
 is divided fro the point of the est lyne unto  
 the point of the southe lyne under the ringe  
 in 90 degrees; and by that same propor-  
 cion is every quarter divided, as is the  
 bak side. That amountith 360 degrees.  
 And understonde wel that degres of this  
 bordure ben answering and consen-  
 trike to the degres of the Equinoxiall, that is  
 dividid in the same nombre as every othir  
 cercle is in the high haven.

This same bordure is dividid also with  
 23 lettres capitals and a small crosse (+)  
 above the south lyne, that shewith the  
 24 houres equals of the klokke. And, as  
 I have seid, 5 of these degres maken a  
 myle wey, and 3 mileweie maken an houre.  
 And every degre of thys bordure contenith  
 4 minutes, and every minute 60 secondes.  
 Now have I tolde the twyes. [65]

17. The plate under the riet is dis-  
 criped with 3 cercles, of whiche the leest  
 is clepid the Cercle of Cancere by cause  
 that the heved of Cancere turnith evermo  
 consen-  
 trike upon the same cercle. In  
 this heved of Cancere is the grettist de-  
 clinacion northward of the sonne, and  
 therefore is he clepid Solsticium of Somer;  
 whiche declinacion after Ptholome is 23  
 degrees and 50 minutes as wel in Cancere  
 as in Capricorn. This signe of Cancere  
 is clepid the Tropik of Somer of *Tropos*,  
 that is to seien 'ageynward.' For than  
 beginneth the sonne to passen from  
 usward. [70]

67. 3 cercles, B<sub>1</sub> tropik cercles; M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> 3  
 tropical cercles; R<sub>1</sub> 3 principal cercles.

67. Chaucer begins here to expand Messahala's  
*Descriptio*, with extracts from John de Sacro-  
 bosco's *Tractatus de Sphæra*.

o. were clepid, B<sub>1</sub> were clepid thus; A<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub>  
 consideryd; R<sub>1</sub> were gyven; Br. Edd. taken  
 names.

o. lordes Arabiens, R<sub>2</sub> A<sub>1</sub> (var.) clerkys; B<sub>2</sub>  
 Arabiens; R<sub>1</sub> Br. Edd. Emperours.

3. The scribe of B<sub>1</sub> inserts Latin note showing  
 wrongness of Chaucer's statement.

6. Chaucer or first copyist has made mistake  
 e, the name of the lower part being the Umbra  
 recta, that of the upright one Umbra Versa.

The myddel cercle in wyddesse of these 3 is clepid the Cercle Equinoxiall, upon whiche turnith evermo the hevedes of Aries and Libra. And understonde wel that evermo this Cercle Equinoxiall turnith iustly from verrey est to verrey west as I have shewed the in the speer solide. This same cercle is clepid also the Weyer of the day; for whan the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries and Libra, than ben the dayes and the nightes ylike of lengthe in all the worlde. And therefore ben these 2 signes called the Equinoxiis. And alle that moeveth withinne the hevedes of these Aries and Libra, his moevyng is clepid Northward; and alle that moevith withoute these hevedes, his moevyng is clepid Southward, as for the equinoxiall. Take kepe of these latitudes North and South, and forgeteit nat. [75] By this cercle equinoxiall ben considred the 24 houres of the klokke, for evermo the arisyng of 15 degrees of the equinoxiall makith an houre equal of the klokke. This equinoxiall is clepid the gurdell of the first moevyng, or ellis of the first moevable. And note that the first moevyng is clepid moevyng of the first moevable of the 8 speer, whiche moevyng is from est in-to west, and este ageyn in-to est. Also it is clepid girdell of the first moevyng for it departith the first moevable, that is to seyn the spere, in two ilike partyes evene distantes for the poles of this world.

The widest of these 3 principal cercles is clepid the Cercle of Capricorne by cause that the heved of Capricorne turnith evermo consentrik upon the same cercle. In the heved of this forseide Capricorne is the grettist declinacioun southward of the sonne, and therefore it is clepid the Solsticium of Wynter. This signe of Capricorne is also clepid the Tropic of

Wynter, for than begynneth the sonne to come ageyn to usward. [82]

18. Upon this forseide plate ben compassed certeyn cercles that highten Almykanteras, of whiche somme of hem semen parfit cercles and somme semen inparfit. The centre that stondith amyddes the narwest cercle is clepid the Cenyth. And the netherist cercle, or the first cercle, is clepid the Orizonte, that is to seyn the cercle that divideth the two emysperies, that is the partie of the hevene above the erthe and the partie by-nethe. These almykanteras ben compassed by 2 and 2, all be it so that on diverse Astrelabies somme almykanteras ben divided by oon, and some by two, and some by thre, after the quantite of the Astrelabie. This forseide Cenyth is ymagined to ben the verrey point over the crowne of thin heved. And also this Cenyth is the verrey pool of the orizonte in every regioun. [88]

19. From this cenyth, as it semeth, there comen a maner croked strikes hie to the clawes of a loppe, or elles like the werke of a wommans calle, in kerryng overtwart the almykanteras. And these same strikes or divisions ben clepid Azimutes, and thei dividen the orizonte of thin Astrelabie in 24 divisions. And these azymutes serven to knowe the costes of the firmament, and to othere conclusiouns, as forto knowe the cenyth of the sonne and of every sterre.

20. Next these azymutes under the cercle of Cancer ben there 12 divisions embelid muche like to the shap of the azimutes that shewen the spaces of the houres of planetes. [92]

21. *Aranea*.—The riet of thin Astrelabie with thy zodiak, shapen in maner of a net or of a lopwebbe after the old descripcioun, whiche thou maist turnen up and down as thiself liketh, containith certein nombre of sterres fixes, with the longitudes and latitudes determinat, yf be that the maker have not erred. The names of the sterres ben written in the margyn of the riet there as thei sitte, a

73. *Weyer*, 'equator'; *cuener*?

77. Cp. *Sacroboſco*: 'et dicitur cingulus primi motus unde sciendum quod primus motus dicitur motus primi mobilis, hoc est nona sphaera caeli ultimi,' etc. So '8' must be error for '9.' Likewise '9' seems to be omitted before *sphaera*, below; cp. *Sacroboſco*: 'Dicitur ergo cingulus primi motus quia cingit sive dividit primum mobile, scilicet sphaeram nonam,' etc.

whiche sterres the smale point is clepid the centre. And understonde also that alle the sterres sitting with-in the Zodiak of thin Astrelabie ben clepid Sterres of the North, for thei arise by northe the est lyne. And all the remenaunt fixed oute of the zodiak ben clepid Sterres of the South. But I seie not that thei arisen alle by southe the est lyne; witnesse on Aldeberan and Algomeyse. [97] Generally understonde this rewle, that thilke sterres that ben clepid Sterres of the North arisen rather than the degre of her longitude, and alle the Sterres of the South arisen after the degre of her longitude—this is to seyn sterres fixed in thyn Astrelabie. The mesure of the longitude of sterres is taken in the Lyne Ecliptik of hevenc, under whiche lyne whan that the sonne and the mone be lyne-right, or ellis in the superficie of this lyne, than is the eclipse of the sonne or of the mone, as I shal declare and eke the cause why. But sothely the ecliptik lyne of thy zodiak is the utterist jordure of thy zodiak there the degrees be marked. [100]

Thy Zodiak of thin Astrelabie is shapen is a compas whiche that contenith a large orde as after the quantite of thyn Astrelabie, in ensaumple that the zodiak in hevenc is ymagyned to ben a superfice contenyng a latitude of 12 degrees, where-as alle the remenaunt of cerces in the hevenc ben ymagyned verrey lynes withoute eny latitude. Amiddes this celestial zodiak is ymagined a lyne whiche that is clepid the Ecliptik Lyne, under whiche lyne is evermo the weye of the sonne. Thus ben there 6 degres of the zodiak on hat oo syde of the lyne and 6 degres on that othir. This zodiak is divided in 2 principale divisouns that departen the 2 signes, and, for the streitnesse of thin Astrolabie, than is every smal divisoun in

a signe departed by two degrees and two, I mene degrees contenyng 60 mynutes. And this forseide hevenysse zodiak is clepid the Cercle of the Signes, or the Cercle of the Bestes, for 'zodia' in language of Greke sowneth 'bestes' in Latyn tunge. And in the zodiak ben the 12 signes that han names of bestes, or ellis for whan the sonne ennth into eny of the signes he takith the propirte of suche bestes, or ellis for that the sterres that ben ther fixed ben disposid in signes of bestes or shape like bestes, or elles whan the planetes ben under thilke signes thei causen us by her influence operaciouns and effectes like to the operaciouns of bestes. [108]

And understonde also that whan an hote planete cometh into an hote signe, than encreasith his hete; and yf a planete be colde, than amenusith his coldenesse by cause of the hoot sygne. And by thys conclusioun maist thou take ensaumple in alle the signes, be thei moist or drie, or moeble or fixe, reknyng the qualite of the planete as I first seide. And everiche of these 12 signes hath respecte to a certeyn parcel of the body of a man, and hath it in governaunce, as Aries hath thin heved, and Taurus thy necke and thy throte, Gemini thin armcholes and thin armes, and so furthe as shal be shewid more pleyn in the 5 partie of this tretis.

This zodiak, whiche that is parte of the Speer, overkervith the equinoxial, and he overkervith him ageyn in evene parties; and that oo half declineth southward; and that othir northward, as plainly declarith the Trety of the Speer.

22. *Labellum*.—Than hast thou a Label that is shapen like a reule, save that it is streight and hath no plates on either ende with holes. But with the smale point of the forseide label shalt thou calcule thin

97. B<sub>1</sub> inserts *Menkar Algomeyse cor Leonis* after *Aldeberan* with marginal note saying that they are found on the Merton College Astrolabe.

100. Since only the north half of the Zodiak and is represented on the Astrolabe.

105. Chaucer omits to say that each sign contains 30°.

113. *Speer*, again a mistake for '9 speer'; cp. 77. The nine spheres are those of the moon, of the six planets, of the fixed stars, and of the zodiac and primum mobile. Chaucer places the zodiac in the 9th in *Tales*, F 1283.

113. i.e. John de Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de Sphaera*, ii. 'de zodiaco circulo,' whence Chaucer derives the foregoing description.



equacions in the bordure of thin Astralabie, as by thin Almury. [115]

23. *Denticulus*. — Thin Almury is clepid the Denticle of Capricorne or ellis the Calculer. This same almury sitt fixe in the heved of Capricorne, and it serveth of many a necessarie conclusioun in equations of thinges as shal be shewid.

*Here endith the descripcioun of the Astrelabie and here begynne the conclusions of the Astrelabie.*

## PART II

1. *Conclusio*. To fynde the degre in whiche the sonne is day by day, after his cours aboute

Rekne and knowe whiche is the day of thy month, and ley thy rewle up that same day, and than wol the verrey poynt of thy rewle sitten in the bordure upon the degre of thy sonne.

Ensample as thus:—The yeer of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of Marche at midday, I wolde knowe the degre of the sonne. I soughte in the bakhalf of myn Astrelabie and fonde the Cercle of the Daies, the whiche I knowe by the names of the monthes writen under the same cercle. Tho leyde I my rewle over this forseide day, and fonde the point of my rewle in the bordure upon the firste degre of Aries, a litel with-in the degre. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. [121]

A-nothir day I wolde knowen the degre of my sonne, and this was at midday in the 13 day of December. I fonde the day of the month in manere as I seide; tho leide I my rewle upon this forseide 13 day, and fonde the point of my rewle in the bordure upon the firste degre of Capricorne alite with-in the degre. And than had I of this conclusioun the ful experience.

118. *up*, B<sub>1</sub> A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Ed. *upon*; B<sub>2</sub> *of*.  
119. Probably the date at which Chaucer was writing.

120. *knowe*, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Br. Ed. *knew*.

121. *knowe*, B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Ed. *knew*.

2. *Conclusio*. To knowe the altitude of the sonne or of othre celestial bodies

Putte the ryng of thyn Astrelabie upon thy right thombe, and turne thi lifte syde ageyn the light of the sonne; and remewe thy rewle up and down til that the stremes of the sonne shine thorough bothe holes of thi rewle. Loke than how many degrees thy rule is areised from the litel crois upon thin est lyne, and take there the altitude of thi sonne. And in this same wise mais thou knowe by night the altitude of the mone or of brighte sterres. [127]

This chapitre is so generall evere in oot that there nedith no more declaracioun but forgeit it not.

3. *Conclusio*. To knowe every tyme of the day by light of the sonne; and every tyme of the nyght by the sterres fixe and eke to knowe by nyght or by day the degre of any signe that ascendith on the est orisonte, that is clepid commonly the ascendent, or ellis horoscopus

Take the altitude of the sonne when the list, as I have seide, and sette the degre of the sonne, in caas that it be before the myddel of the day, amonge thyn almykanteras on the est syde of thin Astrelabie; and if it be after the myddel of the day, sette the degre of thy sonne upon the west syde. Take this manere of settingg for a general rule, ones for evere. And what thou hast sette the degre of thy sonne upon as many almykanteras of height as was the altitude of the sonne taken by thy rule, ley over thi label upon the degre of the sonne; and than wol the point of thi labille sitte in the bordure upon the verrey tyde of the day. [132]

Ensample as thus:—The yeer of oure lord 1391, the 12 day of Marche, I wolde knowe the tyde of the day. I toke the altitude of my sonne, and fonde that it was 25 degrees and 30 of minutes of height in

128. In A<sub>2</sub> Add. 2308 Br. Ed. a spurious conclusion is inserted here.

134. *of minutes*, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Ed. omit *of*; perhaps an imitation of *triginta minutuum*.

the bordure on the bak side. Tho turned I myn Astrelabye, and by cause that it was before mydday, I turned my riet and sette the degre of the sonne, that is to seyn the first degre of Aries, on the right side of myn Astrelabye upon 25 degrees and 30 mynutes of height among myn almykanteras. Tho leide I my label upon the degre of my sonne, and fonde the point of my label in the bordure upon a capitale lettre that is clepid an X. Tho rekned I alle the capitale lettres fro the lyne of mynighnt unto this forseide lettre X, and fonde that it was 9 of the klokke of the day. Tho loked I down upon the est orizonte, and fonde there the 20 degre of Geminis ascendyng, whiche that I toke for myn ascendent. And in this wise had I the experience for evermo in whiche manere I shulde knowe the tytle of the day and eke myn ascendent. [139]

Tho wolde I wite the same nyght folowyng the houre of the nyght, and wroughte in this wise:—Among an heepe of sterres fixe it liked me for to take the altitude of the faire white sterre that is clepid Alhabor, and fonde hir sittying on the west side of the lyne of midday, 12 degrees of heichte taken by my rewle on the bak side. Tho sette I the centre of this Alhabor upon 12 degrees among myn almykanteras upon the west side, by cause that she was founde on the west side. Tho leyde I my label over the degre of the sonne, that was disceidid under the west orisounte, and rekned all the lettres capitalls fro the lyne of midday unto the point of my label in the bordure, and fonde that it was passed 9 of the klokke the space of 10 degrees. Tho lokid I down upon myn est orisounte, and fonde ther 10 degrees of Scorpis

ascendyng, whom I toke for myn ascendent. And thus lerned I to knowe onys for evere in whiche manere I shuld come to the houre of the nyght, and to myn ascendent, as verreyly as may be taken by so smal an instrument. [145]

But natheles this rule in generall wol I warne the for evere:—Ne make the nevere bolde to have take a just ascendent by thin Astrelabie, or elles to have sette justly a klokke, whan eny celestial body by whiche that thou wenyst governe thilke thinges be nigh the southe lyne. For trustewel whan the sonne is nygh the meridional lyne, the degre of the sonne renneth so longe consentrike upon the almykanteras that sothly thou shalt erre fro the just ascendent. The same conclusion sey I by the centre of eny sterre fixe by nyght. And, more over, by experience I wote wel that, in our orisounte, from xi of the klokke unto oon of the klokke in taking of a iust ascendent in a portatif Astrelabie it is harde to knowe—I mene from xi of the klokke before the houre of noon til oon of the klokke next folowyng. [150]

#### 4. A special declaracioun of the Ascendent

The Ascendent sothly, as wel in alle Nativites as in questions and eleccions of tymes, is a thinge which that these Astrologiens gretly observen. Wherefore me semeth convenient, syth that I speke of the Ascendent, to make of it speciall declaracioun.

The Ascendent, sothly to take it at the largest, is thilke degre that ascendithat eny of these forseide tymes upon the est orisounte. And therefore, yf that eny planete ascende at thatt same tyme in thilke forseide degre, than hath he no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne, but he is than in the degre of the ecliptik whiche that is the degre of his longitude. Men sayn that planete is *In Horoscopo*.

*Libra*; R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. 20 degrees of *Libra*; R<sub>2</sub> 12 degrees of *Libra*; M<sub>1</sub> 10 degrees of *Taurus*.

154. degre, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> latitude; Dd<sub>2</sub> R<sub>1</sub> same degre; B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> orizonte; corr. of R<sub>1</sub> (var.) A<sub>2</sub> latitude orizont.

154. degre . . . degre, MSS. except B<sub>1</sub> omit.

138. down upon, A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> on.

138. Geminis, so in MSS.

141. 12 degrees, R<sub>1</sub> (whose numerals are not trustworthy) Dd<sub>1</sub> (corrected later) A<sub>2</sub> Edd. 18 degrees; similarly in 142, except that 18 added later in R<sub>1</sub>.

143. 9 of the klokke, Dd<sub>1</sub> reads 8; R<sub>1</sub> 5; A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. 7.

144. 10 degrees, Dd<sub>1</sub> R<sub>1</sub> read 2; A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. 11.

144. 10 degrees of Scorpis, Dd<sub>1</sub> 23 degrees of

But sothly the House of Ascendent, that is to seyn the first hous or the est angle, is a thinge more brode and large. For, after the statutes of Astrologiens, what celestial body that is 5 degrees above thilke degre that ascendith, or with inne that nombre, that is to seyn neer the degree that ascendith, yit rekne they thilke planete in the ascendent. [156] And what planete that is under thilke degre that ascendith the space of 15 degrees, yit seyn thei that thilke planete is 'like to him that is the Hous of the Ascendent.' But sothly, if he passe the boundes of these forseide spaces, above or byneth, theiseyn that the planete is 'fallyng fro the ascendent.' Yit saien these Astrologiens that the ascendent and eke the lorde of the ascendent may be shajen forto be fortunat or infortunat. As thus:—A 'fortunat ascendent' clepen they whan that no wicked planete, as Saturne or Mars or elles the Tayle of the Dragon, is in the house of the ascendent, ne that no wicked planete have noon aspect of enemyte upon the ascendent. But thei wol caste that thei have a fortunat planete in hir ascendent, and yit in his felicity; and than say thei that it is wel. [157]

Further over thei seyn that the infortunyng of an ascendent is the contrarie of these forseide thinges. The Lord of the Ascendent seythei that he is fortunat whan he is in gode place fro the ascendent, as in an angle, or in a succident where as he is in hys dignite and comfortid with frendly aspectes of planetes and wel receyved; and eke that he may seen the ascendent; and that he be not retrograd, ne combust, ne joynd with no shrew in the same signe; ne that he be not in his descencioun, ne joynd with no planete in his descencioun, ne have upon him noon aspect infortunat; and than sey thei that he is wel. [165]

Natheles these ben observaunces of judicial matere and rytes of payens in which my spirit hath no feith, ne knowing of her

*horoscopum*. For they seyn that every signe is departid in thre even parties by 10 degrees, and thilke porcioun they clepe a face. And al though that a planete have a latitude fro the ecliptik, yit sey somme folke, so that the planete arise in that same signe with eny degre of the forseide face in which his longitude is rekned, that yit is the planete in *horoscopo*, be it in nativite or in eleccion etc. [168]

5. *Conclusio. To knowe the verrey equacion of the degre of the sonne yf so be that it falle bitwene thyn almykanteras*

For as muche as the almykanteras in thin Astrelabie ben compowned by two and two, where as somme almykanteras in sondry astrelabies be compowned by 1 and 1, or elles by 3 and 3, it is necessarie to thy lernyng to teche the first to knowe and worke with thin owne instrument. Wherefore whan that the degre of thi sonne fallith bytwixe 2 almykanteras, or ellis yf thin almykanteras ben graven with over gret a poynt of a compas (for bothe these thinges may causen error as wel in knowing of the tide of the day, as of the verrey ascendent), thou must worken in this wise:—[170]

Sette the degre of thy sonne upon the hyer almykanteras of bothe, and wayte wel where as thin almyr touchith the bordure and sette there a prikke of ynke. Sett down agayn the degre of the sonne upon the nether almykanteras of bothe, and sett there another prikke. Remove than thin almyr in the bordure even amidles bothe prickes, and this wol dede justly the degre of thi sonne to sitte atwixe bothe almykanteras in his right place. Lay than thy label over the degre of thi sonne, and fynde in the bordure the verrey tyde of the day, or of the night. And as verrailly shalt thou fynde upon thin est orisonte thin ascendent. [174]

168. *eleccion*, i.e. election of times.

169. *by 3 and 3*, B<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> 1d<sub>1</sub> by 2 and 2; B<sub>1</sub> b 2 and; A<sub>2</sub> Br. by 2.

170. *of thi sonne*, B<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. of the sonne. *thy and the* are often thus confused.

173. *betwixe*, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *betweene*; B<sub>1</sub> atwixe

157. 15 should be 25. Probably Chaucer's mistake. Brae cites Ptolemy, iii. 10, 'viginti quinque.'

6. *To knowe the sprynge of the dawenyng and the ende of the evenyng the whiche ben called the two crepuscules*

Sette the nadir of thy sonne upon 18 degrees of height amonge thyn almykanteras on the west side; and ley thy label on the degre of thy sonne, and than shal the point of thy label shewen the sprynge of the day. Also set the nader of thy sonne upon 18 degrees of height among thin almykanteras on the est side, and ley over thy label upon the degre of the sonne, and with the point of thy label fynde in the bordure the ende of the evenyng, that is verrey nyght.

The nader of the sonne is thilke degre that is opposyt to the degre of the sonne in the 7 signe. As thus:—every degre of Aries by ordir is nadir to every degre of Libra by ordre, and Taurus to Scorpioun, Gemini to Sagittarie, Cancer to Capricorn, Leo to Aquarie, Virgo to Pisces. And yif eny degre in thy zodiak be derke, his nadir shal declare hym. [179]

7. *Conclusio. To knowe the Arch of the Day, that some folke callen the Day Artificial, fro sonne arisyng tyl it go to reste*

Sette the degre of thi sonne upon thin est orisonte, and ley thy label on the degre of the sonne and at the point of thy label in the bordure sette a pricke. Turne than thy riet aboute tyl the degre of the sonne sitte upon the west orisonte, and ley thy label upon the same degre of the sonne, and at the poynt of thy label sette there a nother pricke. Rekne than the quantite of tyme in the bordure bitwixe bothe prickes, and take there thyn arch of the day. The remenaunt of the bordure under the orisonté is the arch of the nyght. Thus maist thou rekne bothe arches or every porcioun of whether that the liketh. And yf this manere of worching maist thou se how longe that eny sterre fixe dwelleth

180. Rubric. *go to reste*, A<sub>2</sub> Br. *goth down*. The former is Chaucer's usual expression; cp. *Falcs*, A 30, A 1779.

above the erthe, fro tyme that he risith til he go to rest. But the day natural, that is to seyn 24 houres, is the revolucoun of the equinoxial with as muche part of the zodiak as the sonne of his propre moeving passith in the mene while. [185]

8. *Conclusio. To turne the houres in-euales in houres equales*

Knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres in-euales, and depart hem by 15, and take there thin houres equales.

9. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of the day vulgar, that is to seyn fro sprynge of the day unto verrey nyght*

Knowe the quantite of thy crepuscules, as I have taught in the chapitre before, and adde hem to the arch of thy day artificial, and take there the space of alle the hool day vulgar unto verrey night. The same manere maist thou worche to knowe the quantite of the vulgar nyght. [188]

10. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of houres in-euales by day*

Understonde wel that these houres in-euales ben clepid houres of planetes. And understonde wel that som tyme ben thei lenger by day than by night, and som tyme the contrarie. But understonde wel that evermo generly the houre in-equal of the day with the houre in-equal of the night contenen 30 degrees of the bordure, whiche bordure is evermo answering to the degrees of the equinoxial. Wherefore departe the arch of the day artificial in 12, and take there the quantite of the houre in-equal by day. And if thou abate the quantite of the houre in-equal by day out of 30, than shal the remenaunt that levith performe the houre in-equal by night. [193]

184. *fro tyme*, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *fro the tyme*.

188. *Knowe the*, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> *Knowe thou the*.

190. *And understonde*, B<sub>1</sub> *This understonde*; B<sub>2</sub> omits *And*.

191. *contenen*, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *contenyth*.

193. 30, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. 360 degrees.

11. *Conclusio. To knowe the quantite of heures equales*

The quantite of heures equales, that is to seyn the heures of the klokke, ben departid by 15 degrees al redy in the bordure of thin Astrelaby as wel by night as by day, generally for evere. What nedith more declaracioun?

Wherefore whan the list to knowe how many heures of the klokke ben passed, or eny part of eny of these heures that ben passed, or ellis how many heures or parties of heures ben to come fro suche a tyme to suche a tyme by day or by night, knowe the degre of thy sonne, and ley thy label on it. Turne thy ryet aboute joyntly with thy label, and with the poynt of it rekne in the bordure fro the sonne arise unto that same place there thou desirist, by day as by nyght. This conclusioun wol I declare in the last chapitre of the 4 Partie of this tretys so openly that there shal lakke no worde that nedith to the declaracioun. [198]

12. *Conclusio. Special Declaracioun of the heures of planetes*

Understonde wel that evermo, fro the arisyng of the sonne til it go to rest, the nadir of the sonne shal shewe the houre of the planete, and fro that tyme forward al the night til the sonne arise; than shal the verrey degre of the sonne shewe the houre of the planete.

Ensample as thus:—The xiiij day of Marche fyl upon a Saturday, peraventure, and atte risyng of the sonne I fonde the secunde degre of Aries sitting upon myn est orisonte, al be it that it was but litel. Than fonde I the 2 degre of Libra, nadir of my sonne, descending on my west orisonte, upon whiche west orisonte every day generally atte sonne arist ennth the houre of every planete, after whiche planete the

day berith his name, and endith in the next strike of the planete under the forside west orisonte. And evere as the sonne clymbith upper and upper, so goth his nadir downer and downer, teching by suche strikes the heures of planetes by ordir as they sitten in the hevenc. The firste houre unequal of every Saturday is to Saturne, and the secunde to Iupiter, the thirde to Mars, the fourthe to the sonne, the fift to Venus, the sixte to Mercurius, the seventh to the mone. And then ageyn the 8 is to Saturne, the 9 to Jupiter, the 10 to Mars, the 11 to the sonne, the 12 to Venus. And now is my sonne gon to reste as for that Saturday. Than shewith the verrey degre of the sonne the houre of Mercurie entring under my west orisonte at eve; and next him succedith the mone, and so furthe by ordir, planete after planete in houre after houre, all the nyght longe til the sonne arise. Now risith the sonne that Sunday by the morwe, and the nadir of the sonne upon the west orisonte shewith me the entring of the houre of the forside sonne. And in this manere succedith planete under planete fro Saturne unto the mone, and fro the mone up ageyn to Saturne, houre after houre generally. And thus knowe I this conclusioun. [209]

13. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of the sonne in myddes of the day that is clepid the Altitude Meridian*

Sette the degre of the sonne upon the lyne meridional, and rekne how many degrees of almykanteras ben bitwyxe thin est orisonte and the degre of thy sonne, and take there thin altitude meridian, this to seyn the highest of the sonne as for that day. So maist thou knowe in the same lyne the heighest cours that eny sterre fixe

205. the 8, B1 B2 8 houre.

206. And so with any other day, the series beginning with the planet whose name accords with the day; e.g. Monday, to the moon; Wednesday, to Mercury; Friday, to Venus, etc.

207. til the sonne, B2 B3 to the sonne.

208. that Sunday, B1 Br. the Sunday; A2 at Sunday; B3 on Sunday.

210. Conclusions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 follow conclusion 21 in MSS. of group y; cp. Introd.

210. this to seyn, A2 B3 Br. Th. that go to seyn

198. Cp. 'Quarta pars' in Chaucer's Introd.

199. The 'Heures of Planetes' is a matter of astrology, depending on the fact that each planet belonged to a particular day of the week.

200. The 13th of March fell on a Saturday in 1389 and in 1395.

200. *atte risyng*, M1 Dd1 B2 B3 Br. *atte the arisyng*.

lymbeth by night. This is to seyn that whan eny sterre fixe is passid the lyne meridional, than begynneth it to descende; and so doth the sonne. [211]

4. *Conclusio. To knowe the degre of the sonne by thy ryet for a maner curiosite*

Seke besly with thy rule the highest of hesonne in mydde of the day. Turnethan hin Astrelabic, and with a pricke of ynke marke the nombre of that same altitude in the lyne meridional; turne than thy ryet bout tyl thou fynde a degre of thy zodiak accordyng with the pricke, this is to seyn, ittyng on the pricke. And in soth thou halt fynde but 2 degrees in al the zodiak of hat condicioun; and yit thilke 2 degrees in diuerse signes. Than maist thou ightly, by the sesoun of the yere, knowe the signe in whiche that is the sonne. [215]

15. *Conclusio. To knowe whiche day is like to whiche day as of lengthe*

Loke whiche degrees ben ylike fer fro the evedes of Cancer and Capricorne, and loke when the sonne is in eny of thilke degrees; than ben the dayes ylike of lengthe. This is to seyn that as longe is that day in that month, as was suche a day in suche a month; there varieth but litel.

Also, yf thou take 2 dayes naturales in the yere ylike fer fro either pointes of the quinoxial in the opposyt parties, than as longe is the day artificiall of that oon day as is the night of that othir, and the contrarie. [218]

5. *Conclusio. This chapitre is a maner Declaracioun to Conclusionns that followen*

Understonde wel that thy zodiak is devided in two halfe circles, as fro the heved of Capricorne unto the heved of Cancer, and synward fro the heved of Cancer unto the heved of Capricorne. The heved of Capricorne is the lowest point wheras the sonne is in wynter, and the heved of Cancer is

the heighest point in whiche the sonne goth in somer. And therefore understonde wel that eny two degrees that ben ylike fer fro eny of these two hevedes, truste wel that thilke two degrees ben of ilike declinacioun, be it southward or northward, and the daies of hem ben ilike of lengthe and the nyghtes also, and the shadewes ilyke, and the altitudes ylike attc midday for evere. [222]

17. *Conclusio. To knowe the verrey degre of eny maner sterre, straunge or unstraunge, after his longitude; though he be indetermyne in thin Astrelabye, sothly to the trouthe thus heshal be knowe*

Take the altitude of this sterre whan he is on the est syde of the lyne meridional, as neigh as thou mayst gesse; and take an ascendent anon right by som manere sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist; and forgete not the altitude of the firste sterre ne thyn ascendent. And whan that this is done, aspyc diligently whan this same firste sterre passith eny thyng the south westward; and cacche him anon right in the same nombre of altitude on the west syde of this lyne meridional, as he was kought on the est syde; and takca new ascendent anon ryght by som manere sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist, and forgete not this secunde ascendent. And whan that this is done, rekne than how many degrees ben bitwixe the first ascendent and the secunde ascendent; and rekne wel the myddel degre bitwene bothe ascendentes, and sette thilke myddel degre upon thyn est orizonte; and wayte than what degre that sitte upon the lyne meridional, and take there the verrey degre of the ecliptik in whiche the sterre stondith for the tyme. For in the ecliptik is the longitude of a celestial body rekned, evne fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Pisces; and his latitude is rekned after

223. Rubric. longitude, A<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. latitude.

225. passith eny thyng, etc., i.e. passes west of the meridional line.

225. cacche, M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> hath; A<sub>2</sub> Br. take; B<sub>2</sub> sett.

228. wayte than, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. than loke.

216. A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> Edd. have slightly different rubric.

the quantite of his declynacioun north or south toward the polys of this world. [229]

As thus :—yif it be of the sonne or of eny fixe sterre, rekne hys latitude or his declinacioun fro the equinoxial cercle ; and if it be of a planete, rekne than the quantite of his latitude fro the ecliptik lyne, al be it so that fro the equinoxial may the declinacioun or the latitude of eny body celestial be rekned after the site north or south and after the quantite of his declinacioun. And right so may the latitude or the declinacioun of eny body celestial, save ononly of the sonne, after hyssite north or south and after the quantite of his declinacioun, be rekned fro the ecliptik lyne, fro which lyne alle planetes som tyme declinen north or south save ononly the forseide sonne. [233]

18. *Conclusio. To knowe the degrees of longitudes of fixe sterres after that they be determinat in thin Astrelahye, yf so be that thet be trewey sette*

Sette the centre of the sterre upon the lyne meridional, and take kepe of thy zodiak and loke what degre of eny signe that site upon the same lyne meridional at that same tyme, and take there the degre in which the sterre stondith ; and with that same degre cometh that same sterre unto that same lyne fro the orisonte. [235]

19. *Conclusio. To knowe wit whiche degre of the zodiak eny sterre fixe in thin Astrelahye arisith upon the est orisonte al though his dwellyng be in a nother signe*

Sette the centre of the sterre upon the est orisonte, and loke what degre of eny signe that sitt upon the same orisonte at that same tyme. And understonde wel that

231. the site, R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. the syght ; B<sub>1</sub> site ; A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> that it syteth.

232. site, A<sub>2</sub> sytting ; R<sub>2</sub> syght.

234. centre, i.e. the point of the tongue representing it in the Astrolabe.

235. that same degre, R<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. the same degre ; and frequently the same for that same in late MSS.

236. Rubric. his dwellyng, R<sub>2</sub> his orisonte ; Br. Th. the orisonte.

with that same degre arisith that same sterre. [236]

And thys mervelous arisyng with a straunge degre in a nother signe is by cause that the latitude of the sterre fixe is either north or south fro the equinoxial. But sothly the latitudes of planetes be commonly rekned fro the ecliptyk by cause that noon of hem declyneth but fewe degrees oute fro the brede of the zodiak. And take gode kepe of this chapitre of arisyng of celestial bodies ; for truste wel that neyther mone ne sterre, as in our embelif orisonte, arisith with that same degre of his longitude save in oo cas, and that is when they have no latitude fro the ecliptik lyne. But natheles som tyme is everiche of these planetes under the same lyne. [240]

20. *Conclusio. To knowe the declinacioun of eny degre in the zodiak fro the equinoxial cercle*

Sette the degre of eny signe upon the lyne meridional, and rekne hys altitude in the almykanteras fro the est orisonte up to the same degre sette in the forseide lyne, and sette there a prik ; turne up than thy riet, and sette the heved of Aries or Libra in the same meridional lyne, and sette there a nother prik. And whan that this is done, conside the altitudes of hem bothe ; for sothely the difference of thilke altitudes is the declinacioun of thilke degre fro the equinoxial. And yf it so be that thilke degre be northward fro the equinoxial, than is his declinacioun north ; yif it be southward, than is it south.

21. *Conclusio. To knowe fro what latitude in eny region the almykanteras of eny table ben compowned*

Rekne how many degrees of almykanteras in the meridional lyne ben fro the cercle equinoxial unto the cerny, or elles from the pool artyk unto the north orisonte ; and for so gret a latitude, or for so smal a latitude, is the table compowned. [245]

245. Rubric. eny, A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Th. my ; Br. thy.

22. *Conclusio. To know in special the latitude of oure countre, I mene after the latitude of Oxenford, and the height of oure pool*

Understonde wel that as fer is the heved of Aries or Libra in the equinoxial fro pure orisonte as is the cennyth fro the pool artik; and as high is the pool artik fro the orisonte as the equinoxial is fer fro the cennyth. I prove it thus by the latitude of Oxenford: Understonde wel that the height of oure pool artik fro oure north orisonte is 51 degrees and 50 mynutes; than is the cennyth fro oure pool artik 38 degrees and 10 mynutes; than is the equinoxial fro oure cennyth 51 degrees and 50 mynutes; than is oure south orisonte from oure equinoxial 38 degrees and 10 mynutes. Understonde wel this rekenyng. Also forgete not that the cennyth is 90 degrees of height from oure orisonte, and oure equinoxial is 90 degrees from oure pool artik. Also this shorte rule is soth, that the latitude of eny place in a region is the distance fro the cennyth into the equinoxial. [257]

23. *Conclusio. To prove evidently the latitude of eny place in a region by the prove of the height of the pool artik in that same place*

In some wynters nyght whan the firmament is clere and thikke sterred, wayte a yme til that eny sterre fixe sitte lyne right perpendicular over the pool artik, and clepe that sterre A; and wayte another sterre hat sitte lyne right under A, and under the pool, and clepe that sterre F. And understonde wel that F is not considrid but oonly to declare that A sitte evene over the pool. Take than anon right the altitude of A from the orisonte, and forgete it not; let A and F goo fare wel tyl ageynst the awenyng a gret while, and come than geyn, and abide til that A is evene under the pool, and under F; for sothly than wol

F sitte over the pool, and A wol sitte under the pool. Take than este sonys the altitude of A from the orisonte, and notes wel his secunde altitude as hys first altitude. And whan that this is doon, rekene how many degrees that the first altitude of A exceedith his secunde altitude, and take half thilke porcioun that is excedid and adde it to his secunde altitude, and take there the elevacioun of thy pool, and eke the latitude of thy region; for these two ben of oo nombre, this is to seyn as many degrees as thy pool is elevate, so much is the latitude of the region. [258]

Ensample as thus:—peraventure the altitude of A in the evenyng is 56 degrees of height; than wol his secunde altitude or the dawning be 48 degrees, that is 8 degrees lasse than 56 that was his first altitude att even. Take than the half of 8 and adde it to 48 that was his secunde altitude, and than hast thou 52. Now hast thou the height of thy pool and the latitude of the region. But understonde wel that to prove this conclusioun and many a nother faire conclusioun, thou must have a plomet hangyng on a lyne, heigher than thin heved, on a perche; and thilke lyne must hange evene perpendicular bytwix the pool and thin eye; and than shalt thou seen yf A sitte evene over the pool, and over F sitte evene; and also yf F sitte evene over the pool and over A or day. [262]

24. *Conclusio. Another conclusioun to prove the height of the pool artik fro the orisonte*

Take eny sterre fixe that never descendith under the orisonte in thilke region, and considre his heighest altitude and his lowist altitude fro the orisonte, and make a nombre of bothe these altitudes; take than and abate half that nombre, and take

259. In this example MSS. of group  $\beta$  have a different set of observations, viz. 62 for the evening altitude, and 21 for that taken in the morning, giving as a result a latitude about that of Rome.

260. 52 degrees, roughly the latitude of Oxford; cp. 270.

263. make a nombre, i.e. add them together.

246. Rubric. *oure countre*, M<sub>1</sub> the countre; 247. Th. *oure countre*; MS. in St. John's Coll. amb. (Skeat) *nostru contri*.

251. place, M<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. *planeto*.



there the elevacioun of the pool artik in that same regioun.

**25. Conclusio.** *Another conclusioun to prove the latitude of the regioun*

Understonde wel that the latitude of eny place in a regioun is verrey the space bytwex the cenyth of hem that dwellen there and the equinoxial cerce north or south, takyng the mesure in the meridional lyne, as shewith in the almykanteras of thin Astrelabye. And thilke space is as much as the pool artike is high in that same place fro the orizonte. And than is the depressioun of the pool antartik, that is to seyn than is the pool antartike, byneth the orizonte the same quantite of space neither more ne lasse. [-65]

Than if thou desire to knowe this latitude of the regioun, take the altitude of the sonne in the myddel of the day, when the sonne is in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra; for than moeveth the sonne in the lyne equinoxial; and abate the nombre of that same sonnes altitude oute of 90 degrees, and than is the remenaunt of the nombre that levethe the latitude of that regioun. As thus:—I suppose that the sonne is thilke day at noon 38 degrees of height; abate than 38 oute of 90; so levethe there 52; than is 52 degrees the latitude. I say not this but for ensample; for wel I wot the latitude of Oxenford is certeyn minutes lasse as thou might preve. [270]

Now yf so be that the semeth to longe atarieng to abide til that the sonne be in the hevedes of Aries or of Libra, than wayte when the sonne is in eny othir degre of the zodiak and conside the degre of his declinacioun fro the equinoxial lyne; and if it so be that the sonnes declinacioun be northward fro the equinoxial, abate than fro the sonnes altitude at none the nombre

269. B<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> add *and 25 minutes after degrees*, and read *so levethe there 51 degrees and 50 minutes* (B<sub>2</sub> 15, A<sub>2</sub> -1), that is (A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> omit) *the latitude*, an evident attempt to make the problem yield the latitude of Oxford exactly.

270. as thou might preve, A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> R<sub>1</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Dd<sub>2</sub> Br. Th. omit; M<sub>1</sub> B<sub>1</sub> omit as; M<sub>1</sub> adds *the*; B<sub>1</sub> adds *the same*.

of his declinacioun, and than hastow the height of the hevedes of Aries and Libra. [272]

As thus:—My sonne is peraventur in the first degre of Leoun, 58 degrees and 10 minutes of height at none, and his declinacioun is almost 20 degrees northward fro the equinoxial; abate than thilke 20 degrees of declinacioun oute of the altitude at none; than levethe there 38 degrees and oddc minutes. Lo there the heved of Aries or Libra and thin equinoxial in that regioun. Also if so be that the sonnes declinacioun be southward fro the equinoxial, adde than thilke declinacioun to the altitude of the sonne at noon, and take there the hevedes of Aries and Libra and thin equinoxial; abate than the height of the equinoxial oute of 90 degrees; than levethe there the distance of the pool of that regioun fro the equinoxial. Or elles, if the list, take the highest altitude fro the equinoxial of eny sterre fixe that thou knowist, and take the netherest elongacioun (lengthing) fro the same equinoxial lyne, and worke in the manere forseid. [277]

**26. Conclusio.** *Declaraacioun of the Ascensioun of signes*

The excellence of the Spere Solide amonges othir noble conclusiouns, shewith manyfest the diverse ascensiouns of signes in diverse places, as wel in the right cerce as in the embelif cerce. These auctours writen that thilke signe is clepid of right ascensioun with whiche more parte of the cerce equinoxial and lasse part of the zodiak ascendith; and thilke signe ascendith embelif with whiche lasse part of the equinoxial and more part of the zodiak ascendith. Ferther-over, they seyn that

273. There are two sets of readings for this problem, viz. that of the text found in B<sub>1</sub> (except that it reads 17 for 10) M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub>, and 10 degrees of Leo almost 56 of height at noon . . . declinacioun . . . 18 . . . abate . . . 18 than levethe 38 found in MSS. of group β (A<sub>2</sub> and B<sub>2</sub> showing contamination with B<sub>1</sub>).

278. *Spere Solide*, i.e. the chapter 'De ascensionibus et descensionibus signorum rectis et obliquis' of John de Sacra Bosco's *De Sphaera* which Chaucer draws on for this conclusion.

n thilke cuntrey where as the senith of hem hat dwellen there is in the equinoxial lyne, and her orisonte passyng by the two poles of this world, thilke folke han this right cercle and the right orisonte; and evermore he arch of the day and the arch of the night is there ilike longe; and the sonne wies every yere passing thorough the cenith of her heed, and two someres and two wynters in a yere han these forseide peple. And the almykanteras in her Astrelabyces ben straight as a lyne, so as it shewith in the figure. [284]

The utilite to knowe the ascensions of signes in the right cercle is this:—Truste wel that by mediacioun of thilke ascensions these astrologiens, by her tables and her instrumentes, knowen verrely the ascension of every degre and minute in all the zodiak in the embelif cercle as shal be shewed. And nota that this forseide right orisonte, that is clepid *Orison Rectum*, dividith the equinoxial in to right angles; and the embelif orisonte, where as the pool is enhaunced up on the orisonte, overkervith the equinoxial in embelif angles as shewith in the figure. [286]

27. *Conclusio. This is the conclusioun to knowe the ascensions of signes in the right cercle, that is circulus directus*

Sette the heved of what signe the lyst to knowe his ascendyng in the right cercle upon the lyne meridional, and wayte where thyn almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a prikke; turne than thy riet westward til that the ende of the forseide signe sitte upon the meridional lyne and the sonys wayte where thin almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there another prikke. Rekene than the nombre of degres in the bordure bitwixe both prikkes, and take the ascension of the signe in the right

286. *overkerwith*, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> (var.) *overkerwereth*; Edl *overcomith*.

287. *his ascendyng*, A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Br. *the ascendyng*.

287. *and sette ther a prikke*. Following this to and of conclusion B<sub>1</sub> has a different version, no traces of which are found in other MSS.

cercle. And thus maist thou werke with every porcioun of thy zodiak. [289]

28. *Conclusio. To knowe the ascensions of signes in the embelif cercle in every regioun, I mene, in circulo obliquo*

Sette the heved of the signe whiche as the list to knowe his ascension upon the est orisonte, and wayte where thin almyry louchith the bordure, and there sette a prikke. Turne than thy riet upward til that the ende of the same signe sitte upon the est orisonte, and wayte efte sonys where as thin almyry touchith the bordure, and sette there a nother prikke. Rekene than the nombre of degres in the bordur bitwixe bothe prikkes and take there the ascension of the signe in the embelif cercle. And understonde wel that alle the signes in thy zodiak, fro the heved of Aries unto the ende of Virgo, ben clepid Signes of the North fro the equinoxial. And these signes arisen bitwixe the verrey est and the verrey northe in oure orisonte generally for evere. [294] And alle the signes for the heved of Libra unto the ende of Pisces ben clepid Signes of the South fro the equinoxial; and these signes arisen evermore bitwixe the verrey est and the verrey south in oure orisonte. Also every signe bitwixe the heved of Capricorne unto the ende of Geminis arisith on oure orisonte in lasse than 2 houres equales. And these same signes fro the heved of Capricorne unto the ende of Geminis ben cleped Tortuose Signes, or Croked Signes, for thei arise embelyf on oure orisonte. And these croked signes ben obedient to the signes that ben of right ascension. The signes of right ascension ben fro the heved of Cancer unto the [end] of Sagittarie; and these signes arisen more upright, and thei ben called eke Sovereyn Signes and everiche of hem arisith in more space than in 2 houres. Of whiche signes Gemini obeith to Cancer, and Taurus to

299. *unto the end of Sagittarie*. B<sub>2</sub> is the only MSS. that has reading in text. Others *heved for end*.

Leo, Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius to Scorpoun, and Capricorne to Sagittarie. And thus evermore 2 signes that ben ilike fer fro the heved of Capricorne obeyen everiche of hem til othir. [301]

29. *Conclusio. To knowe iustly the 4 quarters of the worlde, as Est, West, North, and South*

- Take the altitude of thy sonne when the list, and note wel the quarter of the worlde in which the sonne is for the tyme by the azymutes. Turne than thin Astrelabie, and sette the degre of the sonne in the almykanteras of his altitude on thilke syde that the sonne stant, as is the manere in takyng of houres, and ley thy label on the degre of the sonne; and rekene how many degrees of the bordure ben bitwexe the lyne meridional and the point of thy label, and note wel that nombre; turne than ageyn thin Astrelabie, and sette the point of thy gret rule there thou takist thin altitudes upon as many degrees in his bordure fro his meridional as was the point of thy label fro the lyne meridional on the wombe side. Take than thin Astrelabie with bothe hondes sadly and slyly, and lat the sonne shyne thorough bothe holes of thy rule, and slyly in thilke shynyng lat thin Astrelabie kouche adoun evene upon a smoth grounde, and than wol the verrey lyne meridional of thin Astrelabie lye evene south, and the est lyne wol lye est, and the west lyne west, and the northe lyne north, so that thou wirke softly and avysely in the kouching. And thus hast thou the 4 quarters of the firmament. [308]

30. *Conclusio. To knowe the altitude of planetes fro the weye of the sonne whethir so they be north or south fro the forseide weye*

Loke whan that a planete is in the lyne meridional, yf that hir altitude be of the

301. til other, B<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> Edd. to other.

same height that is the degre of the sonne for that day, and than is the planete in the verrey wey of the sonne and hath no latitude. And if the altitude of the planete be higher than the degre of the sonne, than is the planete north fro the wey of the sonne suche a quantite of latitude as shewith by thin almykanteras. And if the altitude of the planete be lasse than the degre of the sonne, than is the planete south fro the wey of the sonne suche a quantite of latitude as shewith by thin almykanteras. This is to seyn fro the wey where as the sonne went thilke day, but not fro the wey of the sonne in every place of the zodiak. [312]

31. *Conclusio. To knowe the Cenyth of the arising of the sonne, this is to seyn the partie of the orisonte in whiche that the sonne arisith*

Thou must first considere that the sonne arisith not alwey verrey est, but somtyme by northe the est and somtyme by south the est. Sothly the sonne arisith nevere moo verrey est in oure orisonte, but he be in the heved of Aries or Libra. Now is thin orisonte departed in 24 parties by thin azimutes in significacioun of 24 parties of the world; al be it so that shipmen rekene thilke parties in 32. Than is there no more but wayte in whiche azimutz that thy sonne ennth at his arisyng, and take there the cenith of the arisyng of the sonne. [316]

The manere of the divisioun of thin Astrelabie is this, I mene as in this cas:—First it is divided in 4 plages principalis with the lyne that goth from est to west; and than with a nother lyne that goth fro south to north; than is it divided in smale parties of azymutz, as est, and est by south,

309. Chaucer in 312 explains *wey of the sonne* to mean the sun's apparent path on any given day.

312. After *zodiak* group *β* adds *for on the morrow wyl the sonne be on another degre.*

313. Rubric. *Cenyth*, azimuth.

314. *nevere moo*, A<sub>1</sub> B<sub>2</sub> *evermore.*

315. As in the mariner's compass.

where as is the first azymute above the est lyne; and so furthe for partie to partie til that thou come ageyn un to the est lyne. Thus maist thou understonde also the cenyth of eny sterre in whiche partie he riseth. [319]

**32. Conclusio.** *To knowe in whiche partie of the firmament is the conjuncyoun*

Consider the tyme of the conjuncyoun by the kalender, as thus:—Loke hou many houres thilke conjuncyoun is fro the midday of the day precedent, as shewith by the canoun of thy kalender. Rekene than thilke nombre of houres in the bordure of thin Astrelabie, as thou art wont to do in knowyng of the houres of the day or of the nyght, and ley thy label over the degree of the sonne, and than wol the point of thy label sitte upon the houre of the conjuncyoun. Loke than in whiche azymute the degree of thy sonne sittith, and in that partie of the firmament is the conjuncyoun. [322]

**33. Conclusio.** *To knowe the cenyth of the altitude of the sonne*

This is no more to seyn but eny tyme of the day take the altitude of the sonne, and by the azymut in whiche he stondith maist thou seen in whiche partie of the firmament he is. And the same wise maist thou seen by night of eny sterre, whether the sterre sitte est or west, or north or southe, or eny partie bitwene, after the name of the azimute in whiche the sterre stondith. [324]

**34. Conclusio.** *To knowe sothly the degree of the longitude of the mone, or of eny planete that hath no latitude for the tyme fro the ecliptik lyne*

Take the altitude of the mone, and reke thy altitude up amonge thyn almykanteras on whiche syde that the mone

318. *above the est lyne.* Because the points of the compass were reversed on the Astrolabe.

323. *eny tyme, M<sub>2</sub> R<sub>2</sub> on tyme.*

325. *altitude of the mone, A<sub>2</sub> B<sub>2</sub> latitude of the mone.*

stondith, and sette there a prikke. Take than anon right upon the mones syde the altitude of any sterre fixe whiche that thou knowist, and sett his centre upon his altitude amonge thyn almykanteras there the sterre is founde. Wayte than whiche degre of the zodiak touchith the prykke of the altitude of the mone, and take there the degre in whiche the mone stondith. This conclusioun is verrey sothe, yf the sterres in thin Astrelabie stonden after the trouthe. Comoun tretes of the Astrelabie ne maken non excepcioun whether the mone have latitude or noon, ne on wheyther syde of the mone the altitude of the sterre fixe be taken.

And *nota* that yf the mone shewe himself by light of day, than maist thou wyrke this same conclusioun by the sonne, as wel as by the fixe sterre. [330]

**35. Conclusio.** *This is the wyrkyng of the conclusioun to knowe yf that eny planete be directe or retrograde*

Take the altitude of any sterre that is clepid a planete, and note it wel; and take eke anon the altitude of any sterre fixe that thou knowist, and note it wel also. Come than ageyn the thridde or the ferthe nyght next folewing, for than shalt thou perceyve wel the moeving of a planete, whether so he moeve forward or bakward. Awayte wel than when that thy sterre fixe is in the same altitude that she was whan thou toke hir firste altitude. And take than eft sones the altitude of the forseide planete and note it wel; for truste wel yf so be that the planete be on the right syde of the meridional lyne, so that his secunde altitude be lasse than hys first altitude was, than is the planete directe; and yf he be on the west syde in that condicioun, than is he retrograde. And yf so be that this planete be upon the est side whan his altitude is taken, so that his secunde altitude be more than his first altitude, than is he retrograde. And if he be on the west syde, than is he direct. But the contrarie of these parties is of

the cours of the mone; for certis the mone moeveth the contrarie from othre planetes as in hir epicle, but in noon othir manere. [337]

**36. Conclusio.** *The conclusioun of equacions of houses after the Astrelabie*

Sette the begynnynge of the degre that ascendith upon the ende of the 8 houre inequal, than wol the begynnynge of the 2 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Remove than the degre that ascendith, and sette him on the ende of the 10 houre inequal, and than wol the begynnynge of the 3 hous sitte up on the mydnight lyne. Bringe up ageyn the same degre that ascended first, and sette him upon the est orisonte, and than wol the begynnynge of the 4 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Take than the nader of the degre that first ascendid, and sette him in the ende of the 2 houre inequal; and than wol the begynnynge of the 5 hous sitte upon the lyne of mydnight. Sette than the nader of the ascendent in the ende of the 4 houre inequal, and than wol the begynnynge of the 6 hous sitte on the mydnight lyne. The begynnynge of the 7 hous is nader of the ascendent, and the begynnynge of the 8 hous is nader of the 2 hous, and the begynnynge of the 9 hous is nader of the 3, and the begynnynge of the 10 hous is nader of the 4, and the begynnynge of the 11 hous is nader of the 5, and the begynnynge of the 12 hous is nader of the 6. [343]

**37. Conclusio.** *Another maner of equacions of houses by the Astrelabie*

Take thin ascendent, and than hast thou thy 4 angles; for wel thou wost that

337. certis, R<sub>1</sub> sothly; M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> he settes; A<sub>2</sub> omitt.

338. After conclusion 35 the MSS. vary. The text represents MSS. B<sub>1</sub> M<sub>1</sub> Dd<sub>1</sub> R<sub>1</sub>. R<sub>2</sub> ends with conclusion 35, B<sub>2</sub> with 36. Of the other MSS. some insert a number of spurious conclusions between 35 and 36; others place them after conclusion 40. The evidence that these are spurious is found in the fact that (a) they occur only in late MSS., and (b) are in a style quite different from Chaucer's.

the opposite of thin ascendent, that is to seyn, the begynnynge of the 7 hous, sitt upon the west orisonte, and the begynnynge of the 10 hous sitt upon the lyne meridional, and his opposyt upon the lyne of mydnight. Than ley thy label over the degre that ascendith, and rekne fro the point of thy label alle the degrees in the bordure tyl thou come to the meridional lyne; and departe alle thilke degrees in 3 evene parties, and take there the evene equacions of 3 houses; for ley thy label over everiche of these 3 parties, and than maist thou se by [ther] thy label lith in the zodiak, the begynnynge of everiche of these same houses fro the ascendent; that is to seyn the begynnynge of the 12 hous next above thin ascendent, the begynnynge of the 11 hous, and than the 10 upon the meridional lyne, as I first seide. The same wise wirke thou fro the ascendent doun to the lyne of mydnyght, and thus hast thou othre 3 houses; that is to seyn, the begynnynge of the 2, and the 3, and the 4 hous. Than is the nader of these 3 houses the begynnynge of the 3 houses that folewen. [350]

**38. Conclusio.** *To fynde the lyne meridional to dwelle fixe in eny certeyn place*

Take a rounde plate of metal, for werpyng the brodder the better; and make there upon a just compas a lite with in the bordure. And ley this rounde plate upon an evene grounde, or on an evene ston, or on an evene stok fixe in the grounde; and ley it evene by a level. And in the centre of the compas styke an evene pyn, or a wyre, upright, the smaller the better; sette thy pyn by a plom-rule evene upright, and lete thy pyn be no longer than a quarter of the dyametre of thy compas, fro the centre a-middes. And wayte biely about 10 or 11 of the klokke, whan the sonne shineth, whan the shadewe of the pyn entrith any thyng with in the cercle

348. same, M<sub>2</sub> 12; R<sub>1</sub> 3.

351. a just compas, an exact circle,

353. the centre a-middes, R<sub>1</sub> the pyn.

of thy compas an heer mele; and marke there a pricke with inke. Abide than stille waiting on the sonne til after 1 of the clokke, til that the shadwe of the wyrc, or of the pyn, passe any thing oute of the cercle of the compas, be it never so lyte, and sette there another pricke of ynke. Take than a compas, and mesure evene the myddel bitwexe bothe prickes, and sette there a pricke. Take me than a rule and drawe a strike evene a-lyne, fro the pyn unto the middel pricke; and take there thi lyne meridional for evermore as in that same place. And yif thou drawe a crosse lyne over-thwart the compas justly over the lyne meridional, than hast thou est and west and south, and par consequens, the opposite of the southe lyne is the north. [358]

39. *Conclusio. The Description of the meridional lyne, of longitudes and latitudes of Cites and Townes, as wel as of Climates*

Thys lyne meridional is but a manere descripcioun, or lyne ymaged, that passith upon the poles of this world and by the cernyth of our heved. And it is cleped the lyne meridional, for in what place that any man ys at any tyme of the yere, whan that the sonne, by mevyng of the firmament, cometh to his verrey meridional place, than is it verrey mydday, that we clepen our none, as to thilke man. And therefore is it cleped the lyne of mydday.

And *nota* that evermore of any 2 cytes or 2 townes, of which that oo town approachith neer the est than doth that othir town, truste wel that thilke townes han diverse meridians. [362]

*Nota* also that the arch of the equinoxial that is contened or bownded bitwixe the 2 meridians is clepid the longitude of the

toun. And yf so be that two townes have ilike meridian or oon meridian, than is the distaunce of hem both ilike fer fro the est, and the contrarie; and in this manere thei change not her meridian. But sothly thei chaungen her almykanteras, for the enhaunsyng of the pool and the distance of the sonne. [365]

The longitude of a climat is a lyne ymaged fro est to west ilike distant fro the equinoxiall. And the latitude of a climat may be cleped the space of the erthe fro the begynnyng of the first clymat unto the verrey ende of the same clymat evene direct ageyns the pool artyke. Thus sayn somme auctours; and somme of hem sayn that yf men clepe the latitude of a cuntry the arch meridian that is contened or intercept bitwixe the cernyth and the equinoxial, than say they that the distance fro the equinoxial unto the ende of a climat evene ageynst the pool artik is the latitude of a climat forsoothe. [368]

40. *Conclusio. To knowe with whiche degre of the zodiak that any planete ascendith on the orisonte, whether so that his latitude be north or south*

Knowe by thin almenak the degre of the ecliptik of any signe in whiche that the planete is reckned forto be, and that is clepid the degre of his longitude. And knowe also the degre of his latitude fro the ecliptik north or south. And by these ensamples folewyng in special maist thou wirke forsothe in every signe of the zodiak:— [371]

The degre of the longitude peraventure of Venus or of a nother planete was 6 of Capricorne, and the latitude of hir was northward 4 degrees fro the ecliptik lyne. Than toke I a subtil compas, and clepid that oo point of my compas A, and that other point F. Than toke I the point of

366. *evene direct*, etc., 'versus polum arcticum.'

371. Dd1 has different set of figures (in R1 the figures have not been filled in), giving longitude 6 and latitude 2. In M1 not all figures filled in.

372. 6 of Capricorne, B1 1 degre of Capricorne; R1 of Capricorne (in R1 the figures have not been filled in); M1 *planeta*.

359. From this point B1 is copied from a MS. like M1 Dd1. The readings of all three are very poor; so that for the remaining conclusions the text is that of B1 collated with R1.

359. *Conclusio* 39 is taken largely from Sacrobosco.

A and sette it in the ecliptik lyne in my zodiak in the degre of the longitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 1 degre of Capricorne; and than sette I the point of F upward in the same signe by cause that latitude was north upon the latitude of Venus, that is to seyn, in the 4 degre fro the heved of Capricorne; and thus have 4 degrees bitwix my two prickes. Than leide I down softly my compas, and sette the degre of the longitude upon the orisonte; tho toke I and waxed my label in manere of a peire tables to receyve distinctly the prickes of my compas. [376] Tho toke I thys forseide label, and leyde it fixe over the degre of my longitude; tho toke I up my compas and sette the point of A in the waxe on my label, as evene as I koude gesse, over the ecliptik lyne in the ende of the longitude, and sette the point of F endelonge in my label upon the space of the latitude, inward and over the zodiak, that is to seyn northward fro the ecliptik. Than leide I down my compas, and loked wel in the wey upon the prickes of A and of F; tho turned I my riet til that the pricke of F satt upon the orisonte; than sawe I wel that the body of Venus in hir latitude of degrees septemtrional ascendid in the ende of the 8 degre fro the heved of Capricorne.

And *nota* that in this manere maist thou wirke with any latitude septemtrional in alle signes. But sothly the latitude meridional of a planete in Capricorne ne may not be take by cause of the litel space bitwix the ecliptyk and the bordure of the Astrelabie; but sothely in all othre signes it may. [382]

375. 4 degrees, Dd<sub>1</sub> 2 degrees.

381. 8 degre fro, Dd<sub>1</sub> 6 degre in.

*2 pars hujus conclusio.*

Also the degre peraventure of Iupiter, or of a nother planete, was in the first degre of Piscis in longitude, and his latitude was 2 degrees meridional; tho toke I the point of A and sette it in the first degre of Piscis on the ecliptike; and than sette I the point of F downward in the same signe by cause that the latitude was south 2 degrees, that is to seyn, fro the heved of Piscis; and thus have 2 degres bitwixe bothe prikkes. Than sette I the degre of the longitude upon the orisonte; tho toke I my label, and leide it fixe upon the degre of the longitude; tho sette I the point of A on my label evene over the ecliptik lyne in the ende of the degre of the longitude, and sette the point of F endlonge in my label the space of 2 degres of the latitude outward fro the zodiak (this isto seyn southward fro the ecliptik toward the bordure), and turned my riet til that the pricke of F satt upon the orisonte. Than say I wel that the body of Iupiter in his latitude of 2 degrees meridional ascendid with 8 degres of Piscis in *horoscopo*. And in this manere maist thou wirke with any latitude meridional, as I first seide, save in Capricorne. And yt thou wilt pleye this crafte with the arising of the monc, loke thou rekne wel hir cours houre by houre, for she ne dwellith not in a degre of his longitude but litel while, as thou wel knowist. But natheles yf thou rekne hir verrey moevyng by thy tables houre after houre— [391]

*(Left unfinished.)*

383. 2 degrees, Dd<sub>1</sub> 3 degrees. Similarly in 384, 386, 388 (M<sub>1</sub> agrees with B<sub>1</sub>).

388. 8 degrees, Dd<sub>1</sub> 14 degrees; M<sub>1</sub> 6 degrees.

## THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE

MANY men sayn that in sweveninges  
 Ther nys but fables and lesynges ;  
 But men may some swevenes sene  
 Whiche hardely that false ne bene,  
 But afterwarde ben apparaunt.  
 This maye I drawe to warraunt  
 An authour that hight Macrobes,  
 That halte nat dremes false ne lees,  
 But undothe us the avysioun  
 That whilom mette kyng Cipiou. 10  
 And who-saith, or weneth it be  
 A jape, or ellès nycete,  
 To wene that dremes after falle,  
 Lette who so lyste a fole me calle.  
 For this trowe I, and say for me,  
 That dremes signifiuncè be  
 Of good and harme to many wightes,  
 That dremen in her slepe a nyghtes  
 Of many thynges covertly,  
 That fallen after al openly. 20  
 Within my twenty yere of age,  
 Vhan that Love taketh his cariage  
 Of yongè folke, I wente soone  
 To bedde, as I was wont to done,  
 And faste I slepte ; and in slepyng  
 He mette suche a swevenyng  
 That lykèd me wonder welc.  
 But in that sweven is never a dele  
 That it nys afterwarde befallè,  
 Yght as this dreame wol tel us alle. 30  
 Nowe this dreame wol I ryme a-right  
 To make your hertès gaye and lyght,  
 Or Love it prayeth and also  
 Commaundeth me that it be so.  
 And if there any askè me,  
 Whether that it be he or she,

Howe [wil I] this booke whiche is here  
 Shal hattè, that I rede you here ;  
 It is the Romance of the Rose,  
 In whiche al the Arte of Love I close. 40

The mater fayre is of to make :  
 God graunt me in gree that she it take  
 For whom that it begonnen is !  
 And that is she that hath y-wis  
 So mochel pris, and therto she  
 So worthy is biloved to be  
 That she wel ought of pris and ryght  
 Be clepèd Rose of every wight.

That it was May me thoughtè tho—  
 It is .V. yere or more ago— 50  
 That it was May thus dremèd me,  
 In tyme of love and jolite,  
 That al thing gynneth waxen gay.  
 For ther is neither busk nor hay  
 In May that it nyl shrouded bene,  
 And it with newè levès wrene. 60  
 These wodès eek recoveren grene  
 That drie in wynter ben to sene.  
 And the erthè wexith proude withalle  
 For swotè dewes that on it falle, 65  
 And [al] the porc estat forgette  
 In which that wynter had it sette.  
 And than bycometh the ground so proude,  
 That it wole have a newè shroude,  
 And makith so qucynt his robe and faire  
 That it hath hewes an hundred payre,  
 Of gras and flouris, ynde and pers,  
 And many hewès ful dyvers.  
 That is the robe I mene, y-wis, 69  
 Through whiche the ground to preisen is.

The byrdès that han lefte her song  
 While thei suffridè cold so strong,  
 In wedres gryl and derk to sight,

1. For vv. 1-44 Thynne's edition is sole authority.

4. *that false, ? to falsen ben, 'mensongier.'*

7. *Macrobes, cp. Dethe of Blaunche, l. 284, 1e.*

12. *Th. etc.*

22. *cariage (Th. corage), i.e. toll, 'paage.'*

37. *wil I, supplied from Fr. 'ge voll.'*

61. *al, supplied by Skeat ; but perhaps *poore*.*

66. *hath, MSS. had.*

71. *MS., which is imperfect in vv. 69-72, . . . en.*

72. *Th. han suffrid.*



Ben in May, for the sonnè bright,  
 So glade that they shewe in syngyng,  
 That in her hertis is sich lykyng,  
 That they mote syngen and be light.  
 Than doth the nyghtyngale hir myght  
 To makè noyse and syngen blythe ;  
 Thán is blisful many siþe  
 The chelaundre and [the] papyngay.  
 Than yongè folk entenden ay  
 Forto ben gay and amorous.  
 The tyme is than so sauerous,  
 Hard is the hert that loveth nought  
 In May, whan al this mirth is wrought ;  
 Whan he may on these braunches here  
 The smalè briddès syngen clere  
 Her blesful swetè song pitous.  
 And in this sesoun delytous,  
 Whan love affraieth allè thing,  
 Me thoughte a-nyght, in my sleping  
 Right in my bed, ful redily  
 That it was by the morowe erly,  
 And up I roos, and gan me clothe.  
 Anoon I wisshe myn hondis bothe.  
 A sylvre nedle forth y droughe  
 Out of an aguler queynt ynoughe,  
 And gan this nedlè threde anon ;  
 For out of toun me list to gon  
 The song of briddès forto here,  
 That in thise buskès syngen clere.  
 And in the swete seson that lefe is,  
 With a threde bastyng my slevis,  
 Alone I wente in my playng,  
 The smalè foulès song harknyng,  
 That peynèd hem ful many peyre  
 To syng on bowès bloméd feyre.  
 Iolyf and gay, ful of gladnesse,  
 Toward a ryver gan I me dresse,  
 That I herd renné fastè by,  
 For fairer playng non saugh I  
 Than playen me by that ryvere.  
 For from an hill that stood ther nere,  
 Cam doun the streme ful stif and bold ;  
 Cleer was the water and as cold

As any welle is, soth to seyne.  
 And somdele lasse it was than Seyne,  
 But it was strayghter, wel away ;  
 And never saugh I, er that day,  
 The watir that so wel lykèd me,  
 And wondir glad was I to se  
 That lusty place and that ryvere.  
 And with that watir that ran so clere  
 My face I wysshe. Tho saugh I well  
 The botmè pavèd everydell  
 With gravel ful of stonès shene.  
 The medewe softè, swote, and grene,  
 Héet right on the watir syde.  
 Ful clere was than the morowtyde,  
 And ful attempre, out of drede.  
 Tho gan I walkè thorough the mede,  
 Dounward ay in my pleiying  
 The ryver sylè costeiying.  
 And whan I had a whilè goon,  
 I saugh a gardyn right anoon,  
 Ful long and brood, and eucrydell  
 Encloséd was, and wallèd well  
 With highè wallès enbatailled,  
 Portraied without and wel entailed  
 With many richè portraitures.  
 And bothe the ymagès and peyntures  
 Gan I biholdè bysily ;  
 And I wole telle you redily  
 Of thilk ymagès the semblaunce,  
 As fer as I have remembraunce.

Amyddè saugh I HATÉ stonde,  
 That for hir wrathè, yre, and onde  
 Semede to ben a meveresse,  
 An angry wight, a chideresse ;  
 And ful of gyle and felle corage  
 By semblaunt was that ilk ymage.  
 And she was no thyng wel arraied,  
 But lyk a wode womman afraied.  
 Y-frounced foule was hir visage  
 And grennyng for dispitous rage ;  
 Hir nosè snorted up for tene.  
 Ful hidous was she forto sene,  
 Ful foule and rusty was she this ;

76. Th. *herte*.

81. *chelaundre*, a kind of lark.

84. *saverous*, Fr. 'saverous,' G *saverous*.

91. *affraieth*, arouses; cp. B. of D. 296.

103. As in Thynne; MS. *And in* [erasure] *swete seson* [that swete over, erasure] *is*. The Fr. is 'En icelle saison nouvele,' which makes one suspect that *And in that sesoun that newe is* was the original form of the line.

119. *strayghter*, 'expandue.'

142. G *the peyntures*.

146. G in *remembraunce*.

149. *meveresse*, MSS. *myneresse*; Fr. 'mou-  
 reuse, fem. of *moussur*, 'a troublesome fellow'  
 (Cotgr.).

159. A similar repetition of subject in  
 880.

Hir heed y-writen was, y-wis, 160  
Ful grymly with a greet towayle.

An ymage of another entayle  
A lyft half was hir faste by ;  
Hir name above hir heed saugh I,  
And she was called FELONYE.  
Another ymage, that VILANYE  
Y-clepid was, saugh I and fonde  
Upon the wal on hir right honde.  
Vilany was lyk somdel

That other ymage, and, trustith wel, 170  
She semede a wikked creature.  
By countenance in portrayture  
She semed be ful dispitous,  
And eek ful proude and outrageous.  
Wel coude he peynte, I undirtake,  
That sich ymage coude make.  
Ful foule and cherlysshe semed she,  
And eek vylayneus forto be,  
And litel coude of norriture  
To worshiþe any creature. 180

And next was peynted COVEITISE,  
That eggith folk in many gise  
To take and yeve right nought ageyne,  
And gret tresouris up to leyne.  
And that is she that for usure  
Leneth to many a creature,  
The lassé for the more wynnynge,  
So coveteise is her brennyng.  
And that is she for penyces fele,  
That techith forto robbe and stele 190  
These theves and these smale harlotes ;  
And that is routh, for by her throtes  
Ful many oon hangith at the laste.  
She makith folk compasse and caste  
To taken other folkis thyng  
Through robberie or myscounting.  
And that is she that makith trechoures  
And she makith false pleadours,  
That, with hir termés and hir domes,  
Doon maydens, children, and eek gromes  
Her heritagé to forgo. 201  
Ful croked were hir hondis two,  
For covetise is evere wode  
To gripen other folkis gode ;

166. Another ymage, etc. ; cp. 162, 170, 207.

170. MSS. *noture*.

185. G omits *she*.

178. *coveteise*, Th. *covelous*.

196. *myscounting*, 'mesconter.' Kaluza's  
emendation for *myscounting* of MSS.

Coveitise for hir wynnynge  
Ful leef hath other mennés thing.

Another ymage set saugh I  
Next Coveitise faste by,  
And she was clepid AVARICE.  
Ful foule in peyntynge was that vice, 210  
Ful fade and caytif was she cek,  
And also grene as ony leek.  
So yvel hewed was hir colour  
Hir semed to have lyved in langour ;  
She was lyk thyng for hungre deed,  
That lulle hir lyf oonly by breed  
Kneded with eisel strong and egre ;  
And therto she was lene and megre.  
And she was clad ful porély  
Al in an old torn courtþy, 220  
As she were al with doggis torne ;  
And both bihynde and eke biforne  
Clouted was she beggarly.

A mantyl henge hir faste by,  
Upon a perche weike and small ;  
A burnet cote henge therwith-all,  
Furred with no menyvere  
But with a furre rough of here,  
Of lambé skynnés hevy and blake ;  
It was ful old I undirtake, 230  
For Avarice to clothe hir well  
Ne hastith hir neveradell.  
For certeynly it were hir loth  
To weren ofte that ilké cloth ;  
And if it were forwerd she  
Wolde have ful gret necessite  
Of clothynge, er she bought hir newe,  
Al were it bad of woll and hewe.  
This Avarice hilde in hir hande  
A purs that henge [down] by a bande, 240  
And that she hidde and bonde so  
strong,

Men must abyde wondir long,  
Out of that purs er ther come ought ;  
For that ne cometh not in hir thought.  
It was not, certein, hir entent  
That fro that purs a peny went.

And by that ymage nygh ynough

208. MSS. *faste by*, also in 224, and frequently.

211. MSS. *sad*, but Fr. 'megre' ; cp. 311, where it translates *megre*.

212. *also*, just 'as'.

220. Th. omits *old* ; Fr. 'vies et desrumpue.'

240. Perhaps *hengde*.

Was peynted ENVYR, that never lough,  
 Nor never wel in hir herte ferde,  
 But if she outhur saugh or herde 250  
 Som gret myschaunce, or gret disese.  
 No thyng may so moch hir plese  
 As myschef and mysaventure;  
 Or whan she seeth discomfiture  
 Upon any worthy man falle,  
 That likith hir wel with alle.  
 She is ful glade in hir corage,  
 If she se any grete lynage  
 Be brought to nought in shamful wise.  
 And if a man in honour rise, 260  
 Or by his witte or by his prowesse,  
 Of that hath she gret hevynesse.  
 For trustith wel she goth nygh wode,  
 Whan any chaungé happith gode.  
 Envie is of such crueltee  
 That feith ne trouth[*c*] holdith she  
 To frend ne felawé, bad or good.  
 Ne she hath kynne noon of hir blood,  
 That she nys ful her enemye;  
 She nolde, I dar seyn hardelye, 270  
 Hir owné fadir ferde well.  
 And sore abieth she everydell  
 Hir malice and hir male talent,  
 For she is in so gret turment  
 And hath such [wo] whan folk doth good,  
 That nygh she meltith for pure wode;  
 Hir herté kervyth and so brekith,  
 That god the puple wel a-wrekeith.  
 Envie, i-wis, shal nevere lette  
 Som blame upon the folk to sette; 280  
 I trowe that if Envie, i-wis,  
 Knewe the besté man that is  
 On this side, or biyonde the see,  
 Yit somewhat lakken hym wolde she;  
 And if he were so hende and wis,  
 That she ne myght al abate his pris,  
 Yit wolde she blame his worthynesse,  
 Or by hir wordis make it lesse.  
 I saugh Envie in that peyntyng  
 Hádde a wondirful loking, 290  
 For she ne lokidé but awrie,

248. Kaluza reads *peynle* to avoid slurring *envye*, but *peynted* is the form in ll. 301, 349, 450, 827, 975.

256. MSS. *Than*, but Fr. 'Ice.' If anything is to be added to the verse, it should be *to se* after *wel*; Fr. 'a veoir.'

266. *ne*, MSS. omit.

275. *wo*, supplied from Fr.

Or overthart all baggyngly.  
 And she hadde a foule usage,  
 She myght loke in no visage  
 Of man or womman forth-right pleyn,  
 But shette hir one eye for disdeyn;  
 So for Envié brenné she,  
 Whan she myght any man y-se  
 That faire or worthi were, or wise,  
 Or ellés stode in folkis pryse.

SORWÉ was peynted next Envie  
 Upon that wall of masonrye,  
 But wel was seyn in hir colour  
 That she hadde lyved in langour;  
 Hir seméde to havé the jaunyce.  
 Nought half so pale was Avarice,  
 Nor no thyng lyk [as] of lenesse;  
 For sorowé, thought, and gret distresse,  
 That she hadde suffred day and nyght,  
 Made hir ful yolwe and no thyng bright  
 Ful fadé, pale, and megre also. 31  
 Was never wight yit half so wo  
 As that hir seméde forto be,  
 Nor so fulfilled of ire as she.  
 I trowe that no wight myght hir please,  
 Nor do that thyng that myght hir ease;  
 Nor she ne wolde hir sorowé slake  
 Nor comfort noon unto hir take,  
 So depé was hir wo bigonnen  
 And eek hir hert in angre ronnen. 3  
 A sorowful thyng wel seméde she,  
 Nor she hadde no thyng slowé be  
 Forto forcracchen al hir face,  
 And forto rent in many place  
 Hir clothis, and forto tere hir swire,  
 As she that was fulfilled of ire.  
 And al to-torn lay eek hir here  
 Aboute hir shuldris here and there,  
 As she that hadde it al to-rent  
 For angre, and for malalent. 3  
 And eek I telle you certeynly  
 How that she wepe ful tendirly.  
 In worlde nys wyght so harde of herte  
 That had [he] sene her sorowes smerté,  
 That nolde have had of her pyte,

292. *baggyngly*, 'borgnoiant' (Cotgr. 'loure'); cp. *B. of D.* v. 623.

296. *one eye*, MS. *eien*; Fr. 'un oeil.'

298. *y-se*, MSS. *se*; cp. 1401.

305. Either omit *to*, or read *to have* as 11 syllables.

325. *swire*, throat; nothing in Fr. con-  
 sponding.

So wo begone a thyng was she.  
 She al to-dassht her-selfe for woo,  
 And smote togyder her hondès two.  
 To sorowe was she ful ententyfe  
 That woful rechelèsse caytyfe ;  
 Her toughtè lytel of playing  
 Or of clypping, or [of] kissing ;  
 For who so sorowful is in herte,  
 Him lustè not to play ne sterte,  
 Ne for to dauncen, ne to synge,  
 Ne may his herte in temper bringe,  
 To makè joye on even or morowe,  
 For joy is contrarie unto sorowe.

340

ELDE was paynted after this,  
 That shorter was a foote, i-wys,  
 Than she was wonte in her yongherle.  
 Unneth her selfe she mightè fele ;  
 So feble and eke so olde was she  
 That faded was al her beaute.  
 Ful salowe was waxen her colour ;  
 Her heed for hore was whyte as flour,  
 I-wys great qualme ne were it none,  
 Ne synne, al though her lyfe were gone ;  
 Al woxen was her body unwele,  
 And drie and dwyned al for elde.  
 A foule forwelked thyng was she,  
 That whylom rounde and softe had be ;  
 Her eerès shoken faste withall,  
 As from her heed they woldè fall ;  
 Her facè frounced and forpyned,  
 And bothe her hondès lorne, fordwyned.  
 So olde she was that she ne went  
 A foote, but it were by potent.  
 The tyme that passeth nyght and daye,  
 And restelèsse travayleth aye,  
 And steleth from us so prively,  
 That to us semeth so sykerly  
 That it in one poynt dwelleth ever ;  
 And certes it ne resteth never,  
 But gothe so faste, and passeth aye,  
 That there nys man that thynkè may  
 What tyme that nowe present is ;  
 Asketh at these clerkès this.  
 For [or] men thynke it redily  
 Thre tymès ben y-passed by.  
 The tyme that may not sojourne,

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But goth and may never retourne,  
 As watir that doun renneth ay,  
 But never drope retornè may.  
 Ther may no thing as tyme endure,  
 Metall nor ertchely créature ;  
 For allè thing it frette and shall.  
 The tyme eke that chaungith all,  
 And all doth waxe and fostred be,  
 And allè thing distroiet he ;  
 The tyme that eldith our auncessours,  
 And eldith kynges and emperours,  
 And that us alle shal overcomen  
 Er that leth us shal have nomen ;  
 The tyme, that hath al in welde  
 To elden folk, had maad hir elde  
 So only, that to my witing,  
 She myght[?] helpe hir silf no thing,  
 But turned ageyn unto childhede.  
 She had no thing hir silf to lede,  
 Ne witte ne pithè in hir holde  
 More than a child of two yer olde.  
 But nathèles I trowe that she  
 Was faire sumtyme, and fresh to se,  
 Whan she was in hir rightful age ;  
 But she was past al that passage,  
 And was a doted thing bicomen.  
 A furred cope on had she nomen,  
 Wel had she clad hir silf and warme,  
 For colde myght ellès don hir harme.  
 These oldè folk have alwey colde,  
 Her kynde is sich whan they ben  
 olde.

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Another thing was don there write,  
 That semède lyk an ipocrite,  
 And it was clepid P'OPPE HOLY.  
 That ilk is she that pryvely  
 Ne spareth never a wikked dede  
 Whan men of hir taken noon hede.  
 And maketh hir outward precious  
 With palè visage and pitous,  
 And semeth a simple créature.  
 But ther nys no mysaventure  
 That she ne thenkith in hir corage.  
 Ful lyk to hir was that ymage,  
 That makid was lyk hir semblaunce.  
 She was ful symple of countenance  
 And she was clothed and eke shod  
 As she were, for the love of god,

401. in hir holde, in her possession.

413. don there write, 'empres (apres ?) escrete.'

348. Perhaps read *contraire*; cp. 991.368. *by potent*, with a crutch.

380. i.e. three moments are gone while one is thinking about it.

Yolden to relygioun,  
 Sich semede hir devocioun. 430  
 A sauter helde she faste in honde,  
 And bisily she gan to funde  
 To maké many a feynt priere  
 To god, and to his seyntis dere.  
 Ne she was gay, ne fresh, ne jolyf,  
 But semede to be ful ententyf  
 To gode werkis and to faire,  
 And therto she had on an haire;  
 Ne certis she was fatt no thing,  
 But semed wery for fasting; 440  
 Of colour pale and deed was she.  
 From hir the gate ay werned be  
 Of Paradys, that blisful place.  
 For sich folk maketh lene her face,  
 As Crist seith in his Evangile,  
 To geté prys in toun a while;  
 And for a litel glorie veigne  
 They lesen god and ek his reigne.  
 • And alderlast of everychon  
 Was peynted POVERT al aloon, 450  
 That not a peny haddle in holde,  
 All though she hir clothis wolde,  
 And though she shulde an honged be;  
 For nakid as a worme was she,  
 And if the wedir stormy were,  
 For colde she shulde have dyed there.  
 She nadde on but a streit olde sak,  
 And many a cloute on it ther stak;  
 This was hir cote and hir mantell,  
 No more was there, never a dell, 460  
 To clothe hir with, I undirtake;  
 Grete leyser haddé she to quake.  
 And she was putt, that I of talke,  
 Fer fro these other, up in an halke;  
 There lürkéd and there couréd she.  
 For pover thing, where so it be,  
 Is shamefast and dispised ay;  
 Accurséd may wel be that day  
 That povere man conceyved is,  
 For god wote al to selde, i-wys, 470  
 Is only povere man wel fedde

437. *to faire*, 'bonnes ovres faire'; 'faire' carelessly misread!

438. *haire*, O.F. 'haire,' a sleeveless shirt of hair worn as a penance.

442. *gate*, perhaps plural.

444. *face*, 'vis'; MSS. *grace*.

451. *holde*, G. *wolde*; but cp. 395.

454. *nakid as a worme*, 'nue comme vers'; cp. *Tales*, E 880.

Or wel araiéd or [wel] cledde,  
 Or welbilovéd in sich wise  
 In honour that he may arise.  
 Alle these thingis well avised,  
 As I have you er this devyused,  
 With gold and asure over all  
 Depeynted were upon the wall.  
 Square was the wall and high sumdell,  
 Enclosed and barred well, 480  
 In stede of hegge, was that gardyne;  
 Come nevere shepherde theynne.  
 Into that gardyn wel y-wrought  
 Who so that me coude have brought  
 By laddre, or ellés by degre,  
 It woldé wel have likéd me,  
 For sich solace, sich joie and play  
 I trowe that nevere man ne say,  
 As was in that place delytous.  
 The gardeyn was not dangerous 490  
 To herberwe briddés many oon,  
 So riche a yerde was nevere noon  
 Of briddés songe and braunches grenc;  
 Therynne were briddés mo I wene  
 Than ben in all the rewme of Fraunce.  
 Ful blisful was the accordeaunce  
 Of swete and pitous songe thei made;  
 For all this world it owghté glade.  
 And I my-silf so mery ferde,  
 Whan I her blisful songés herde, 500  
 That for an hundreth pounde nolde I,  
 If that the passage opunly  
 Haddé be unto me free,  
 That I nolde entren forto se  
 Thassamble—god kepe it fro care—  
 Of briddis whiche theynne ware.  
 That songen thorough her mery throtes  
 Dauncis of love and mery notes.  
 Whan I thus herdé foulés syng,  
 I felle fast in a weymentyng,  
 By which art, or by what engyne,  
 I myght come into that gardyne.  
 But way I couthe fyndé noon  
 Into that gardyne for to goon.  
 Ne nought wist I if that ther were

472. MSS. omit *wel*.

480. The verse has apparently but three accents

492. MSS. *yere*.

501. MSS. *wolde*; i.e. I wouldn't like hundred pounds not to enter.

505. Prof. Skeat changes *god kepe it fro care* to *god it kepe and were* on account of the Chaucerian rhyme.

ither hole or place where,  
 y which I myght have entre.  
 e ther was noon to teché me,  
 or I was al aloone i-wys,  
 or wo and angwishis of this. 520  
 'ill atté last bithought I me,  
 hat by no weye ne myght it be  
 hat ther nas laddre, or wey to passc,  
 r hole, into so faire a place.  
 ho gan I go a full grete pas,  
 invyronyng evene in compas  
 he closing of the squarè wall,  
 yl that I fonde a wiket small,  
 o shett that I ne myght in gon,  
 and other entre was ther noon. 530  
 lpon this dore I gan to smyte  
 hat was [so] fetys and so lite,  
 or other weye coude I not seke.  
 ul long I shof, and knokkide eke,  
 nd stood ful long and oft herknyng,  
 hat I herde ony wight comyng,  
 il that dore of thilk entre  
 mayden curteys openyde me.  
 hir heer was as yelowé of hewe  
 s ony basyn scouréd newe, 540  
 hir flesh [as] tendre as is a chike,  
 ith benté browis smothe and slyke;  
 nd by mesure largé were  
 he openyng of hir yén clre;  
 ir nose of good proporcioun,  
 ir yén grey as is a faucoun;  
 ith sweté breth and wel savoured,  
 ir facé white and wel coloured,  
 ith litel mouth and rounde to see;  
 clové chynne eke hadlé she,  
 ir nekké was of good fasoun,  
 lengthe and gretnesse by resoun,  
 ithoute bleyné, scabbe, or royne;  
 o lersalem unto Burgoyne  
 ner nys a fairer nekke, i-wys,  
 o fele how smothe and softe it is.  
 ir throte also white of hewe  
 o snowe on braunché snowéd newe.  
 o body ful wel wrought was she,  
 en neded not in no cuntre 560

116. Perhaps read *there* for *where*.  
 117. *For-wo*, very weary; but perhaps mistake  
*ful wo*.

118. *and oft* (Th. *al*, G *amid of*) *herknyng*, 'par  
 inter fois *escoutal*.

119. *also*, *as*. Perhaps read *was also*.

A fairer body *forto seke*.  
 And of fyn orfrays hadde she eke  
 A chapélet so semly oon  
 Ne weréde never mayde upon.  
 And faire above that chapélet  
 A rosé gerland had she sett.  
 She hadde [in honde] a gay mirroure,  
 And with a riché gold tresour  
 Hir heed was tresséd, queyntély.  
 Hir slevés sewid fetously, 570  
 And *forto kepe* hir hondis faire  
 Of glovés white she had a paire.  
 And she hadde on a cote of grene  
 Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene.  
 Wel semyde by hir apparayle  
 She was not wont to gret travayle;  
 For whan she kempte was fetisly,  
 And wel araycd and richély,  
 Thanne had she don al hir journe.  
 For merye and wel bigoon was she, 580  
 She laddé a lusty lyf in May;  
 She hadde no thought by nyght ne day  
 Of no thyng, but it were oonly  
 To graythe hir wel and uncouthly.  
 Whan that this dore hadde opened me  
 This may[dé] semely *forto sec*,  
 I thankéd hir as I best myght,  
 And axide hir how that she hight,  
 And what she was I axide eke.  
 And she to me was nought unmeke, 590  
 Ne of hir answer daungerous,  
 But faire answeride, and seidé thus:—  
 'Lo, sir, my name is YDELNESSE;  
 So clepé men me, more and lesse;  
 Ful myghty and ful riche am I,  
 And that of oon thyng namely,  
 For I entendé to no thyng,  
 But to my joye, and my pleyying,  
 And *forto kembe* and tressé me.  
 Aqucynted am I and pryve 600  
 With Myrthé, lord of this gardyne,  
 That fro the lande Alexandryne  
 Madé the treés hidre be fette

564. *upon*, adverb; cp. 1085, *Tales*, D 568.

567. MSS. omit *in honde*; 'en sa main.

574. *Gaunt*, Ghent.

579. *journe*, day's work.

593. Cp. *Tales*, G 1-7, A 1940.

602. MSS. of *Alex*.

603. *be fette*, perhaps omit *be*; cp. 607, 609,  
 where the infinitives are passive, Fr. 'fiat . . .  
 faire, 'fiat portraire.'

That in this gardyne ben y-sette.  
 And whan the trees were woxen on hight,  
 This wall, that stant heere in thi sight,  
 Dide Myrthe enclosen al aboute.  
 And these ymages al withoute  
 -Ie dide hem bothe entaile and peynte,  
 That neithir ben jolyf ne queynte, 610  
 But they ben ful of sorowe and woo,  
 As thou hast seen a while agoo.  
 And oft tyme hym to solace  
 Sir Myrthe cometh into this place,  
 And eke with hym cometh his meynce,  
 That lyven in lust and jolite.  
 And now is Myrthe therynne to here  
 The briddis, how they synge clere,  
 The mavys and the nyghtyngale,  
 And other joly briddis smale. 620  
 And thus he walketh to solace  
 Hym and his folk, for swetter place  
 To pleyen ynne he may not fynde,  
 Al though he sought oon in-tyl Ynde.  
 The alther-fairest folk to see  
 That in this world may founde be  
 Hath Mirth with hym in his route,  
 That folowen hym always aboute.  
 Whan Ydelnesse had tolde al this,  
 And I hadde herkned wel y-wys, 630  
 Thanne seide I to dame Ydelnesse :  
 'Now also wisly god me blesse,  
 Sith Myrthe that is so faire and fre  
 Is in this yerde with his meyne,  
 Fro thilk assemble, if I may,  
 Shal no man wernè me to-day,  
 That I this nyght ne mote it see.  
 For wel wene I there with hym be  
 A faire and joly companye,  
 Fulfilled of all curtesie.' 640  
 And forth, withoute wordis mo,  
 In at the wicket went I tho,  
 That Ydelnesse hadde opened me,  
 Into that gardyne faire to see.  
 And whan I was inne i-wys,  
 Myn herte was ful glad of this.  
 For wel wende I ful sikerly  
 Have ben in Paradys erthly ;  
 So faire it was that, trusteth wel,  
 It semede a place espirituel.  
 For certys, as at my devys,  
 Ther is no place in Paradys

645. Perhaps insert *ther* before *inne*.

So good inne forto dwelle or be,  
 As in that gardyne, thoughte me.  
 For there was many a bridde syngyng  
 Thorough-out the yerde al thringyng.  
 In many places were nyghtyngales,  
 Alpès, fynchès, and wodewales,  
 That in her swetè song deliten.  
 In thilkè places as they habiten, 6  
 There myght[e] men see many flokkes  
 Of turtles and [of] laverokkes.  
 Chalaundres felè sawe I there,  
 That wery, nygh forsongen were.  
 And thrustles, terins, and mavys,  
 That songen forto wynne hem prys,  
 And eke to sormounte in hir songe  
 That othere briddès hem amonge.  
 By notè fmadè faire servyse  
 These briddès that I you devise ; 6  
 They songe her songe as faire and wel  
 As angels don espirituel.  
 And, trusteth wel, than I hem herde,  
 Ful lustily and wel I ferde,  
 For never yitt sich melodye  
 Was herd of man that myghtè dye.  
 Sich swetè song was hem amonge,  
 That me thought it no briddis songe,  
 But it was wondir lyk to be  
 Song of mermaydens of the see, 7  
 That, for her syngyng is so clere,  
 Though we mermaydens clepe hem he  
 In English as is oure usaunce,  
 Men clepè hem sereyns in Fraunce.  
 Ententif weren forto synge  
 These briddis, that nought unkunnyng  
 Were of her craft and apprentys,  
 But of song sotil and wys.  
 And certis, whan I herde her songe,  
 And sawe the grenè place amonge, 8  
 In herte I wexe so wondir gay,  
 That I was never erst er that day  
 So jolyf, nor so wel bigoo,  
 Ne merye in herte, as I was thoo.  
 And than wist I and sawe ful well,  
 That Ydelnesse me servèd well,  
 That me putte in sich jolite.

658. *Alpes*, bullfinches. *wodewales*, orioles  
 668. *That othere* (MSS. *other*) can be used as  
 plural nouns ; cp. 991.

673. *than* (Th. *whan*, G. *that*), *whan*  
 680. Chaucer calls them *mermaids* in B  
 30, where the French version has *seraines*.

hir freend wel ought I forto be  
 with she the dore of that gardyne  
 fadde opened, and me leten inne. 700  
 from hennés forth how that I wroughte,  
 shal you tellen as me thoughte.  
 first wherof Myrthé servéd there,  
 and eke what folk there with hym

were,  
 Withoute fable I wole discryve;  
 and of that gardyne eke as blyve  
 wole you tellen aftir this  
 the fairé fasoun all y-wys,  
 that wel y-wrought was for the nones.  
 may not telle you all at ones, 710  
 but as I may and can, I shall  
 y ordre tellen you it all.

ful faire servise, and eke ful swete,  
 these briddis maden, as they sete;  
 dayes of love ful wel sownyng,  
 they songen in their jargonyng;  
 summe high and summe eke lowé songe  
 upon the braunches gfeue y-spronge.  
 the swetnesse of her melodye

made al myn herte in reverye. 720

and whan that I hadde herde, I trowe,  
 these briddis syngyng on a rowe,  
 than myght I not withholdé me  
 that I ne wente inne forto see  
 Myrthé; for my desiryng  
 as hym to seen, over allé thyng;  
 his countenance and his manere,  
 that sighté was to me ful dere.

so wente I forth on my right honde  
 oun by a lytel path I fonde, 730

mentés full and fenell grene.  
 and fasté by, withouté wene,

Myrthe I fonde, and right anoon

to sir Myrthé gan I goon,  
 here as he was, hym to solace.

and with hym in that lusty place  
 faire folk and so fresh had he,

that whan I sawe I wondred me  
 so whennés siché folk myght come,

faire they weren all and some, 740

or they were lyk, as to my sighte,  
 angels that ben fethered brighte.

This folk, of which I telle you soo,  
 pon a karole wenten thoo.

740. *fethered brighte*, with bright wings.

744. *karole*, a ring-dance to song.

A lady karolede hem, that hyght  
 GLADNESSE, [the] blisfull and the light.  
 Wel coude she syngre and lustyly;  
 Noon half so wel and semely,  
 Couthe make in song sich refreynnyng.

It sat hir wondir wel to syngre; 750

Ilir voice ful clerc was and ful swete,  
 She was nought rudé ne unmete,

But couthe ynow of sich doying  
 As longeth unto karolyng.

For she was wont in every place  
 To syngen first, folk to solace,

For syngyng moost she gaf hir to,  
 No craft had she so leef to do.

The myghtist thou karoles sene,  
 And folk daunce and mery bene, 760

And maké many a faire tournyng  
 Upon the grené gras springyng.

There myghtist thou see these flowtours,  
 Mynstrales, and eke jogèlours,

That wel to syngé dide her peyne;  
 Somme songé songés of Loreyne,

For in Loreyn her notés bee  
 Full sweter than in this contre.

There was many a tymbester,  
 And saillouris that I dar wel swere, 770

Couthe her craft ful parfly;  
 The tymbres up ful sotilly,

They caste and hente full ofte,  
 Upon a fynger faire and softe,

That they [ne] failide never mo.  
 Ful fetys damysellés two,

Ryght yonge and full of semelyhede,  
 In kirtles and noon other wede

And fairé tresséd every tresse,  
 Hadde Myrthé doon, for his noblesse, 780

Amydde the karole forto daunce.  
 But herof lieth no remembrance

How that they dauncéd queyntely;  
 That oon wolde come all pryvly

Agayn that other, and whan they were  
 To-gidre almost, they threwe yfere

Ilir mouthis so that through her play  
 It seméd as they kiste alway.

749. MSS. *And couthe*.

768. *this contre*, Orleans.

770. *saillouris*, dancers.

771. *that* possibly belongs before *couthe* in next verse; Fr. 'Qui moult savoient.'

773. *They casten and (hem) hente ful ofte*; but perhaps a 3-beat line, cp. 480, 80x.



To dauncen well koude they the gise,  
 What shulde I more to you devyse ; 790  
 Ne bode I never thennès go,  
 Whiles that I sawe hem dauncèd so.

Upon the karoll wonder faste  
 I gan biholde, til attè laste  
 A lady gan me forto espie ;  
 And she was clepèd CURTESIE  
 The worshipfull, the debonaire,  
 I pray to god evere falle hir faire.  
 Ful curteisly she callèd me,  
 'What do ye there, Beau ser?' quod she,  
 'Come [here], and if it lyké yow 801  
 To dauncen, dauncith with us now.'

And I withoutè tariyng  
 Wénte into the karolyng.  
 I was abasshèd never a dell,  
 But it to me likèd right well  
 That Curtesie me clepèd so,  
 And bad me on the dauncèd go.  
 For if I haddè durst, certeyn  
 I wolde have karolèd right fayn, 810  
 As man that was to dauncèd blithe.  
 Thanne gan I loken oftè sithe  
 The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,  
 The countenaunce, and the maneres  
 Of all the folk that dauncèd there ;  
 And I shal tell [you] what they were.

Ful faire was Myrthe, ful longeand high,  
 A fairer man I nevere sigh ;  
 As rounde as appille was his face,  
 Ful rody and white in every place. 820  
 Fetys he was and wel beseye,  
 With metely mouth and yén greye,  
 His nose by mesure wrought ful right.  
 Crispe was his heer, and eek ful bright,  
 His shuldris of a largè brede,  
 And smalish in the girldilste.  
 He semèd lyke a portreiture,  
 So noble he was of his stature,  
 So faire, so joly and so fetys,  
 With lymès wrought at poynt devys, 830  
 Delyver, smert, and of grete myght ;  
 Ne sawe thou nevere man so lyght.  
 Of berde unnethe hadde he no thyng,  
 For it was in the firstè spryng.

791. *bode*, mistake for *bode*, or *bad*; cp. 808.  
 The same Fr. is differently rendered at 1854.

801. *here*, MSS. omit; Fr. 'ça venez.'

806. Sk. *is me likede*.

811. MSS. *right blithe*.

Ful yonge he was, and mery of thougt!  
 And in samette with briddis wrought,  
 And with gold beten ful fetysly,  
 His body was clad ful richely.  
 Wrought was his robe in straungè gise  
 And al to-slytered for queyntise  
 In many a placè lowe and hie ;  
 And shode he was with grete maistrie,  
 With shoon decopèd and with laas.  
 By druery and by solas,  
 His leef a rosyn chapèlet  
 Hadde made and on his heed it set.

And witè ye who was his leef?  
 Dame Gladnesse there was hym so let  
 That syngith so wel with glad courage  
 That from she was .XII. yeer of age,  
 She of hir lovè graunt hym made.  
 Sir Mirthe hir by the fynger hadde  
 Dáunsyng, and she hym also ;  
 Grete lovè was atwixe hem two.  
 Bothe were they faire and bright of hea  
 She semèd lyke a rosè newe  
 Of colour, and hir flesh so tendre  
 That with a brerè smale and slendre  
 Men myght it cleve, I dar wel seyn ;  
 Hir forheed frouncèles, al pleyn ;  
 Bent were hir [brownè] browis two,  
 Hir yén greye and glad also,  
 That laugheden ay in hir semblaunt  
 First or the mouth, by covenant.  
 I not what of hir nose descripye,  
 So faire hath no womman alyve.  
 Hir heer was yelowè, and clere shyny  
 I wot no lady so likyng.

Of orfrays fresh was hir gerland ;  
 I, which seyen have a thousand,  
 Saugh never y-wys no gerlond yitt,  
 So wel y-wrought of silk as it.  
 And in an overgilt samit  
 Cladde she was, by grete delit,  
 Of which hir leef a robè werede ;  
 Thè myrier she in hir hertè ferede.

And next hir wente, in hir other s<sup>i</sup>  
 The GOD OF LOVE, that can devyile  
 Love, and as hym likith it be,  
 But he can cherles daunten, he,

861. *browne*, supplied from Fr.

865. MSS. insert *not* before *not* and *l*  
 before *descripye*.

873. *samit*, robe of samite.

and makeþ folkis pridé fallen,  
 and he can wel these lordis thrallen,  
 and ladyes putt at lowe degre,  
 than he may hem to proudé see.  
 This God of Love of his fasoun  
 as lykē no knavē, ne quystroun.  
 is beaute gretly was to preyse,  
 it of his robé to devise  
 drede encombred forto be ;  
 or nought y-clad in silk was he, 890  
 at all in floures and in flourettes,  
 paynted all with amorettes.  
 and with losengés, and scochouns,  
 ith briddés, lybardes, and youns,  
 and other beestis wrought ful well,  
 is garnément was everydelell  
 portreied, and wrought with floures,  
 y dyvers medlyng of colouris.  
 oures there were of many gise,  
 sett by compas in assise ; 900  
 her lakkide no flour to my dome,  
 e nought so mych as flour of brome,  
 e violete, ne eke pervynke,  
 e flour noon that man can on thynke ;  
 and many a rosé-leef ful longe,  
 as entermelled ther amonge,  
 and also on his heed was sette  
 roses reed a chaplet.  
 it nyghtyngales, a full grete route  
 that flyen over his heed aboute, 910  
 the leeves felden as they flyen ;  
 and he was all with briddés wryen,  
 ith popynjay, with nyghtyngale,  
 ith chalaundre, and with wodcūale,  
 ith synche, with lark, and with arch-  
 aungell.  
 semede as he were an aungell,  
 that doon were comen fro hevene  
 clere.  
 Love hadde with hym a bachelere,  
 that he made alloweyces with hym be ;  
 VERE LOKYNG cleped was he. 920  
 this bachelere stode biholdingyng  
 the daunce ; and in his honde holdingyng

86. *quystroun* (O.F. *coistrōn*), scullion.  
 92. Found only in Th.  
 93. *with amorettes*, 'by amorous girls'; cp.  
 5. 'With' in this sense is common in Middle  
 English; cp. *Troilus*, iv. 80.  
 95. *archaungell*; Fr. 'mesanges,' which  
 grave defines as titmouse.

Turke bowes two had he.  
 That oon of hem was of a tree  
 That bereth a fruyt of savour wykke,  
 Ful crokid was that foulé stikke ;  
 And knotty here and there also,  
 And blak as bery, or ony slo.  
 That other bowe was of a plante  
 Withouten wem, I dar warante, 930  
 Ful evene, and by proporcioun  
 Treitys and long, of good fasoun ;  
 And it was peynted wel and thwyten,  
 And over al diapred and writen  
 With ladyes and with bachelers,  
 Full lyghtsom and glad of cheris.  
 These bowes two helde Swete-lokyng,  
 That seméle lyk no gadelyng,  
 And ten brode arowis hilde he there,  
 Of which .V. in his righthond were ; 940  
 But they were shaven well and dight,  
 Nokked and fethered aright,  
 And all they were with gold bygoon,  
 And stronge poynted everychoon,  
 And sharpe forto kerven well.  
 But iren was ther noon, ne steell,  
 For al was golde, men myght it see,  
 Out-take the fetheres and the tree.  
 The swiftest of these arowis fyve  
 Out of a bowe forto dryve, 950  
 And besté fethered for to fice,  
 And fairest eke, was clepid Beaute ;  
 That other arowe that hurteth lesse  
 Was clepid, as I trowe, Sympleesse ;  
 The thridde cleped was Fraunchise  
 That fethred was in noble wise,  
 With valour and with curtesye ;  
 The fourthe was cleped Compaignye,  
 That hevye forto shoten ys ;  
 But who so shetith right y-wys, 960  
 May therwith doon grete harme and wo.  
 The fife of these, and laste also,  
 Faire-Semblaunt men that arowe calle,  
 Faire-Semblaunt men that arowe calle,  
 The leeste grevous of hem alle,  
 Yit can it make a ful grete wounde.  
 But he may hope his soris sounce,  
 That hurt is with that arowe y-wys ;  
 His wo the bette bistowed is,

923. *Turke bowes*, etc. MSS. add *ful wel*  
*devisyd* (not in Fr.) after *two*. Cp. *Tales*, A 2895,  
 where 'Turkeis.'

932. MSS. *ful good*; Fr. 'de bone façon.'

For he may sonner have gladnesse ;  
 His langour oughte be the lesse. 970  
 Five arowis were of other gise,  
 That ben ful foulé to devyse,  
 For shaft and ende, soth forto telle,  
 Were also blak as fende in helle.  
 The first of hem is calléd Pride,  
 That other arowe next hym biside,  
 It was [y-]clepéd Vylanye.  
 That arowe was al with felonye  
 Envenymed, and with spitous blame.  
 The thriddle of hem was clepéd Shame,  
 The fourthé Wanhope clepéd is, 981  
 The fifté Newé-thought, y-wys.  
 These arowis that I speke of heere  
 Were allé fyve on oon manere,  
 And allé were they resemblable.  
 To hem was wel sitting and able,  
 The foulé croked bowe hidous  
 That knotty was, and al roynous ;  
 That bowé seméde wel to shete  
 These arowis fyve, that ben unmete 990  
 And contrarye to that other fyve.  
 But though I tellé not as blyve  
 Of her power, ne of her myght,  
 Herafter, shal I tellen right  
 The soothe, and eke signyfiance ;  
 As fer as I have remembraunce  
 All shal be seid, I undirtake,  
 Er of this book an ende I make.  
 Now come I to my tale ageyn.  
 But aldirfirst I wole you seyn 1000  
 The fasoun and the countenaunces  
 Of all the folk that on the daunce is.  
 The God of Love, jolyf and lyght,  
 Ladde on his honde a lady bright,  
 Of high prys and of grete degre ;  
 This lady calléd was Beaute,  
 As an arowe of which I tolde,  
 Ful wel [y-]thewel was she holde ;  
 Ne she was derk, ne broun, but bright,  
 And clere as [is] the moné lyght, 1010  
 Ageyn whom all the sterrés semen  
 But smalé candels, as we demen.  
 Hir flesh was tendre as dewe of flour,  
 Hir chere was symple as byrde in bour,  
 As whyte as lylle or rose in rys ;

978. MSS. read *as for al*, 'toute.'991. Perhaps read *contraire*; cp. 348.1014. *byrde*, bride.

Hir facé gentyl and tretys,  
 Fetys she was, and smale to sè ;  
 No wyntred browis haddé she,  
 Ne popped hir, for it nedéd nought ;  
 To wyndre hir, or to peynre hir ough  
 Hir tresses yelowé, and longé straught  
 Unto hir helys doûn they raughten ;  
 Hir nose, hir mouth, and eyhe, and ch  
 Wel wrought, and all the remenaunt e  
 A ful grete savour and a swote  
 Me toucheth in myn herté rote,  
 As helpe me god, whan I remembre  
 Of the fasoun of every membre.  
 In world is noon so faire a wight ;  
 For yonge she was, and hewéd bright  
 Sore plesaunt, and fetys with all, 1  
 Gente, and in hir myddill small.  
 Bisidé Beaute yede richesse,  
 An high lady of gret noblesse,  
 And gret of prys in every place ;  
 But who so durste to hir trespass,  
 Or til hir folk, in word or dede,  
 He were full hardy, out of drede.  
 For bothe she helpe and hyndre may ;  
 And that is nought of yisterday,  
 That riché folk have full gret myght  
 To helpe, and eke to greve a wyght.  
 The leste and grettest of valour  
 Diden Rychesse ful gret honour,  
 And besy weren hir to serve,  
 For that they wolde hir love deserve.  
 They clepéd hir 'Lady,' grete and sma  
 This widé world hir dredith all,  
 This world is all in hir daungere.  
 Hir court hath many a losengere, 1  
 And many a traytour envyous,  
 That ben ful besy and curyous  
 Forto dispreisen and to blame

1018. *wyntred*, 'guignie, not elsewhere fin in English unless in 'winrede browis,' O Homilies (Morris) ii. 213, where the mean seems to be 'ogling glances' as here. changes to *wyndred* as in 1020.1019. *popped*, defined by Coles (2713) 'd fine.' v. Dyce's Skelton ii. 299, where *poppe* is quoted.1020. *wyndre*, to trim (the hair), Coles, 1018.1026. *toucheth*, Kaluzs's emendation for *then* of the MSS.1037. MSS. *werk*, 'par fais ou par dis.'1043. MSS. *beste* for *leste*, 'il greignor e menor.'

That best deserven love and name.  
 Bifore the folk, hem to bigilen,  
 These losengeris hem preyse, and smylen,  
 And thus the world with word anyonten;  
 And aftirward they prille, and poynten  
 The folk right to the bare boon,  
 Bihynde her bak when they ben goon,  
 And foule abate the folkis prys. 1061  
 Ful many a worthy man, y-wys  
 An hundrid, have do to dye  
 These losengers thorough flaterye;  
 And make folk ful straungè be  
 There hem oughtè be pryve.  
 Wel yvel mote they thryve and thee,  
 And yvel arrayvèd mote they be,  
 These losengers ful of envye;  
 No good man loveth her companye. 1070  
 Richesse a robe of purpur on hadde,  
 Ne trowe not that I lye or madde,  
 For in this world is noon hir lyche,  
 Ne by a thousand deel so riche,  
 Ne noon so faire; for it ful well  
 With orfrays leyed was everydeell  
 And portraied in the ribanynges  
 Of dukès storyes, and of kynges,  
 And with a bend of gold tasseled,  
 And knoppis fyne of gold ameled. 1080  
 Aboute hir nekke of gentyl entayle  
 Was shete the richè chevesaile,  
 In which ther was full gret plente  
 Of stonès clere and bright to see.  
 Tychesse a girdell hadde upon,  
 The bokele of it was of a stoon,  
 Of vertu gret and mochel of myght;  
 For who so bare the stoon so bright,  
 Of venym durst hym no thing doute,  
 While he the stoon hadde hym aboute.  
 That stoon was gretly forto love, 1091  
 And, tyl a richè mannys byhove,  
 Vorth all the gold in Rome and Frise.  
 The mourdaunt wrought in noble wise

Was of a stoon full precious,  
 That was so fyne and vertuous  
 That hole a man it koudè make  
 Of palasie, and [of] tothe ake.  
 And yit the stoon hadde such a grace  
 That he was siker in every place, 1100  
 All thilkè day not blynde to bene,  
 That fastyng myght that stoon [have] seene.  
 The barres were of gold ful fyne  
 Upon a tyssu of satyne,  
 Full hevy, gret, and no thyng lyght,  
 In everiche was a besaunt-wight.  
 Upon the tresses of Richesse  
 Was sette a cercle, for noblesse,  
 Of brend gold that full lyghtè shoon,  
 So faire trowe I was never noon. 1110  
 But she were kunnyng for the nonys,  
 That koudè devysè alle the stonys,  
 That in that cercle shewen clere.  
 It is a wondir thing to here,  
 For no man koudè preyse or gesse  
 Of hem the valewe or richesse.  
 Rubyes there were, saphires, jagounces,  
 And emeraudes more than two ounces.  
 But all byfore ful sotilly  
 A fyn charboncle sette saugh I; 1120  
 The stoon so clere was and so bright,  
 That also soone as it was nyght,  
 Men myght [è] seen to go for nede  
 A myle or two in lengthe and brede.  
 Sich lyght sprang oute of the stonè,  
 That Richesse wondir brightè shone,  
 Bothe hir heed and all hir face,  
 And eke aboute hir all the place.

Dame Richesse on hir honde gan lede  
 A yong man full of semelyhede, 1130  
 That she best loved of any thing.  
 His lust was mych in housholding,  
 In clothyng was he ful fetys,  
 And loved to have well hors of prys;  
 He wende to have reproved be  
 Of theft or moordre, if that he  
 Hadde in his stable any hakeney.  
 And therefore he desired ay

1055. *prille* (Th. *prill*, G. *prile*). Fr. 'poignant,' may be right (cp. sb. *prill*, a top), and mean *piquette*. But probably the scribe's mistake for *brill*, pierce; cp. 5556, where *depe* for *dothe*.

1065. *And make*, Th. *And maketh*; G *have* *lead*, 'car il tout,' etc.

1068. *arrayvèd*, G *achyved*.

1080. *durst*, need. The forms of *durren* and *larf* were confused in Middle English; cp. 1324, 150.

1094. *mourdaunt*, the pendant of the girdle.

1102. *have*, supplied from Fr., 'l'avait veüe.'

1106. *besaunt*, a gold coin worth about a half sovereign.

1117. *jagounces*, cp. 'There is a stone whiche called is jagouance.' . . . Cytryne of colour, lyke garnettes of entayle.' Lydgate's *Minor Poems*, p. 188.

To be aqueynted with Richesse,  
For all his purpos, as I gesse, 1140  
Was forto makè gret dispense  
Withoutè wernyng or diffense;  
And Richesse myght it wel sustene  
And hir dispencè well mayntene,  
And hym alwey sich plentè sende  
Of gold and silver forto spende  
Withoutè lakking or daunger,  
As it were poured in a garner.

And after on the dauncc wente  
LARGESSE, that sette al hir entente 1150  
For to be honourable and free.  
Of Alexandres kyn was she;  
Hir mostè joyè was y-wys  
Whan that she yaf, and seide, 'Have  
this.'

Not Avarice, the foule caytyf,  
Was half to gripe so ententyf,  
As Largesse is to yeve and spende;  
And god ynough alwey hir sende,  
So that the more she yaf away  
The more y-wys she hadde alwey. 1160  
Gret loos hath Largesse and gret pris,  
For bothè wyse folk and unwys  
Were hooly to hir baundon brought,  
So wel with yiftes hath she wrought.  
And if she hadde an enemy,  
I trowe that she coude tristely  
Make hym full soone hir freend to be,  
So large of yift and free was she.  
Therefore she stode in love and grace  
Of riche and pover in every place. 1170  
A full gret fool is he y-wys  
That bothè riche and nygart is;  
A lord may have no maner vice  
That greveth more than avarice;  
For nygart never with strengthe of  
honde

May wynnè gret lordship or londe;  
For freendis all to fewe hath he  
To doon his will perfourmèd be.  
And who so wole have freendis heere,  
He may not holde his tresour deere. 1180  
For by ensample I tellè this,  
Right as an adamaund y-wys  
Can drawn to hym sotylly  
The yren that is leid therby,

1158. *sende*, sent.1166. *tristely*, Th. *craftely*.

So drawith folkès hertis y-wis  
Silver and gold that yeven is.  
Largesse hadde on a robè fresh  
Of richè purpur Sarsynesh.  
Wel fourmèd was hir face and cleere,  
And opened hadde she hir colere; 1190  
For she right there hadde in present  
Unto a lady maad present  
Of a gold brochè, ful wel wrought.  
And certys it myssatte hir nought,  
For thorough hirmsokkè wrought with silk  
The flesh was seen as white as mylk.  
Largesse, that worthy was and wys,  
Hilde by the honde a knyght of prys,  
Was sibbe to Artour of Britaigne,  
And that was he that bare the ensaigne  
Of worship, and the gounfanoun. 1201  
And yit he is of sich renoun  
That men of hym seye fairè thynges  
Byforè barouns, erles, and kynges.  
This knyght was comen all newly  
Fro [a] tourneyng fastè by.

Ther hadde he don gret chivalrie  
Through his vertu and his maistrice,  
And for the love of his lemman  
He caste down many a doughty man. 1210  
And next hym daunced dame FRAUNCHISE  
Arayèd in full noblè gyse.  
She was not broune ne dunne of hewe,  
But white as snowe y-fallen newe.  
Hir nose was wrought at poynt devys,  
For it was gentyl and tretys,  
With cyen gladdè and browès bente,  
Hir here down to hir helis wente;  
And she was symple as dowve off tree.  
Ful debonaire of herte was she; 1220  
Slefe durst neither seyn ne do  
Bút that that hir longèd to.  
And if a man were in distresse,  
And for hir love in hevynesse  
Hir herte wolde have full gret pite,  
She was so amiable and free.  
For were a man for hir bistadde,  
She woldè ben right sore adradde  
That she dide over gret outrage;  
But she hym holpe his harme to a-wage

1185. *hertis*, as in v. 76, is to be read as 0 syllable.1188. MSS. *Sarsynesh*.1199. *i.e.* Who was sib, etc.1206. MSS. omit *a*; Fr. *d'un tornoiement*.

ir thought it ell a vylanye. 1231  
 1d she hadde on a sukkenye  
 nat not of hempe ne heerdys was ;  
 fair was noon in all Arras.  
 1rd, it was ridled fetysly !  
 1er nas nat a poynt trewely  
 nat it nas in his right assise.  
 all wel y-clothed was Fraunchise,  
 1r ther is no cloth sittith bet  
 a damysell than doth roket ; 1240  
 womman wel more fetys is  
 roket than in cote y-wis.  
 1e whyt roket, rydded faire,  
 tokeneth that full debonaire  
 1e sweté was she that it berc.  
 Bi hir daunced a bachelere ;  
 can not telle you what he hight,  
 it faire he was and of good hight,  
 I hadde he be, I sey no more,  
 1e lordis sone of Wyndésore. 1250  
 And next that daunced CURTESYE,  
 nat preiséd was of lowe and hyc,  
 1e neither proude ne foole was she.  
 1e forto daunced calléd me,  
 pray god yeve hir right good grace !  
 hanne I come first into the place,  
 1e was not nycé ne outrageous,  
 it wys and ware and vertuous ;  
 faire speche and of faire answeré,  
 as never wight mysseid of here, 1260  
 she bar rancour to no wight.  
 ere broune she was and therto bright  
 face, of body avenaunt ;  
 not no lady so plesaunt.  
 e were worthy forto bene  
 1 emperesse or crowned quene.  
 And by hir wente a knyght dauncyng,  
 nat wylly was and wel spekyng,  
 id ful wel koude he don honour.  
 1e knyght was faire and styf in stour, 1271  
 id in armure a semely man,  
 id welbiloved of his lemman.  
 Faire IDILNKSSÉ thanne saugh I,  
 at alwey was me fasté by ;  
 hir have I withouté sayle

Told yow the shap and apparayle.  
 For, as I seide, loo that was she  
 That dide to me so gret bounte,  
 That she the gate of the gardyn  
 Undide and lete me passen in. 1280

And after dauncéd, as I gesse,  
 YOUTIE fulfilled of lustynesse,  
 That nas not yit XII yeer of age,  
 With herté wyldé and thought volage.  
 Nycé she was, but she ne mente  
 Noon harme ne slight in hir entente,  
 But oonly lust and jolyte ;  
 For yongé folk wele witen ye  
 Have lytel thought but on her play.  
 Hir lemman was byside alway 1290  
 In sich a gise that he hir kyste  
 At allé tymés that hym lysté ;  
 That all the dauncé myght it see,  
 They make no force of pryvete ;  
 For who spake of hem yvel or well,  
 They were ashamed neveradell,  
 But men myght seen hem kissé there,  
 As it two yongé dowwes were.  
 For yong was thilké bachelere,  
 Of beaute wot I noon his pere, 1300  
 And he was right of sich an age  
 As Youthe his leef, and sich corage.

The lusty folk that dauncéd there,  
 And also other that with hem were,  
 That weren all of her meyne,  
 Ful hendé folk and wys and free  
 And folk of faire port trewely  
 They weren allé comunly.  
 Whanne I hadde seen the countenaunces  
 Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,  
 Thanne haide I will to gon and see 1311  
 The gardyne that so lykéd me,  
 And loken on these fairé loreres,  
 On pyntrees, cedres, and olmeris.  
 The daunces thanne y-ended were,  
 For many of hem that dauncéd there  
 Were with her lovés went away,  
 Undir the trees to have her play.  
 A lord, they lyvéd lustyly !  
 A gret fool were he sikirly 1320

123. *sukkenye*, 'sorrquenne', a canvas jacket, or gabardine (Cotgr.).

126. a *poynes*, one point.

129. i.e. Edward I. the son of Henry III. of gland.

1295. *were* (G omits); Kaluza reads *wel was*.

1282. *l'outhe* (MSS. *And she*), proposed by Ten Brink.

1308. *They*, MSS. *There*.

1314. *olmeris* (G *olmeris* f), elma. 'Moriers' was perhaps read as *olmers*; but *olmyers* in v. 1387 translates 'oliviers.'

That nolde his thankés such lyf lede.  
 For this dar I seyn oute of drede,  
 That who so myghte so wel fare,  
 For better lyf durst hym not care ;  
 For ther nys so good paradys  
 As to have a love at his devys.  
 Oute of that placé wente I thoo,  
 And in that gardyn gan I goo,  
 Pleying alonge full meryly.  
 The God of Love full hastily 1330  
 Unto hym Swetè-Lokying clepte.  
 No lenger wolde he that he kepte  
 His bowe of gold, that shoon so bright ;  
 He had hym bend it anon ryght.  
 And he full soonè sette an-ende,  
 And at a braid he gan it bende ;  
 And toke hym of his arowes fyve,  
 Full sharp and redy forto dryve.

Now god that sittith in mageste,  
 Fro deedly woundes he kepè me, 1340  
 If so be that he hadde me shette !  
 For if I with his arowe mette,  
 It hadde me grevèd sore y-wys.  
 But I, that no thyng wist of this,  
 Wentè up and doun full many away,  
 And he me folwed faste alway ;  
 But no where wolde I restè me,  
 Till I hadde in all the gardyn be.

The gardyn was by mesuryng  
 Right evene and square ; in compassing  
 It was as long as it was large. 1351  
 Of fruyt-hadde every tree his charge,  
 But it were any hidous tree,  
 Of which ther werè two or three.  
 There were, and that wote I full well,  
 Of pome garnettys a full gret dell,  
 That is a fruyt full well to lyke,  
 Namely to folk whanne they ben sike.  
 And trees there were of gret foisoun  
 That baren nottes in her sesoun 1360  
 Such as men notè myggès calle,  
 That swote of savour ben withalle ;  
 And almandérès gret plente,

1321. *his thanks*, willingly.1326. *his* is often indefinite in Middle English.1336. *at a braid*, immediately.1341. Skeat reads *not for hadde*; Fr. 'Se il faut tant que a moi traie.' Perhaps join with the next line by reading *Or for* in 1342.1362. *almanderes*, MSS. *almandres*, Fr. 'alemandiers.'

Fygès, and many a datè tree,  
 There wexen, if men haddè nede,  
 Thorough the gardyn in length and brede  
 Ther was eke wexyng many a spice,  
 As clowe-gelofre, and lycorice,  
 Gyngevre, and greyn de Paradys,  
 Cazell, and setéwale of prys, 137  
 And many a spicè delitable  
 To eten whan men rise fro table.  
 And many homly trees ther were  
 That peches, coynes, and apples beere  
 Médlers, plowmes, perys chesteynis,  
 Cherys, of which many oon fayne is,  
 Nôtes, aleys, and bolas,  
 That forto seen it was solas ;  
 With many high lorer and pyn  
 Was renged clene all that gardyn, 1  
 With cipres and with olyveris,  
 Of which that nygh no plente heere is  
 There were elmès grete and stronge,  
 Maples, asshe, oke, aspè, planes longe  
 Fyne ew, popler, and lyndes faire,  
 And othere trees full many a payre  
 What shulde I tel you more of it ?  
 There were so many trées yit,  
 That I shulde al encombred be  
 Er I had rekened every tree. 1

These trees were sette, that I devys  
 \*One from another in assyse  
 Fyve sadome or sixe, I trowè so ;  
 But they were hyc and great also,  
 And for to kepe out wel the sonne,  
 The croppès were so thicke y-ronne,  
 And every braunche in other knette,  
 And ful of grenè leves sette,  
 That sonnè myght there none descende  
 Lest [it] the tender grasses shende. 1  
 There myght men does and roes y-se,  
 And of squyrels ful great plente  
 From bowe to bowe alway lepyng ;  
 Connès there werè also playyng,  
 That comyn out of her clapers,  
 Of sondrie colours and maners,  
 And maden many a tourneyng  
 Upon the fresshe grasse spryngyng.

In places sawe I wellès there  
 In whichè there no froggès were, 1  
 And fayre in shadowe was every wellè  
 But I ne can the nombre telle

1411. *shadowe*, perhaps read *shade*.

Of stremys smal, that by devyse  
 Myrthe had done come through condysc;  
 Of whiche the water in rennyng  
 Can make a noysé ful lykyng.

About the brinkés of the welles  
 And by the stremés over al elles  
 Sprange up the grasse, as thicke y-set  
 And softe as any veluet, 1420  
 On whiche men myght his lemman ley  
 As on a fetherbed to pley,  
 For the erthé was ful softe and swete.  
 Through moisture of the wellé wete  
 Spronge up the soté grené gras  
 As fayre, as thicke, as myster was.  
 The moche amended it the place  
 That therthé was of suche a grace  
 That it of flourés hath plente,  
 That bothe in somer and wynter be. 1430  
 There sprange the vyolet al newe,  
 And fresshe pervynké riche of hewe,  
 And floures yelowé, white, and rede,  
 Suche plente grewe there never in mede.  
 Ful gaye was al the grounde, and queynt  
 And poudred, as men had it peynt  
 With many a fresshe and sondrie floure,  
 That casten up ful good savour.

I wol nat longe holde you in fable  
 Of al this garden delectable, 1440  
 Mote my tongé stynten nede;  
 For I ne maye withouten drede  
 Vaught tellen you the beaute al,  
 Se halfe the bounte there with al.

I went on right honde and on lefte  
 About the place; it was nat leste  
 Tyl I had al the garden [in] bene,  
 In the esters that men myghté sene.  
 And thus while I wente in my playe  
 The God of Love me folowed aye, 1450  
 Right as an hunter can abyde  
 The best, tyl he seeth his tyde  
 To shoten at good messe to the dere,  
 Vhan that hym nedleth go no nere.

And so befyl I rested me  
 Lesydes a wel under a tree,  
 Whiche tree in Fraunce men cal a pyne;

But sithe the tyme of kyng Pepyne,  
 Ne grewe there tree in mannés syght  
 So fayre, ne so wel woxe in hight, 1460  
 In al that yarde so high was none.  
 And springyng in a marble stone  
 Had nature set, the sothe to telle,  
 Under that pyné tree a welle;  
 And on the border al withoute  
 Was written in the stone aboute  
 Letters smal, that sayden thus:  
 'Here starfe the fayré Narcisus.'

Narcisus was a bachelere 1469  
 That Love had caught in his daungere,  
 And in his nette gan hym so strayne,  
 And dyd him so to wepe and playne,  
 That nede him must his lyfe forgo.  
 For a fayre lady that hight Echo  
 Him loved over any créature,  
 And gan for hym suche payne endure,  
 That on a tyme she him tolde  
 That, if he her loven nolde,  
 That her behovéd nedés dye,  
 There laye none other remedye. 1480

But nathelless for his beaute  
 So feirs and daungerous was he  
 That he nolde graunté hir askyng,  
 For wepyng ne for faire praiyng.  
 And whanne she herd hym werné soo,  
 She hadde in herté so gret woo,  
 And took it in so gret dispite,  
 That she withouté more respite  
 Was deed anon. But er she died  
 Full pitously to god she preied, 1490  
 That proude-hertid Narcisus,  
 That was in love so daungerous,  
 Myght on a day be hampred so  
 For love, and ben so hoot for woo,  
 That never he myght to joye atteyne,  
 Than he shulde feece in every veyne  
 What sorowe trewé lovers maken  
 That ben so velayncly forsaken.  
 This prayer was but resonable,  
 Therefore god helde it ferme and stable.  
 For Narcisus, shortly to telle, 1500  
 By aventure come to that welle,  
 To resten hym in that shadowing  
 A day whanne he come fro huntynge.

1420. *veluet*, trisyllabic.

1426. *myster*, need; cp. vv. 6519, 6581, 7324.

1429. *kath*; cp. 1659 for a similar change of use.

1435. *poudred*, 'piled.'

1447. Cp. v. 1348.

1470. *daungere*, dominion.

1473. *nede*, adverbial.

1496. *Than*, when.



This Narcisus hadde suffred paynes  
 For rennyng alday in the playnes,  
 And was for thurst in grete distresse  
 Of heet, and of his werynesse  
 That hadde his breth almost bynomen.  
 Whanne he was to that welle y-comen,  
 That shadowid was with braunches grene,  
 He thoughte of thilk water shene 1512  
 To drynke, and fresshe hym wel withalle;  
 And down on knees he gan to fulle,  
 And forth his heed and necke out-straught  
 To drynken of that welle a draught.  
 And in the water anon was sene  
 His nose, his mouth, his yē shene,  
 And he therof was all abasshed;  
 His ownē shadowe had hym bytrasshed,  
 For well wende he the formē see 1522  
 Of a child of gret beaute.  
 Well kouthē Love hym wreke thoo  
 Of daunger and of pride also,  
 That Narcisus somtyme hym beere.  
 He quytte hym well his guerdoun there;  
 For he musede so in the welle  
 That, shortly all the sothe to telle,  
 He lovede his ownē shadowe soo,  
 That attē laste he starf for woo. 1530  
 For whanne he saugh that he his wille  
 Myght in no maner way fulfille,  
 And that he was so fastē caught  
 That he hym kouthē comforte nought,  
 He loste his witte right in that place,  
 And deyde withynne a lytel space.  
 And thus his warisoun he took  
 Fro the lady that he forsook.  
 Ladies I preye ensample takith,  
 Ye that ageyns youre love mistakith; 1540  
 For if her deth be yow to wite,  
 God kan ful well youre whilē quyte.  
 Whanne that this lettre of which I telle  
 Hadde taught me that it was the welle  
 Of Narcisus in his beauté,  
 I gan anon withdrawē me,  
 Whanne it felle in my remembraunce  
 That hym bitiddē such myschaunce.

1537. *warisoun*, 'guerredon' (confused with *guerdoun*?), reward.

1538. *Fro*, MSS. *For*, 'de la meschine.'

1540. *love*, 'unis', perhaps read *loves*; but cp. v. 1965.

v. 1965. *ageyns* here means 'in respect to.'

1541. *to wite*, gerundive, i.e. is to be imputed to you.

1543. *lettre*, writing.

But at the lastē thanne thought, I  
 That scathēles full sykerly 1550  
 I myght unto the wellē goo—  
 Wherof shulde I abaishen soo?  
 Unto the welle than went I me,  
 And down I loutede forto see  
 Thē clerē water in the stoon,  
 And eke the gravell which that shoon  
 Down in the botme as silver fyn.  
 For of the well this is the fyn,  
 In world is noon so clere of hewe.  
 The water is evere fresh and newe 1560  
 That welmeth up with wawis bright  
 The mountance of two fynger hight.  
 Abouten it is gras spryngyng  
 For moiste so thikke and wel likyng,  
 That it ne may in wynter dye  
 No more than may the see be drye.

Downe at the botmē sette sawe I  
 Two cristall stonys craftely  
 In thilk freshe and fairē welle.  
 But o thing sothly dar I telle 1570  
 That ye wole holde a gret mervayle  
 Whanne it is tolde, withouten fayle.  
 For whanne the sonnē clere in sight  
 Cast in that welle his bemys bright,  
 And that the heete descendid is,  
 Thanne taketh the cristall stoon y-wis  
 Agayn the sonne an hundrid hewis,  
 Blewe, yelowē, and rede that fresh a  
 newe is.

Yitt hath the merveilous cristall  
 Such strengthē, that the place overall, 1580  
 Bothe flour, and trec, and leves grene,  
 And all the yerde in it is seene.  
 And forto don you to undirtonde,  
 To make ensample wole I fonde.  
 Ryght as a myrrour openly  
 Shewith allē thing that stont therby,  
 As well the colour as the figure,  
 Withouten ony coverture;  
 Right so the cristall stoon shynyng,  
 Withouten ony disseyvyng, 1590  
 The estrees of the yerde accusith,  
 To hym that in the water musith.  
 For evere in which half that ye be

1578. *rede that fresh and newe is*, 'vermeil.'

1581. *flour*, MSS. *four*; Fr. 'flour.'

1586. *stont*, MSS. *stondeth*; read *Shewith all thing*, etc.

1591. *estrees* (MSS. *estrees*), 'l'estre.'

Ze may well half the gardyne se ;  
 And if he turne, he may right well  
 sene the remenaunt everydell.  
 For ther is noon so litil thyng  
 so hidde ne closid with shittynge,  
 That it ne is sene as though it were  
 seyntid in the cristall there. 1600  
 This is the mirroure perilous,  
 in which the proud Narcisus  
 sawe all his face faire and bright ;  
 That made hym swithe to lie upright.  
 For who so loketh in that mirroure,  
 Ther may no thyng ben his socour,  
 That he ne shall there sene some thyng  
 That shal hym lede into lovyng.  
 Full many worthy man hath it  
 blent, for folk of grettist wit 1610  
 ben sooné caught heere and awayted ;  
 Withouten respite ben they bailed.  
 Leere comth to folk of newé rage,  
 Leere chaungith many wight corage ;  
 Leere lith no rede ne witte therto,  
 For Venus sone, daun Cupido,  
 hath sowne there of love the seed,  
 That help ne lith there noon, ne rede,  
 so cerclith it the welle aboute.  
 His gynnés hath he sett withoute, 1620  
 lyght forto cacche in his panteris  
 these damoyseles and bachelers.  
 He will noon other briddé cacche  
 though he sette either nette or lacche.  
 And for the seed that heere was sowne  
 his welle is clepid, as well is knowen,  
 the Welle of Love of verray right,  
 of which ther hath ful many a wight  
 poked in bookis dyversely. 1630  
 But they shall never so verily  
 descripcioun of the wellé heere,  
 leke the sothe of this matere,  
 as ye shall, whanne I have unlo  
 the craft that hir bilongith to.  
 Allway me likéd forto dwelle  
 so sene the cristall in the welle,

That shewide me full openly  
 A thousand thingés fasté by.  
 But I may say in sory houre  
 Stode I to loken or to poure, 1640  
 For sithen [have] I soré siked ;  
 That mirroure hath me now entriked.  
 But hadde I first knowen in my wit  
 The vertue and [the] strengthe of it,  
 I noldé not have mused there ;  
 Mé had lette bene ellis where,  
 For in the snare I fell anoon  
 That hath bitresshed many oon.  
 In thilké mirroure sawe I tho,  
 Among a thousand thingés mo, 1650  
 A roser chargid full of rosis,  
 That with an hegge aboute enclos is.  
 Tho had I sich lust and envie,  
 That for Parys, ne for Pavie,  
 Nolde I have left to goon and see  
 There grettist hepe of roses be.  
 Whanne I was with this ragé hent,  
 That caught hath many a man and shent,  
 Toward the roser gan I go.  
 And whanne I was not for therfro, 1660  
 The savour of the roses swote  
 Me smote right to the herté rote,  
 As I hadde all enbawmed be.  
 And if I ne hadde endouted me  
 To have ben hatid or assailed,  
 My thankis wolde I not have failed  
 To pulle a rose of all that route  
 To beren in myn honde aboute,  
 And smellen to it where I wente ;  
 But ever I dredde me to repente, 1670  
 And leste it grevede or forthought  
 The lord that thilké gardyn wrought.  
 Of roses ther were greté wone,  
 So fairé waxé never in rone.  
 Of knoppes clos some sawe I there,  
 And some wel beter woxen were ;  
 And some ther ben of other moysoun,  
 That drowé nygh to her sesoun,  
 And spedde hem fasté forto sprede.  
 I lové well sich roses rede, 1680

1595. *he* is the indefinite pronoun, i.e. 'one' ;

note to v. 1540.

1604. i.e. to lie dead ; cp. *Tales*, D 768.

1608. MSS. *laughyng*.

1610. Perhaps we should read *Y' - bleint*, received ; Fr. 'mis en rage'.

1613. *of newe*, anew.

1621. *pantere*, cp. *Leg. of G. W.* 131.

1642. MSS. *sighide*, cp. *Parl. of F.* 404.

1666. *My thankis* (G *Me thankis*), for my part.

1666. MSS. *wole*.

1673. *wone*, abundance, seems to be plural ; cp. *Zupitza's Gny of Warwick*, 10390.

1674. *rose* seems to be a northern word meaning 'bush.' Fr. 'sous ciaux.'

For brode roses and open also  
 Ben passéd in a day or two,  
 But knoppes wille [all] freshe be  
 Two dayes atté leest or thre.  
 The knoppes gretly liked me,  
 For fairer may ther no man se.  
 Whó-so myght have oon of all,  
 It ought hym ben full lief withall;  
 Might I gerlond of hem geten,  
 For no richesse I wolde it leten. 1690  
 Among the knoppes I chese oon  
 So faire, that of the remenaunt noon  
 Ne preise I half so well as it,  
 Whanne I avise it in my wit.  
 For it so well was enlumyned  
 With colour reed, [and] as well fyned  
 As nature couthe it maké faire;  
 And it hath levés wel fourre paire,  
 That kynde hath sett thorough his knowyng  
 Aboute the redé roses spryngyng. 1700  
 The stalké was as rishe right,  
 And theron stode the knoppe upright,  
 That it ne bowide upon no side.  
 The swoté smellé spronge so wide,  
 That it dide all the place aboute.  
 Whanne I haddesmelled the savour swote,  
 No will hadde I fro thens yit goo;  
 Bot somdell neer it wente I thoo  
 To take it, but myn hond for drede  
 Ne dorste I to the rosé bede 1710  
 For thesteles sharpe of many manecres,  
 Netles, thornes, and hokede breres;  
 For myché they distourbled me,  
 That sore I dradde to harméd be.

The God of Love with bowé bent,  
 That all day sette hadde his talent  
 To pursuen and to spien me,  
 Was stondyng by a figé tree.  
 And whanne he sawé how that I  
 Hadde chosen so ententifly 1720  
 The bothoun more unto my paie

1683. MSS. omit *al*; Fr. 'tuit frois.'

1705. *aboute*, Fr. 'replenist.' Skeat and Kaluza think that the Chaucerian part of the translation ends here; but it is possible that the absence of rhyme is due to a later alteration of a rhyme like *swete*, vb., with *swote*, adj.; or *replete* with *swote* (*replete*, vb., is given in Levin's rhyme-list).  
 • 1713. For, Skeat reads *Ful*, Kaluza *Over*, but no change is necessary.

1714. *That* (MSS. *For*), Fr. 'Que.'

1721. From this point 'botoun', hitherto translated by *knoppe*, is rendered *bothoun* (= 'button')

Than any other that I say,  
 He toke an arowe full sharply whette,  
 And in his bowe whanne it was sette,  
 Ile streight up to his eré drough  
 The strongé bowe, that was so tough,  
 And shette att me so wondir smerte,  
 That thorough myn ye unto myn herte  
 The takel smote, and depe it wente.  
 And therewith-all such colde mehente, 1730  
 That, under clothés warme and softe,  
 Sithen that day I have chevered ofte.  
 Whanne I was hurt thus, in [a] stounde  
 I felle doun platte unto the grounde;  
 Myn herté failed and feynted ay,  
 And longé tyme a-swoone I lay.  
 But whanne I come out of swounyng,  
 And haddé witt and my felyng,  
 I was all maate, and wende full well  
 Of bloode have loren a full gret dell. 1740  
 But certes the arowe that in me stode  
 Of me ne drewé no drope of blode,  
 For why I founde my wounde all dreye.  
 Thanne toke I with myn hondis tweie  
 The arowe, and ful fast out it plight,  
 And in the pullyng sore I sight;  
 So at the last the shaft of tree  
 I drough out with the fethers thre  
 But yet the hokede heed y-wis,  
 The which that Beaute callid is, 1750  
 Gan so depe in myn herté pace  
 That I it myghté nought arace;  
 But in myn herté still it stode.  
 Al bledde I not a drope of blode.  
 I was bothe anguyssous and trouble  
 For the perill that I sawe double.  
 I nysté what to seye or do,  
 Ne gete a leche my woundis to;  
 For neithir thorough gras ne rote  
 Ne hadde I helpe of hope ne bote. 1760  
 But to the bothoun evermo  
 Myn herté drewé, for all my wo;  
 My thought was in noon other thing,  
 For hadde it ben in my keypyng,  
 It wolde have brought my lyf agayn.

in the curious form *bothoun*. Kaluza sees in this the evidence of a new translator. If so, the new part probably begins at v. 1715. After this the translation becomes more diffuse, the rhymes have a northern colouring, and the verses frequently begin with an accented syllable.

1733. *in a stounde*, 'tantost.'

1750. *that*, MSS. *it*.

'or certis evenly, I dar wel seyn,  
 the sight onoly and the savour  
 legged mych of my langour.  
 'hanne gan I forto drawe me  
 toward the bothon faire to se. 1770  
 and Love hadde gete hym in this throwe  
 another arowe into his bowe,  
 and forto shete gan hym dresse;  
 'he arowis namé was Symplesse.  
 and whanne that Love gan nygheme mere,  
 he drowe it up withouten were,  
 and shette at me with all his myght;  
 so that this arowe anon right  
 'horoughout [myn] eigh, as it was founde,  
 'n myn herte hath maad a wounde. 1780  
 'hanne I anon dide al my crafte,  
 'orto drawn out the shafte;  
 and therwith-all I sighede este,  
 but in myn herte the heed was leste,  
 Which ay encreside my desire,  
 Into the bothon drawe nere.  
 and evermo that me was woo,  
 'he more desir hadde I to goo  
 Into the roser, where that grewe  
 'he freysshé bothon so bright of hewe.  
 'kür me were to have laten be, 1791  
 but it bihovede nedé me  
 'o done right as myn herté badde,  
 'or evere the body must be ladde  
 'fir the herte, in wele and woo;  
 If force togidre they must goo.  
 but never this archer woldé scyne  
 'o shete at me with all his peyne.  
 and forto make me to hym mete,  
 'he thridde arowe he gan to shete, 1800  
 'hanne best his tyme he myght espie,  
 'he which was named Curtesie.  
 'to myn herte it dide avale.  
 'swone I fell bothe deed and pale,  
 'ong tyme I lay and stiréd nought,  
 'ill I abraide out of my thought.  
 and faste thanne I avysede me

1766. evenly, equally; cp. v. 5280. There is no *even* in Fr.

1776. withouten were, Fr. 'sans menacier,' without warning.

1791. laten, let.

1794-5-6. Seems to be a quotation; not in Fr.; l. vv. 2084 ff.

1797, 1798. *scyne, peyne* (Thyn. *syne, pyne*). either an assonance of *syne, peyne*; cp. vv. 1785, 86, *desire, nerve*.

To drawe out the shafte of tree;  
 But evere the heed was left bihynde,  
 For ought I couthe pulle or wynde. 1810  
 So sore it stikid whanne I was hit,  
 That by no craft I myght it flit.  
 But anguyssous and full of thought  
 I felt sich woo my wounde ay wrought,  
 That somonede me alway to goo  
 Toward the rose, that plesede me soo.  
 But I ne durste in no manere,  
 Bicause the archer was so nere;  
 'For evermore gladly,' as I rede,  
 'Brent child of fier hath myché drede.'  
 And certis yit, for al my peyne, 1821  
 Though that I sigh yit arwis reyne,  
 And groundé quarels sharpe of steele,  
 Ne for nó payne that I myght feele,  
 Yit myght I not my-silf witholde  
 The faire roser to biholde.  
 For Love me yaf sich hardément  
 Forto fulfill his comaundement,  
 Upon my fete I rose up thanne,  
 Fêble as a forwoundid man, 1830  
 And forth to gon [my] myght I sette,  
 And for the archer nolde I lette.  
 Toward the roser fast I drowe,  
 But thornés sharpe mo than ynowe  
 Ther were, and also thistélés thikke  
 And brerés brymmé forto prikke,  
 That I ne myghté geté grace  
 The rowé thornés forto passe,  
 To sene the roses freshe of hewe.  
 I must abide, though it me rewe, 1840  
 The hegge aboute so thikke was,  
 That closide the roses in compas.  
 But o thing lykéd me right wele;  
 I was so nygh I myghté fele  
 Of the bothon the swote odour,  
 And also se the freshe colour.  
 And that right gretly likéd me,  
 That I so neer myght it se.  
 Sich joie anon therof hadde I,  
 That I forgate my maladie; 1850  
 To sene I haddé siche delit,

1814. MSS. *leste*; Skeat proposed *felte*.

1842. *close* is but one syllable.

1848. *neer*, either an adverbial form *near*, from O.E. *neor* with adv. -*e*, or a scribe's mistake for *nerwe*; Skeat reads *it myght*.

1851. Skeat's emendation, *it hadde I*, is perhaps right.

Of sorwe and angre I was al quyte,  
 And of my woundes that I hadde thore.  
 For no thing liken me myght more  
 Than dwellen by the roser ay,  
 And thennés never to passe away.  
 But whanne a while I hadde be thare,  
 The god of Love, which alto-share  
 Myn herté with his arwis kene,  
 Cast hym to yeve me woundis grene.  
 He shette at me full hastily 1861  
 An arwe naméd Company,  
 The whiché takell is full able  
 To make these ladies merciable.  
 Thanne I anoon gan chaungen hewe  
 For grevaunce of my woundé newe,  
 That I agayn fell in swounyng,  
 And sighéde sore in compleynyng.  
 Soore I compleynéd that my sore  
 On me gan greven more and more. 1870  
 I hadde noon hope of allegeaunce;  
 So nygh I drowe to desperaunce,  
 I roughté [ne] of deth ne lyf.  
 Wheder that Love wolde me dryf,  
 Yf me a martir wolde he make,  
 I myght his power nought forsake.  
 And while for anger thus I woke,  
 The God of Love an arwe toke;  
 Ful sharpe it was and [ful] pugnaunt.  
 And it was callid Faire Semblaunt, 1880  
 The which in no wise wole consente,  
 That ony lover hym repente  
 To serve his love with herte and all  
 For ony perill that may bifall.  
 But though this arwe was kené grounde,  
 As ony rasour that is founde  
 To kutte and kervé, at the poynt  
 The God of Love it hadde anoynt  
 With a precious oynement,  
 Sombdell to yeve alleggément 1890  
 Upon the woundés that he hadde  
 Through the body in my herte made,  
 To helpe her sorés and to cure,  
 And that they may the bette endure.  
 But yit this arwe, withouté more,  
 Made in myn herte a largé sore,

1853, 1854. *thore, more*, northern rhyme;  
 perhaps *thare, mare*; cp. 1857.

1873. MSS. *rought of deth ne of lyf*.

1874. *Wheder*, whither.

1890. As in Thyenne. G *That he hadde the  
 body hole made* written later over blank line.

That in full grete payne I abode.  
 But ay the oynement wente abrode,  
 Thourgh-oute my woundés large and wide  
 It spredde aboute in every side. 1900  
 Through whos vertu and whos myght  
 Myn herté joyfull was and light;  
 I hadde ben deed and alto-shent  
 But for the precious oynement.  
 The shaft I drowe out of the arwe,  
 Roukyng for wo right wondir narwe,  
 Bút the heed, which made me smerte,  
 Léfte bihyndé in myn herte  
 With other foure, I dar wel say,  
 That never wole be take away. 1910  
 Bút the oynement halpe me wel;  
 And yit sich sorwé dide I fele  
 Thát al day I chaungéd hewe  
 Of my woundés fresshe and newe.  
 As men myght se in my visage,  
 The arwis were so full of rage,  
 So variaunt of diversitee,  
 That men in everiche myght se  
 Bothe gret anoy, and eke swetnesse  
 And joíe meynt with bittirnesse. 1920  
 Now were they esy, now were they wode,  
 In hem I felte bothe harme and goode;  
 Now sore without alleggément,  
 Now softyng with the oynement;  
 It softed heere and prikked there,  
 Thus ese and anger to-gidre were.  
 The God of Love delyverly  
 Come lepande to me hastily,  
 And seidé to me in gret rape,  
 'Yelde thee, for thou may not escape,  
 May no defence availle thee heere; 1930  
 Therfore I rede make no daungere,  
 If thou wolt yelde thee hastely.  
 Thou shalt [the] rather have mercy.  
 He is a foole in sikernesse,  
 That with daunger or stoutenesse  
 Rebellig there that he shulde plesse;  
 In sich folye is litel ese.  
 Be meke where thou must nedis bowe,  
 To stryve ageyn is nought thi proue;  
 Come at oones and have y-doo, 1940  
 For I wole that it be soo.  
 Thanne yelde thee heere debonairly.'

1925. MSS. *softened . . . prikkith*. *Soft*  
 became less violent.

1940. *nought thi proue*, not to thy advantage

nd I answerid ful hombly :  
 Glády sir at youre biddynge  
 wole me yelde in allé thyng ;  
 o youre servýse I wole me take,  
 or god defende that I shulde make  
 geyn youre biddynge résistance,  
 wole not don so grete offence. 1950  
 or if I dide, it were no skile ;  
 e may do with me what ye wile,  
 ave or spille and also sloo.  
 ro you in no wise may I goo,  
 ly lyf, my deth is in youre honde,  
 may not laste out of youre bonde ;  
 leyn at youre lyst I yeldé me,  
 layng in herte that sumtyme ye  
 omfort and esé shull me sende,  
 r ellis shortly, this is the cende, 1960  
 ithouten helthe I mote ay dure,  
 ut if ye take me to youre cure.  
 omfort or helthe how shuld I have,  
 th ye me hurt, but ye me save ?  
 he helthe of lovè mot be founde  
 here as they token firste her wounde.  
 nd if ye lyst of me to make  
 oure prisoner, I wole it take  
 f herte and willfully at gree ;  
 oolly and pleyne y yeldé me, 1970  
 ithouté feynynge or feyntise,  
 o be governed by youre emprise.  
 f you I heré so mych pris,  
 wole ben hool at youre devis  
 rto fulfillé youre lykyng,  
 ad repenté for no thyng,  
 opyng to have yit in some tide  
 re mercy of that I abide.  
 nd with that covenant yelde I me,  
 noon down knelyng upon my kne, 1980  
 oferyng forto kisse his fete.  
 it for no thyng he wolde me lete,  
 nd seide, 'I love thee bothe and preise,  
 ns that thyn answer doth me ese,  
 r thou answerid so curteisly.  
 r now I wote wel uttirly

That thou art gentyll by thi speche ;  
 For, though a man ser woldé seche,  
 He shulde not fynden in certeyn  
 No sich answer of no vileyn, 1990  
 For sich a word ne myghté nought  
 Isse out of a vilayns thought.  
 Thou shalt not lsen of thi speche,  
 For [to] thy helpynge wole I eche,  
 And eke encrenen that I may.  
 But first I wole that thou obaye  
 Fully for thyn avauntage,  
 Anoon to do me heere homage ;  
 And sithé kisse thou shalt my mouthe,  
 Which to no vilayn was never couthe  
 For to aproche it ne forto touche. 2001  
 For sauif of cherlis I ne vouche  
 That they shull never neigh it nere ;  
 For curteis and of faire manere,  
 Well taught and full of gentilnesse,  
 He musté ben that shal me kysse ;  
 And also of full high fraunchise,  
 That shal atteyne to that emprise.  
 And first of o thing warne I thee,  
 That peyne and gret adversite 2010  
 He mote endure, and eke travaille,  
 That shal me serve withouté faile.  
 But ther ageyns thee to comforte,  
 And with thi servise to desporte,  
 Thou mayst full glad and joyfull be  
 So good a maister to have as me,  
 And lord of so high renoun.  
 I here of love the gonfounoun,  
 Of curtesie the banere.  
 For I am of the silf manere, 2020  
 Géntil, curteys, meke, and fre,  
 That who ever contentyf be  
 Mé to honouré, doute, and serve,  
 Néde is that he hym observe  
 Fro trespasse and fro vilanye,  
 And hym governe in curtesie  
 With will and with entencioun.  
 For whanne he first in my prisoun  
 Is caught, thanne must he uttirly  
 Fro thennes forth full bisily 2030

960. *this is*, pronounce 'this.'

965. Cp. note to 1340.

976. Fr. 'Ge ne m'en puis de riens doloir.'

978. *Me repente*.

978. MSS. *Mercy*; but Fr. 'la merci que'

983. *men*.

983. Fr. 'moult.' So probably *moche* instead

of *much*.

2016. *Rend f have*.

2024. *Nede is*, MSS. *And also*. 'Dedans lui ne puet demorer Vilonnne ne mesprison Ne nule mauvese aprison.' 'Aprison,' instruction, seems to have been confused with 'aprisonnement,' to make prisoner, hence vv. 2028-2032, to which there is nothing corresponding in Fr.

Caste hym gentyll forto bee  
 If he desiré helpe of me.<sup>2038</sup>  
 Anoon withoute more delay,  
 Withouten daunger or affray,  
 I bicomé his man anoon,  
 And gave hym thanke many a oon,  
 And knelide doun with hondis joynt,  
 And made it in my port full quoint.  
 The joye wente to myn herté rote, <sup>2039</sup>  
 Whanne I hadde kissed his mouth so swote;  
 I hadde sich myrthe and sich likyng  
 It curéd me of langwishing.  
 He askide of me thanne hostages.  
 'I have,' he seide, 'taken fele homages  
 Of oon and other, where I have bene  
 Disceyved ofte withouten wene;  
 These felouns full of falsite  
 Have many sithes biguyled me,  
 And through falshede her lust achieved,  
 Wherof I repente and am agreved. <sup>2050</sup>  
 And I hem gete in my daungere,  
 Her falshede shull they bie full dere!  
 But for I love thee, I seie thee pleyn,  
 I wole of thee be more certeyn.  
 For thee so sore I wole now bynde,  
 That thou away ne shalt not wynde  
 Forto denyen the covenant  
 Or don that is not avenant.  
 That thou were fals it were gret reuthe,  
 Sith thou semest so full of treuthe.' <sup>2060</sup>  
 'Sire, if thee lyst to undirstande,  
 I mérvéile the askyng this demande.  
 For why or wherfore shuldé ye  
 Ostages, or borwis aske of me,  
 Or ony other sikirnesse,  
 Sith ye wote in sothfastnesse  
 That ye have me supriséd so,  
 And hole myn herté taken me fro,  
 That it wole do for me no thing  
 But if it be at youre biddyng; <sup>2070</sup>  
 Myn herte is youre and myn right nought  
 As it bihoveth in dede and thought,  
 Rédy in all to worche youre will,  
 Whether so turne to good or ill.  
 So sore it lustith you to plesse,  
 No man theroof may you desese.

Ye have theron sette sich justice,  
 That it is werreid in many wise.  
 And if ye doute it nolde obeye,  
 Ye may theroof do make a keye, <sup>208</sup>  
 And holde it with you for ostage.  
 'Now certis this is noon outrage,'  
 Quod Love, 'and fully I acorde;  
 For of the body he is full lord  
 That hath the herte in his tresour;  
 Outrage it were to asken more.'  
 Thanne of his awmener he drough  
 A litell keye, fetys ynowgh,  
 Which was of gold polisséd clere; <sup>209</sup>  
 And seide to me, 'With this keye heer  
 Thyn herte to me now wole I shette;  
 For all my jowell, loke and knette,  
 I bynde undir this litel keye,  
 That no wight may carie aweye.  
 This keye is full of gret postc.'  
 With which anoon he touchide me  
 Under the side full softly,  
 That he myn herté sodeynly  
 Without anyé haddé spered, <sup>210</sup>  
 That yit right nought it hath me dered  
 Whanne he hadde don his will al oute,  
 And I hadde putte hym out of doute,  
 'Sire,' I seide, 'I have right gret wille  
 Youré lust and plesaunce to fulfille.  
 Loke ye my servise take atte gree  
 By thilké feith ye owe to me.  
 I seye nought for recreaundise,  
 For I nought doute of youre servise,  
 But the servaunt traveileth in vayne,  
 That forto serven doth his payne <sup>211</sup>  
 Unto that lord which in no wise  
 Kan hym no thank for his servyse.'  
 Lové seide, 'Dismaie thee nought,  
 Syn thou for sokour hast me sought;  
 In thank thi servise wole I take  
 And high of gre I wole thee make,  
 If wikkidnesse ne hyndre thee;  
 But as I hope it shal nought be,  
 To worshipe no wight by aventure  
 May come, but if he peyne endure; <sup>212</sup>  
 Abide and suffre thy distresse  
 That hurtith now; it shal be lesse.

2038. *it in, (?) in it, i.e. in doing it.*2051. *And, if.*2051. *in my daungere*; cp. v. 1470.2074. *Whether*, monosyllable 'wher'; cp. 2128.2077. *justice*, punishment.2078. *werreid*, persecuted; cp. vv. 3<sup>2</sup>

6264, 6266.

2084, 2085. Cp. vv. 1794 ff.

2116. *MSS. degre*.

wote my silf what may thee save,  
 That medicyne thou woldist have ;  
 And if thi trouthe to me thou kepe,  
 shal unto thyn helþyng eke.  
 To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,  
 here so they be olde or grene ;  
 thou shalt be holpen at wordis fewe.  
 or certeynly thou shalt well shewe 2130  
 here that thou servest with good wilke  
 to accomplysshyn and fulfille  
 y comaundementis day and nyght  
 'hiche I to lovers yeve of right.'  
 Ah Sire, for goddis love,' scilde I,  
 Er ye passe hens ententyfly,  
 to comaundementis to me ye say,  
 and I shall kepe hem if I may.  
 or hem to kepen is all my thought.  
 and if so be I wote hem nought, 2140  
 thanne may I [erre] unwityngly.  
 herfore I pray you entierly,  
 ith all myn hertè me to lere,  
 nat I trespassse in no manere.  
 ye God of Love thanne chargide me,  
 noon as ye shall here and see,  
 orde by worde by right emprise,  
 as the Romance shall devise.  
 ye maister lesith his tyme to lere  
 hanne the disciple wole not here ; 2150  
 is but veyn on hym to swynke  
 nat on his lernyng wole not thyneke.  
 ho so luste love, late hym entende,  
 or now the Romance bigynneth to  
 amende ;  
 now is good to here in fay  
 ony be that can it say,  
 and poynte it as the resoun is.  
 forth [an] other gate ywys,  
 shall nought well in allè thyng  
 brought to good undirstondyng. 2160  
 for a rede that poyntith ille  
 good sentence may oftè spille.  
 e book is good at the cendyng  
 iad of newe and lusty thyng.

For who so wole the eendyng here,  
 The crafte of love he shall mowe lere,  
 If that ye wole so long abide  
 Tyl I this Romance may unhide,  
 And undo the signification  
 Of this dreame into Romance. 2170  
 The sothfastnesse that now is hidde  
 Without coverture shall be kidde,  
 Whanne I undon have this dremyng,  
 Wherynne no word is of lesyng.  
 'Vylanye at the bigynnyng  
 I wole,' sayde Love, 'over alle thyng  
 Thou levè, if thou wolt nought be  
 Fals and trespassse ageyns me.  
 I curse and blamè generally  
 All hem that loven vilanye. 2180  
 For vilanye makith vilayn,  
 And by his dedis a cherle is seyn.  
 Thise vilayns arn withouten pitee,  
 Fréndshiþe, love, and all bounte.  
 I nyl resseyve unto my servise  
 Hem that ben vilayns of emprise.  
 But undirstonde in thyn entent  
 That this is not myn entendement,  
 To clepe no wight in noo ages  
 Oonly gentill for his lynages. 2190  
 But who so [that] is vertuous,  
 And in his port nought outrageous,  
 Whanne sich oon thou seest thee biforn,  
 Thóugh he be not gentill born,  
 Thou maist well seyn this is in soth,  
 That he is gentil by cause he doth  
 As longeth to a gentilman,  
 Of hym noon other deme I can.  
 For certeynly withouten drede  
 A cherle is demèd by his dede 2200  
 Of hie or lowe, as ye may see,  
 Or of what kynrede that he bee.  
 Ne say nought, for noon yvel wille,  
 Thyng that is to holden stille ;  
 It is no worshiþe to mysseye,  
 Thou maist ensample take of Keye,  
 That was somtyme, for mysseyyng,  
 Hatèd bothe of olde and ying.  
 As fer as Gawcyn the worthy  
 Was preisèd for his curtesie, 2210  
 Kay was hatèd, for he was fell,

141. *erre* (MSS. omit), 'issir de la voie' (Fr. emendation).

149-2152. Should come after 2144 if we follow original.

154. *bigynneth to amende*. If the reading of text is retained it must be *gynnith l'amende*. Fr. 15 'des or amende,' perhaps we should *l'wole amende*.

2185-2202. Not in Fr. It bears some resemblance to *Camel. Tales*, D 1109.

2188. *this is*, read *this*.



Of word dispitous and cruell.  
 Wherefore be wise and aqueyntable,  
 Goodly of word and resonable,  
 Bothe to lesse and eke to mare.  
 And whanne thou comest there men are,  
 Loke that thou have in custome ay  
 First to salue hym, if thou may ;  
 And if it fall that of hem somme  
 Salue thee first, be not domme, 2220  
 But quyte hym curteisly anoon,  
 Without abidyng, er they goon.  
 For no thyng eke thy tunge applye  
 To speke wordis of rebaudrye ;  
 To vilayne speche in no degre  
 Late never thi lippe unbounden be,  
 For I nought holde hym, in good feith,  
 Curteys that foulé wordis seith.  
 And allé wymmen serve and preise,  
 And to thy power her honour reise ; 2230  
 And if that ony myssaieere  
 Dispise wymmen, that thou maist here,  
 Blame hym and bidde hym holde hym stille.  
 And set thy myght, and all thy wille,  
 Wymmen and ladies forto please,  
 And to do thyng that may hem ese,  
 That they ever speke good of thee ;  
 For so thou maist best praised be.  
 Loke fro pride thou kepe thee wele,  
 For thou maist bothe perceyve and fele,  
 That pride is bothe foly and synne. 2240  
 And he that pride hath hym withynne,  
 Ne may his herte in no wise  
 Meken ne souplen to servyse.  
 For pride is founde in every part  
 Contrarie unto lovés art,  
 And he that loveth trefw[er]ly  
 Shulde hym conténe jolily  
 Withouté pride in sondry wise,  
 And hym diggysen in queyntise ; 2250  
 For queynte array withouté drede  
 Is no thyng proude, who takith hede ;  
 For fresh array, as men may sec,  
 Withouté pride may ofté be.  
 Mayntene thy silf alfir this rent,  
 Of robe and eke of garnément ;  
 For many sithé faire clothying  
 A man amendith in mych thyng.  
 And loke alwey that they be shape,  
 What garnément that thou shalt make,

2230. *to thy power*, according to thy power.

Of hym that kan [hem] besté do  
 With all that pertheyneth ther to.  
 Poyntis and sleves be well sittande,  
 Right and streght on the hande ;  
 Of shone and bootés newe and faire,  
 Loke at the leest thou have a paire,  
 And that they sitte so fetisly,  
 That thesè ruyde may uttirly  
 Merveyle, sith that they sitte so pleyr  
 How they come on or off ageyn. ;  
 Were streitè gloves with awmere  
 Of silk, and alwey with good chere  
 Thou yeve, if thou have [gret] riches  
 And if thou have nought, spende the le  
 Alwey be mery, if thou may, )  
 But wasté not thi good alway.  
 Have hatte of floures as fresh as May  
 Chapelett of roses of Wissonday ;  
 For sich array ne costneth but lite.  
 Thynhondis wasshe, thy teeth make wh  
 And lete no filthe upon thee bee ; ;  
 Thy nailes blak if thou maist see,  
 Voide it away delyverly ;  
 And kembe thyn heed right jolily.  
 Farce not thi visage in no wise,  
 For that of love is not themprise,  
 For love doth haten, as I fynde,  
 A beaute that cometh not of kynde.  
 Alwey in herte, I redé thee,  
 Glád and mery forto be ; ;  
 And be as joyfull as thou can,  
 Love hath no joye of sorowful man.  
 That yvell is full of curtesie  
 That lowith in his maladie.  
 For ever of love the sikénesse  
 Is meynde with swete and bitternesse.  
 The sore of love is merveilous,  
 For now [is] the lovér joyous,  
 Now can he pleyne, now can he grone,  
 Now can he syngen, now maken mone ;  
 To day he pleyne for hevynesse, 230  
 To morowe he pleyeth for jolynesse.  
 The lyf of love is full contrarie,  
 Which stounde-mele can ofté varie.

2271. *awmere*, name as *awmmer*, v. 208 above.

2273. MSS. omit *gret* ; Fr. 'grant richeve.'

2285. *Farce*, paint ; variant form of *farir*.

2293. *That yvell*, that sick man.

2294. MSS. *knowith*, but Fr. 'L'en en it (Kal.)

2302. *pleyeth*, MSS. *pleyneth*.

Bút if thou canst mirthis make,  
That men in gre wole gladly take,  
Do it goodly, I comaunde thee.  
For men shulde, where so evere they be,  
Do thing that [to] hem sitting is ;  
For therof cometh good loos and pris.  
Where-of that thou be vertuous <sup>2311</sup>  
Ne be not straunge ne daungerous,  
For if that thou good ridere be,  
Prike gladly that men may [the] se.  
In armés also, if thou konne,  
Pursue tyl thou a name hast wonne.  
And if thi voice be faire and clere  
Thou shalt make [no] gret daungere  
Whanne to syng the goodly prey,  
It is thi worship fortobeye. <sup>2320</sup>  
Also to you it longith ay  
To harpe and gitterne, daunce and play ;  
For if he can wel foote and daunce,  
It may hym greetly do avaunce.  
Among eke, for thy lady sake.  
Songes and complayntes [se] that thou  
make,

For that wole meven in her herte,  
Whanne they reden of thy smerte.  
Loke that no man for scarce thee holde,  
For that may greve thee many folde ;  
Resoun wole that a lover be <sup>2331</sup>  
In his yiftes more large and fre  
Than cherles that kan naught of lovyng.  
For who therof can ony thyng,  
He shall be leef ay forto yeve,  
In lovés lore who so wolde leve.  
For he that through a sodeyn sight,  
Or for a kyssyng, anon right  
Yaff hoole his herte in will and thought,  
And to hym self kepith right nought,  
Aftir swich gift is good resoun <sup>2341</sup>  
He yeve his good [all] in abandoun.  
Now wole I shortly heere reherce  
Of that I have seid in verce

<sup>2311</sup>. *vertuous*, skilled.

<sup>2323</sup>. *he*, indefinite.

<sup>2323</sup>. *foote*. Kal. suggests *flout* because *foot* (allure) is a later word.

<sup>2325</sup>. *Among*, i.e. from time to time.

<sup>2333</sup>. MSS. *ben not*. See next verse.

<sup>2336</sup>. MSS. *londes*.

<sup>2341</sup>. *swich gift*, Kal. for *this swift* if of MSS. Perhaps *After so riche gift*, Fr. 'Après si riche don.'

<sup>2342</sup>. MSS. omit *al*. Fr. 'tout a bandon.'

Al the sentence by and by,  
In wordis fewe compendiously,  
That thou the bet mayst on hem thyne,  
Whether so it be thou wake or wyne.  
For the wordis litel greve  
A man to kepe, whanne it is breve. <sup>2350</sup>  
Who so with love wole goon or ride,  
He mote be curteis and voide of pride,  
Méry, and full of jolite,  
And of largesse alosed be.  
Firste I joync thee heere in penaunce  
That evere, withoute répentance,  
Thou sette thy thought in thy lovyng  
To laste withoute répynting,  
And thenke upon thi myrthis swete,  
That shal folowe afir, whan ye mete.  
And for thou trewe to love shalt be, <sup>2361</sup>  
I wole, and comaunde thee  
That in oo place thou sette all hoole  
Thyn herte, withoute halven doole  
Of trecherie and sikernesce ;  
For I lovede nevere doublenesse.  
To many his herte that wole departe,  
Everiche shal have but litel parte ;  
But of hym drede I me right nought  
That in oo placé settith his thought. <sup>2370</sup>  
Therefor in oo place it sette,  
And lat it nevere thennys flette.  
For if thou yevest it in lenyng,  
I holde it but a wrecchid thyng.  
Therefor yeve it hoole and quyte,  
And thou shalt have the more merite ;  
If it be lent, than afir soone  
The bounte and the thank is doone,  
Bút in love fre yeven thing  
Requyrith a gret guerdonyng. <sup>2380</sup>  
Yeve it in yift al quyte fully,  
And make thi yifte debonairly,  
For men that yifte holde more dere  
That yeven [is] with gladsome chere.  
That yifte nought to preisen is  
That man yeveth maugre his.  
Whanne thou hast yeven thy herte, as I  
Have seid [to] thee heere openly,  
Thanne aventurés shull thee fall

<sup>2349</sup>. *wordis*, perhaps read *word is*, 'la parole.'

<sup>2355</sup>. *joync*, enjoin. MSS. *that heere*, but Fr. 'tenjoing en penitence.'

<sup>2365</sup>. *Of trecherie*, etc. (MSS. *For trecherie*),

i.e. half treacherous, half faithful.

<sup>2386</sup>. *maugre his*, in spite of himself.

Which harde and hevy ben with-all. 2390  
 For ofte, whan thou biithenkist thee  
 Of thy lovyng, where so thou be,  
 Fro folk thou must departe in hie,  
 That noon perceyve thi maladie.  
 But hyde thyne harme thou must alone,  
 And go forthe sole, and make thy mone.  
 Thou shalte no whyle be in o state,  
 But whylom colde and whilom hate,  
 Nowe reed as rose, now yelow and fade.  
 Suche sorowe I trowe thou never hade;  
 Côtidien, ne quarteyne, 2401  
 It is nat so ful of peyne.

For often tymes it shal fal  
 In love, among thy payn's al,  
 That thou thy selfe al holy  
 Foryeten shalte so utterly,  
 That many tymes thou shalte be  
 Styl as an ymage of tree,  
 Domme as a stone, without steryng  
 Of fote or honde, without spekyng. 2410

Than, soone after al thy payne,  
 To memorye shalte thou come agayne,  
 A man abasshed wonder sore,  
 And after syghen more and more.  
 For wytte thou wele, withouten wene,  
 In suche astate ful ofte have bene,  
 That have the yvel of love assayde,  
 Whérthrough thou arte so dismayde.  
 After a thought shal take the so,  
 That thy love is to ferre the fro; 2420  
 Thoushakesaye "God! What may this be  
 That I ne maye my lady se?  
 Myne herte alone is to her go,  
 And I abyde al sole in wo,  
 Departed fro myne owné thought,  
 And with myne eyen se right nought.

Alas! myne eyen send I ne may  
 My careful herté to convey!  
 Myne hertés gydé but they be,  
 I prayse nothyng what ever they se. 2430  
 Shul they abyde than? nay,  
 But gone visyte without delay,  
 That myne herte desyreth so.  
 For certainly, but if they go,  
 A foole my selfe I maye wel holde,

2395-2442. Thynne is the only authority here,  
 the MS. lacking a leaf.

2416. Subject omitted as in 2367.

2427. Th. *sene fur send*; Fr. *enovier*.

2432. Th. *gone and visyten*.

Whan I ne se what myne hert wolde.  
 Wherefore I wol gone her to sene,  
 For cased shal I never bene,  
 But I have some tokenyng."

Than gost thou forthe without dwelling.  
 But ofte thou saylest of thy desyre, 2441  
 Er thou mayst come her any nere,  
 And wastest in vayn thi passage.  
 Thanne fallest thou in a newé rage;  
 For want of sight, thou gynnest morne,  
 And homewarde pensyf thou dost retorne.  
 In greet myscheef thanne shalt thou bee,  
 For thanne agayne shall come to thee  
 Sighes and pleyntes with newé woo,  
 That no yecchyng prikketh soo. 245

Who wote it nought, he may go lere  
 Of hem that bien love so dere.  
 No thyng thyn herte appesen may  
 That ofte thou wole goon and assay,  
 If thou maist seen by aventure  
 Thi lyv's joy, thine hertis cure.  
 So that bi gracé if thou myght  
 Atteyne of hire to have a sight,  
 Thanne shalt thou done noon other dede  
 But with that sight thine eyen fede. 246  
 That faire fresh whanne thou maist see,  
 Thyne herté shall so ravysshed be,  
 That nevere thou woldest, thi thankis, let  
 Ne rémove forto see that swete.  
 The more thou seest, in sothfastnesse,  
 The more thou coveytest of that swetnesse.  
 The more thine herté brenneth in fier,  
 The more thine herte is in desire.

For who considreth everydeell,  
 It may be likned wondir well 247  
 The peyne of love unto a fere.  
 For evermore thou neighest nere,  
 Thou or whoo so that it bee,  
 For verray sothe I tell it thee,  
 The hatter evere shall thou brenne,  
 As experiencé shall thee kenne.  
 Where so comest in ooy coost,  
 Who is next fuyre he brenneth most.  
 And yitt forsothe for all thine herte,  
 Though thou for lové swelte and swete,  
 Ne for no thyng thou felen may, 248  
 Thou shalt not willen to passen away.

2463. *thi thankis*, willingly.

2477. Supply *thou*.

2478. *next*, nearest.

And though thou go, yitt must thee nede  
 Theuke allé day on hir fairhede,  
 Whom thou biheelde with so good wille,  
 And holde thi silf biguyld ifle  
 That thou ne haddest noon hardément  
 To shewe hir ought of thynce entent.  
 Thyn herte full sore thou wolt dispise,  
 And eke reprove of cowardise, 2490  
 That thou, so dulle in every thing,  
 Were domme for drede withoute spekyng.  
 Thou shalt eke thenke thou didest folyc,  
 That thou were hir so fasté bye,  
 And durst not auntere thee to say  
 Som thyng er thou cam away.  
 For thou haddist nomore wonne,  
 To speke of hir whanne thou bigonne,  
 But yitt she woldé, for thy sake,  
 In armés goodly thee have take, 2500  
 It shulde have be more worth to thee  
 Than of tresour gret plente.  
 Thus shalt thou morne and eke compleyne,  
 And gete enchesoun to goone ageyne  
 Unto the walke, or to the place  
 Where thou biheelde hir fleshly face.  
 And never, for fals suspeccioun,  
 Thou woldest fynde occasioun  
 Forto gone unto hire hous.  
 So art thou thanne desirous 2510  
 A sight of hir forto have,  
 If thou thine honour myghtist save,  
 Or ony erande myghtist make,  
 Thider for thi lovés sake  
 Full fayn thou woldist, but for drede  
 Thou gost not, lest that men take hele.  
 Wherefore I red [the] in thi goyng  
 And also in thynce ageyn comyng,  
 Thou be well ware that men ne wite;  
 Feyne thee other cause than itte 2520  
 To go that weye or fasté bye;  
 To helé wel is no folyc.  
 And if so be it happé thee,  
 That thou thi lové there maist see,  
 In siker wise thou hir salewe,  
 Wherewith thi colour wole transmewe,  
 And eke thy blode shal alto quake,  
 Thynce hewe eke chaungen for hir sake;

2497. The French suggests that we should supply *though* before *than* and read that for yitt in v. 2490.

2517. Cp. *I rede the in v. 2856.*

2522. *hele*, conceal.

But word and witte with chere full pale  
 Shull wante [the] forto tell thy tale. 2530  
 And if thou maist so fer forth wynne,  
 That thou [thi] resoun dorst bigynne,  
 And woldist seyn thre thingis or mo,  
 Thou shalt full scarsly seyn the two.  
 Though thou bithenke thee never so well,  
 Thou shalt foryeté yit somdell,  
 But if thou dele with trecherie;  
 For fals lovers mowe all folye  
 Seyn what hem lust withouten drede,  
 They be so double in her falsheide; 2540  
 For they in herte cunne thenke a thyng,  
 And seyn another in her spekyng.  
 And whanne thi speche is eendid all,  
 Ryght thus to thee it shall byfall,  
 If ony word thanne come to mynde  
 That thou to seye hast left bihynde.  
 Thanne thou shalt brenne in gret martire,  
 For thou shalt brenne as ony fiere,  
 This is the stryf and eke the affray,  
 And the batell that lastith ay; 2550  
 This bargeyn eende may never take,  
 But if that she thi pees will make.  
 And whanne the nyght is comen anon,  
 A thousande anges shall come upon.  
 To bedde as fast thou wolt thee dight,  
 Where thou shalt have but smal delite;  
 For whanne thou wenest forto slepe  
 So full of peyné shalt thou crepe,  
 Sterte in thi bedde aboute full wide,  
 And turne full ofte on every side, 2560  
 Now downward groff and now upright,  
 And walowe in woo the longé nyght;  
 Thine armys shalt thou sprede abrede  
 As man in werre were forwerede.  
 Thanne shall thee come a remembrance  
 Of hir shappe and hir semblance,  
 Where to none other may be pere.  
 And wite thou wel withouté were,  
 That thee shal [sеме] somtyme that nyght  
 That thou hast hir, that is so bright, 2570  
 Naked bitwene thyne armés there,  
 All sothfastnesse as though it were.  
 Thou shalt make castels thanne in Spayne  
 And dreme of joye, all but in vayne,  
 And thee deliten of right nought,

2530. Fr. '*Parole te faudra.*'

2551. *bargeyn*, strife; Kaluza changes to *batell*.

2564. Fr. '*Com fait homs qui a mal a dens.*'

While thou so slomrest in that thought,  
That is so swete and delitable ;  
The which in soth[ē] nys but fable,  
For it ne shall no while laste.  
Thanne shalt thou sighe and wepē faste  
And say, " Dere god, what thing is  
this ? 2581

My dreame is turned all amys,  
Which was full swete and apparent ;  
But now I wake, it is al shent !  
How yede this mery thought away !  
Twenty tymes upon a day  
I wolde this thought wolde come ageyne,  
For it alleghith well my peyne ;  
It makith me full of joyfull thought.

It sleth me that it lastith noght 2590

A lord, why nyl ye me socoure  
Fro joye ? I trowe that I langoure ;  
The deth I wolde me shuldē sloo  
While I lye in hir armēs twoo.  
Myne harme is harde, withouten wene,  
My gret unease full ofte I meene.  
But wolde love do so I myght  
Have fully joye of hir so bright,  
My peyne were quyte me rychely.  
Allas, to grete a thing aske I ! 2600  
Hit is but foly and wrong wenyng  
To aske so outrageous a thyng ;  
And who so askith folily,  
He mote be warned hastily.

And I ne wote what I may say,  
I am so fer out of the way.  
For I wolde have full gret likyng  
And full gret joye of lassē thing ;  
For wolde she of hir gentylnesse  
Withoutē more me oonys kyssē, 2610  
It were to me a grette guerdoun,  
Relees of all my passioun.  
But it is harde to come therto,  
All is but folye that I do ;  
So high I have myne heretē sette  
Where I may no comfort gette ;  
I not where I seye well or nought,  
But this I wote wel in my thought,  
That it were better of hir alloone,  
Förto stynte my woo and moone, 2620

2585. *How*, MSS. *Now*.

2592. *Fro joye*, MSS. *The joye*, which Skeat retains, construing as object of *langour*; but 'langour' is not used in this sense.

2617. MSS. *wote not*.

A loke on me I-caste goodly, .  
Than forto have al utterly  
Of an other all hooles the play.  
A lord, where I shall byde the day  
That evere she shall my lady be ?  
He is full cured that may hir see.  
A god, whanne shal the dawning springe  
To lye thus is an angry thyng ;  
I have no joye thus heere to lye  
Whanne that my love is not me byc. 2631  
A man to lye hath gret disese,  
Which may not slepe ne reste in ese.  
I wolde it dawed and were now day,  
And that the nyght were went away ;  
For were it day I wolde uprise.  
A slowē sonne, shewe thine enprise !  
Spede thee to sprede thy beemys bright,  
And chace the derknesse of the nyght,  
To putte away the stoundēs stronge,  
Whiche in me lasten all to longe ! 2641  
The nyght shalt thou contenē soo  
Withoutē rest, in peyne and woo.  
If evere thou knewe of love distresse,  
Thou shalt mowe lerne in that sicknesse  
And thus enduring shalt thou lye,  
And ryse on morwē up erly  
Out of thy bedde, and harneysse thee,  
Er evere dawning thou maist see.  
All pryvly thanne shall thou goon,  
What wedder it be, thi silf alloon, 2651  
For reyne or hayle, for snowe, for slete,  
Thider she dwellith that is so swete.  
The which may fall a-slepē be,  
And thenkith but lytel upon thee.  
Thanne shalt thou goon ful foule a-feerd  
Loke if the gatē be unspered,  
And waite without in woo and peyne,  
Full yvel acoolde, in wynde and reyne.  
Thanne shal thou go the dore bfore,  
If thou maist fyndē any score, 2661  
Or hooles, or recēt what evere it were.  
Thanne shalt thou stoupe, and lay to ere,

2621. MSS. on *hir I-caste*. Skeat proposed the reading in the text ; I read *of hir*.

2624. *where*, whether ; introducing a direct question.

2628. *lye*, MSS. *liggen*, but cp. rhymes in vv. 2629, 2630 ; 2645, 2646.

2631. *to lye*, i.e. in lying down.

2641. *contene*, continue ; but Fr. 'te contendre' may have been rendered *contende*.

2650. *weder*, MSS. *whider*, Skeat's correction.

If they withynne a-slepē be—  
 I mene all save the lady free,  
 Whom wakyng if thou maist aspie,  
 Go putte thi-silf in jupartie,  
 To askē grace, and thee bimene,  
 That she may wite withoutē wene  
 That thou [a-]nyght no rest hast hadde,  
 So sore for hir thou were bystadde; 2670  
 Wommen wel ought pitē to take  
 Of hem that sorwen for her sake.  
 And loke, for love of that relyke,  
 That thou thenke noon other lyke;  
 For whanne thou hast so gret annoy,  
 Shall kysse thee er thou go away,  
 And holde that in full gret deynthe.  
 And for that noman shal thee see  
 Bifore the hous, ne in the way,  
 Loke thou be goone ageyn er day. 2680

Such comyng and such goyng,  
 Such hevynesse and such wakyng  
 Makith lovers, withouten wene,  
 Under her clothēs pale and lene.  
 For love levethe colour ne cleernesse,  
 Who loveth trewe hath no fatnesse;  
 Thou shalt wel by thy-silf [y-]see  
 That thou must nedlis assaied be;  
 For men that shapen hem other weye  
 Falsly her ladyes to bitraye, 2690  
 It is no wonder though they be fatt,  
 With falsē othes her loves they gatt.  
 For oft I see suche losengours  
 Fatter than abbatis or priours.  
 Yif with o thing I thee charge,  
 That is to seye that thou be large  
 Unto the mayde that hir doith serve,  
 So best hir thanke thou shalt deserve.  
 Yēve hir yiftes, and gete hir grace,  
 For so thou may thank purchace, 2700  
 That she thee worthy holde and free,  
 Thi lady, and all that may thee see.  
 Also hir servauntes worshippe ay,  
 And please as mych as thou may;  
 Grete good through hemi may come to thee

2669. *a-nyght*, MSS. *nyght*.

2673. 'Por l'amor du haut scintueire'; cp. the similar use of *relyk* in v. 2907.

2676. The Fr. directs the lover to kiss the door before leaving; so Kaluza reads *wham* for *whan* in verse above, and suggests: 'Thou kisse the dore er thou go away for v. 2676.'

2704. Read *mychel*, or insert *ever* before *may*.

Bi-cause with hir they ben pryve;  
 They shal hir telle hoc they thee fande  
 Curteis, and wys, and well doande,  
 And she shall prisē well the marc.  
 Loke oute of londe thou be not fare, 2710  
 And if such cause thou have that thee  
 Bihoveth to gone out of contree,  
 Leve houle thin hertē in hostage,  
 Till thou ageyn make thi passage.  
 Thenke longe to see the swetē thyng,  
 That hath thine herte in hir keepyng.  
 Now have I tolde thee in what wise  
 A lover shall do me servise;  
 Do it thanne if thou wolt have  
 The meede that thou afir crave, 2720  
 Whanne Love all this hadde boden me,  
 I seide hym, 'Sire, how may it be  
 That lovers may in such manere  
 Endure the peyne ye have seid heere?  
 I merveye me wonder faste.  
 How ony man may lyve or laste  
 In such peyne and [in] such brennyng;  
 In sorwe and thought, and such sighing,  
 Aye unrescōd woo to make,  
 Whether so it be they slepe or wake, 2730  
 In such annoy contynuely,  
 As helpe me god, this merveile I  
 How man, but he were maad of stele,  
 Myght lyve a monthe such peynes to fele.'  
 The God of Love thanne seide me,  
 'Freend, by the feith I owe to thee,  
 May no man have good but he it bye;  
 A man loveth more tendirly  
 The thyng that he hath bought most  
 dere.

For wite thou well, withouten were, 2740  
 In thanke that thyng is taken more  
 For which a man hath suffred sore.  
 Certis no wo ne may atteyne  
 Unto the sore of lovēs peyne;  
 Noon yvel therto ne may amounte,  
 Nomorē than a man [may] counte  
 The dropes that of the water be.  
 For drye as well the greetē see  
 Thou myghtist, as the harmēs telle  
 Of hem that with lovē dwelle 2750  
 In servysē; for peyne hem sleeth,  
 And yet ech man wolde fie the deeth.

2709. Perhaps insert *thee* before *well*.

2752. *yet*, 'toutes voies', MSS. *that*.

And trowe thei shulde nevere escape,  
 Neré that hope couthe hem make  
 Glád, as man in prisoun sett,  
 And may not geten forto ete  
 But barly breed and watir pure,  
 And lyeth in vermyn and in ordure ;  
 With all this yitt can he lyve,  
 Good hope such comfort hath hym yive,  
 Which maketh wene that he shall be 2761  
 Delyvered and come to liberte.  
 If fortune is [his] full trust,  
 Though he lye in strawe or dust ;  
 In hoope is all his susteynyng.  
 And so for lovers in her wenyng,  
 Whiche Love hath shütte in his prisoun,  
 Good hope is her salvacioun.  
 Good hope how soré that they smerte  
 Yeveth hem bothé will and herte 2770  
 To profre her body to martire ;  
 For hope so sore doith hem desire  
 To suffre ech harme that men devise  
 For joye that aftirward shall aryse.  
 Hope in desire hathe victorie,  
 In hope of love is all the glorie,  
 For hope is all that love may yive ;  
 Nere hope ther shulde no lover lyve.  
 Blessid be hope, which with desire  
 Avaunceth lovers in such manere ! 2780  
 Good hope is curteis forto please,  
 To kepe lovers from all disese ;  
 Hope kepith his bonde, and wole abide  
 For any perill that may betyde ;  
 For hope to lovers, as most cheef,  
 Doth hem endure all myscheef ;  
 Hope is her helpe whanne myster is.  
 And I shall yeve thee eke I-wys  
 Three other thingis, that gret solas  
 Doith to hem that be in my las. 2790  
 The firsté good that may be founde  
 To hem that in my lace be bounde  
 Is SWETÉ THOUGHT, forto recorde  
 Thing wherwith thou canst accorde  
 Best in thyne herte, where she be.

2753. *And trowe*, i.e. I trowe; cp. vv. 2756, 2758.

2775. *hathe*, MSS. *cacche*; 'Esperance par souffrir vaint'. Skeat amends to *cacche*, taking *hope* as imperative.

2783. *bonde*, MSS. *londe*,  
 Ieste te garantira.  
 Ne ja de toi ne partira.

Thenkyng in absence is good to thee.  
 Whanne any lover doth compleyne,  
 And lyveth in distresse and in peyne,  
 Thanne Swetè-Thought shal comeas bly  
 Away his angre forto dryve.  
 It makith lovers to have remembraunce  
 Of comfort and of high plesaunce,  
 That hope hath hight hym forto wynne  
 For Thought anon thanne shall bygyne  
 As ferre, god wote, as he can fynde,  
 To make a mirrour of his mynde ;  
 For to biholde he wole not lette.  
 Ifir persone he shall afore hym sette,  
 Ifir laughing cyen, persaunt and clere,  
 Ifir shappe, hir fourme, hir goodly cheff  
 Ifir mouth, that is so gracious, 2810  
 So swete and eke so saverous ;  
 Of all hir fetures he shall take heede,  
 Ifis eyen with all hir lymès fede.  
 Thus Swetè-Thenkyng shall aswage  
 The peyne of lovers and her rage.  
 Thi joye shall double withouté gesse  
 Whanne thou thenkist on hir semlyness  
 Or of hir laughing, or of hir chere  
 That to thee made thi lady dere. 2820  
 This comfort wole I that thou take ;  
 And if the next thou wolt forsake,  
 Which is not lessé saverous,  
 Thou shuldist ben to daungerous.

The secounde shal be SWETÈ-SPECH  
 That hath to many oon be leche  
 To bringe hem out of woo and were,  
 And holpe many a bachilere,  
 And many a lady sent socoure,  
 That have lovéd paramour, 2830  
 Through spekyng whanne they myght here  
 Of hir lovers, to hem so dere.  
 To hem it voidith all her smerte,  
 The which is closéd in her herte ;  
 In herte it makith hem glad and light,  
 Speche, whanne they mowe have [no] sigh  
 And therfore now it cometh to mynde  
 In oldé dawés, as I fynde,  
 That clerkis writen that hir knewe ;  
 Ther was a lady, fresh of hewe, 2840  
 Which of hir lovè made a songe,

2796. Kal. reads *Thought for Thenkyng*; b.  
 cp. v. 2815.

2808. *he shall*; cp. note to v. 2945.

2809. *cyen*, one syllable; cp. vv. 2913, 2814.

2824. MSS. *shulddest not*, 'seroien'.

On hym, forto remembre amonge,  
 In which she seyde: "Whanne that I here  
 speken of hym that is so dere,  
 To me it voidith allé smerte.  
 [wys, he sittith so nere myne herte  
 To speke of hym at eve or morwe  
 It cureth me of all my sorwe.  
 To me is noon so high plesauce  
 As of his persone dalyaunce." 2850  
 she wist full well that Swete-Spekyng  
 Comfortith in full myché thyng.  
 If hir love she hadde full well assaid,  
 Of him she was full well apaid;  
 To speke of hym hir joye was sett.  
 Therefore I rede thee that thou gett  
 A felowe that can well concele,  
 And kepe thi counsell, and well hele,  
 To whom go shewe hoolly thine herte,  
 Bothe well and woo, joye and smerte;  
 To gete comfort to hym thou goo, 2861  
 And pryvly bitwene yow twoo  
 Yee shall speke of that goodly thyng,  
 That hath thyne herte in hir kepyng.  
 Of hir beaute, and hir semblaunce,  
 And of hir goodly countenance;  
 Of all thi state, thou shalt hym seye,  
 And aske hym counsell how thou may  
 Do any thyng that may hir plesce;  
 For it to thee shall do gret ese, 2870  
 That he may wite thou trust hym soo,  
 Sothe of thi wele and of thi woo.  
 And if his herte to love be sett,  
 His companye is myche the bett,  
 For resoun wole he shewe to thee  
 All uttirly his pryvyte,  
 And what she is he loveth so.  
 To thee pleyntly he shall undo,  
 Withouté drede of ony shame,  
 Sothe tell hir renoun and hir name. 2880  
 Thanne shall he forther, ferre and nere,  
 And namely to thi lady dere.  
 In syker wise yee every other  
 Shall helpen, as his owne brother,  
 In trouthe withouté doublenesse,  
 And kepen cloos in sikernes;e;  
 For it is noble thing in fay  
 To have a man thou darst say  
 Thy pryvé counsell every deell; 2889

2881. Then shall he go further, etc.

2888. (?) Supply *that* before *thou*.

For that wole comforte thee right well,  
 And thou shalt holde thee well apayed,  
 Whanne such a freend thou hast assayed.

The thridde good of gret comforte,  
 That yeveth to lovers moste dísporte,  
 Comyth of sight and of biholding,  
 That clepid is Swete-lokyng.  
 The which may [thee] noon esé do  
 Whanne thou art fer thy lady fro.  
 Wherefore thou prese alwey to be  
 In placé where thou maist hir see. 2900  
 For it is thyng most amerous,  
 Most delytable and savorous,  
 Forto a-swage a mannés sorowe,  
 To sene his lady by the morwe.  
 For it is a full noble thing,  
 Whanne thyne eyen have metyng  
 With that relike precious  
 Whereof they be so désirous.  
 But al day after, soth it is,  
 They have no drede to faren amysse; 2910  
 They dreden neither wynde ne reyne,  
 Né noon other maner peyne.  
 For whanne thyne eyen were thus in blisse,  
 Yit of hir curtesie, y-wysse,  
 Alloone they can not have her joye,  
 But to the herte they [it] convoye;  
 Parte of her blisse to hym they sende,  
 Of all this harme to make an cnde.  
 The eye is a good messangere,  
 Which can to the herte in such manere  
 Tidyingis sendé, that hath sene 2921  
 To voide hym of his peynés clene.  
 Whereof the herte rejoiseth soo,  
 That a gret partye of his woo  
 Is voided, and putte away to flight,  
 Right as the derknesse of the nyght  
 Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,  
 Right so is al his woo full soone  
 Devoided clene, whanne that the sight  
 Biholden may that freshe wight 2930  
 That the herte desireth soo,  
 That al his derknesse is agoo.  
 For thanne the herte is all at ese,  
 Whanne the eyen sene that may hem plesce.

2902. MSS. *favorous*, 'savorous.'

2917. *they*, MSS. *thou*.

2920. The verse is made smoother by placing *can* after the first word of the next line.

2925. *voided*, (?) *void*.

2934. *the eyen*, 'li oel,' MSS. *they*.



Now have I declared thee all oute  
 Of that thou were in drede and doute,  
 For I have tolde thee feithfully  
 What thee may curen utterly.  
 And allé lovers that wole be  
 Feithfull and full of stabilite, 2940  
 Good hope alwey kepe bi thi side,  
 And Swetè-Thought, make eke abide ;  
 Swetè-Lokyng and Swetè-Speche.  
 Of all thyne harmes thi shall be leche :  
 Of every thou shalt have gret plesaunce,  
 If thou canst bidè in suffraunce,  
 And servè wel withoute feyntise ;  
 Thou shalt be quyte of thyne emprise  
 With more guerdoun, if that thou lyve,  
 But at this tyme this I thee yive' 2950  
 The God of Love, whanne al the day  
 Had taught me as ye have herd say,  
 And enfourmed compendiously,  
 He vanyshide away all sodeynly ;  
 And I alloone lefte all soole,  
 So full of compleynt and of doole,  
 For I sawe no man there me by.  
 My woundes me greved wondirly ;  
 Me forto curen no thyng I knewe  
 Sàve the bothon bright of hewe, 2960  
 Wheron was sett hoolly my thought.  
 Of other comfort knewe I nought,  
 But it were through the God of Love.  
 I knewe not elles th my bihove  
 That myght me ease or comfort gete,  
 But if he wolde hym entermete.  
 The roser was withoutè doute  
 Clósed with an haye withoute,  
 As ye toforn have herd me seyne.  
 And fast I bisiede, and wolde sayne 2970  
 Have passed the hay, if [that] I myght  
 Have gotten ynnè by my slight  
 Unto the bothon so faire to see.  
 But evere I draddè blamed to be,  
 If men wolde have suspeccioun  
 That I wolde of entencioun  
 Have stole the roses that there were ;

2945. *Of every*, i.e. from each of them. Kaluzs omits *gret*, but two unaccented syllables, one of which is *shall*, are not uncommon in the poem ; cp. vv. 2808, 2813.

2950. *at*, 'devote', MSS. *all*.

2953. *enfourmed*. Perhaps supply *me* before *enfourmed*.

2954. *away* does not seem to belong to the verse. *with*. *have*. MSS. *have* ; but cp. v. 2900.

Therefore to entre I was in fere. .  
 But at the last, as I bithought,  
 Whether I shulde passe or nought,  
 I sawe come with a glad chere  
 To me a lusty bachelere,  
 Of good stature and of good hight ;  
 And BIALACOIL forsothe he hight,  
 Sone he was to Curtesie.  
 And he me grauntide full gladly  
 The passage of the outter hay,  
 And séidè 'Sir, how that yee may  
 Pässe, if [that] youre willè be  
 The freshè roser forto see,  
 And yee the swetè savour felc,  
 Yóu warrantè may [I] right wele.  
 So thou thee kepè fro folye,  
 Shall no man do thee vylanye ;  
 If I may helpè you in ought,  
 I shall not feynè, dredeth nought,  
 For I am bounde to youre servise,  
 Fully devoide of feyntise.'  
 Thanne unto Bialacoil saide I :  
 'I thanke you, sir, full hertely 30  
 And youre biheestè take at gre,  
 That ye so goodly profer me.  
 To you it cometh of gret franchise  
 That ye me profer youre servise.'  
 Thanne afir, full delyverly,  
 Thorough the breres anon wente I,  
 Wherof encombred was the hay.  
 I was wel plesed, the soth to say,  
 To se the bothon faire and swote 30  
 So freshè spronge out of the rote.  
 And Bialacoil me servèd well  
 Whanne I so nygh me myghtè fele  
 Of the bothon the swete odour  
 And so lusty hewed of colour.  
 But thanne a cherle (foule hym bityde !  
 Biside the roses gan hym hyde,  
 To kepe the roses of that roser  
 Of whom the namè was DAUNGER.  
 This cherle was hid there in the greves,  
 Kovered with gras and with leves, 30  
 To spie and take whom that he fonde  
 Unto that Roser putte an honde.  
 He was not soole, for ther was moo ;

2988. *how*. (?) *now* ; cp. v. 2985.

2992. MSS. *Your warrantè*, and omit / ; 'vous i puis bien garantir'.

2998. Possibly *devoided* ; but cp. v. 372.

3001. *biheest*. with inorganic *st* as in Chaucer

For with hym weré other twoo  
 Of wikkid maners and yvel fame.  
 That oon was clepid by his name  
 WYKKED-TONGE (god yeve hym sorwe!),  
 For neither at evé ne at morwe  
 He can of no man good [ne] speke;  
 On many a just man doth he wreke. 3030  
 Ther was a womman eke that hight  
 SHAME, that, who can reken right,  
 Trespace was hir fadir name,  
 Hir moder Resoun; and thus was Shame  
 Brought of these ilké twoo.  
 And yitt hadde Trespasse never adoo  
 With Resoun, ne never ley hir bye  
 He was so hidous and so ugly,  
 I mené this that Trespas hight;  
 But resoun conceyved of a sight 3040  
 Shame, of that I spake aforene.  
 And whanne that Shame was thus [y-]  
 borne,

It was ordcynéd that CHASTITE  
 Shulde of the Roser lady be,  
 Which of the bothons more and lasse  
 With sondre folk assailéd was,  
 That she ne wisté what to doo.  
 For Venus hir assailith soo,  
 That nyght and day from hir she stale  
 Bothons and roses over-all. 3050  
 To Resoun thanne praith Chastite,  
 Whom Venus hath flemed over the see,  
 That she hir doughter wolde hir lene,  
 To kepe the Roser fresh and grene.  
 Anoon Resoun to Chastite  
 Is fully assented that it be,  
 And grauntide hir at hir request  
 That Shame, by cause she is honest,  
 Shall keper of the roser be.  
 And thus to kepe it ther were three, 3060  
 That noon shulde hardly be ne bolde,  
 Wére he yong or were he olde,  
 Ageyn hir will awaye to bere  
 Bothons ne roses that there were.  
 I hadde wel spedde, hadde I not bene  
 Awayted with these three and sene.  
 For Bialacoil, that was so faire,  
 So gracious and debonaire,  
 Quytt hym to me full curteislye,

And me to pleasé, bade that I 3070  
 Shulde drawe me to the bothon nere;  
 Prese in to touché the rosere  
 Which bare the roses, he yaf me leve;  
 This graunte ne myght but lytel greve.  
 And for he sawe it liked me,  
 Ryght nygh the bothon pullede he  
 A leef all grenc and yaff me that;  
 The whiche full nygh the bothon sat,  
 I made [me] of that leef full queynte.  
 And whanne I felte I was aqueynte 3080  
 With Bialacoil, and so pryve,  
 I wende all at my will hadde be.  
 Thanne waxe I hardy forto telle  
 To Bialacoil how me bifelle  
 Of love, that toke and wounded me;  
 And seide: 'Sir, so mote I thee,  
 I may no joye have in no wise  
 Uppon no sidé, but it rise.  
 For sithens, if I shall not feyne,  
 In herte I have hadde so gret peyne, 3090  
 So gret annoy and such affray,  
 That I ne wote what I shall say,  
 I drede youre wrathé to disserve.  
 Lever me were that knyves kerve  
 My body shulde in pecys small,  
 Than any weyes it shuldé fall  
 That ye wratthéd shulde ben with me.'  
 'Sey boldely thi will,' quod he,  
 'I nyl be wroth, if that I may, 3099  
 For nought that thou shalt to me say.'  
 Thanne seide I, 'Ser, not you displease  
 To knowen of myn gret unnese,  
 In which oonly love hath me brought.  
 For peynés gret, disese, and thought,  
 Fro day to day he doth me drye—  
 Supposeth not, sir, that I lye.  
 In me fyve woundés dide he make,  
 The soore of whiche shall nevere slake;  
 But ye the Bothon graunté me  
 Which is moost passaunt of beaute, 3110  
 My lyf, my deth, and my martire,  
 And tresour, that I moost desire.'  
 Thanne Bialacoil, affrayéd all,  
 Seyd, 'Sir, it may not fall—  
 That ye desire, it may not arise.  
 What! Wolde ye shende me in this wise?

3038. 'Si hidous et si ley'; it would seem, therefore, as if second *so* belonged in text, and should not be omitted as Kaluza suggests.

3096. *any weyes*, MSS. in *any wise* (Kaluza).  
 3115. *arise*, cp. 3088; perhaps originally *arise*, with assonance.

A mochel foolè thanne I were,  
 If I suffride you away to bere  
 The fresh bothoun so faire of sight.  
 For it were neither skile ne right, 3120  
 Of the roser ye broke the rynde,  
 Or take the rose aforn his kynde;  
 Ye are not curteys to askè it.  
 Late it still on the roser sitt,  
 And growe til it amended be  
 And parfytyl come to beaute;  
 I nolde not that it pulled were  
 Fró the roser that it bere,  
 To me it is so leef and decre.' 3129  
 With that sterte oute anon Daungere,  
 Out of the place were he was hidde;  
 His malice in his chere was kiddè.  
 Full grete he was and blak of hewe,  
 Sturdy and hidous, who so hym knewe,  
 Like sharp urchouns his here was growe;  
 His eyes reed as the fyre glowe,  
 His nosè frouncel, full kirkéd stoodle.  
 He come criande as he were woode,  
 And seide: 'Bialacoil, telle me why  
 Thou bryngest hider so booldely 3140  
 Hym that [is] so nygh the roser!  
 Thou worchist in a wrong manner;  
 He thinkith to dishonoure thee.  
 Thou art wel worthy to have maugree,  
 To late hym of the roser witte;  
 Who serveth feloun is yvel quitte.  
 Thou woldist have doon gret bounte,  
 And he with shame wolde quyte thee.  
 Fle hennés, Felowe! I rede thee goo,  
 It wanteth litel I wole thee sloo; 3159  
 For Bialacoil ne knewe thee nought,  
 Whanne thee to serve he sette his thought;  
 For thou wolt shame hym, if thou myght,  
 Bóthe ageyns resoun and right.  
 I wole no more in thee afye,  
 That comest so slyghly for tespyc;  
 Fór it preveth wonder well  
 Thy sleight and tresoun every deell.'  
 I durst no more there make abode

3118. The verse would be smoother without *away*; cp. note to v. 2951.

3126. Only in *Thynne*, which reads *pyed sparklingly*; 'not les lex rouges comme feus.'

3137. *kirked*, 'fronced', translated in v. 7259 'frouncen.' Morris suggested *kroked*, which Skeat thinks likely.

3150. *I*, Th. *he*; Gl. *it*; Fr. 'ga.

Fór the cherl, he was so wode; 31  
 So gan he threté and manace,  
 And thurgh the haye he dide me chace  
 For feer of hym I tremblyde and quok  
 So cherlishly his heed it shoke;  
 And seide, if eft he myght me take  
 I shulde not from his hondis scape.  
 Thanne Bialacoil is fledde and mate,  
 And I, all soole, disconsolate,  
 Was left aloone in peyne and thought.  
 For shame to deth I was nygh brought  
 Thanne thought I on myn high foly, 3  
 How that my body utterly  
 Was yeve to peyne and to martire;  
 And therto hadde I so gret ire,  
 That I ne durst the haye passe.  
 There was noon hope, there was no gra  
 I trowe nevere man wiste of peyne,  
 But he were laced in lovés cheyne;  
 Ne no man [not], and sooth it is,  
 But if he love, what anger is. 3  
 Love holdith his heest to me right wel  
 Whanne péyne he seide I shuldè fele.  
 Noon herte may thenke, ne tungé seyn  
 A quarter of my woo and peyne;  
 I myght not with the anger laste.  
 Myn herte in poynt was forto brast,  
 Whanne I thought on the rose, that so  
 Was thurgh Daunger cast me froo.  
 A longe while stode I in that state, 3  
 Til that me saugh so maddle and mate  
 The lady of the highe ward,  
 Which from hir tour lokide thiderward

RESOUN men clepè that lady,  
 Which from hir tour delyverly,  
 Come down to me withoute more.  
 But she was neither yong ne hoore,  
 Ne high ne lowe, ne fat ne lene,  
 But best as it were in a mene.  
 Hir eyen two were cleer and light  
 As any candell that brenneth bright; 3  
 And in hir heel she hadde a crowne.  
 Hir semede wel an high persoun;  
 For rounde enviroun hir crownet  
 Was full of riché stonys frett.  
 Hir goodly semblaunt by devys  
 I trowe were maad in Parady; 3  
 For nature hadde nevere such a grace  
 To forge a werk of such compace.

3175. MSS. *hayes*, 'la haie.'

For certeyn, but if the letter lye,  
 Gôd hym-silf, that is so high, 3210  
 Mâde hir aftir his ymage,  
 And yaff hir sith sich avauntage,  
 That she hath myght and seignorie  
 To kepē men from all folye,  
 Who so wole trowe hir lore,  
 Ne may offendē nevermore.

And while I stode thus derk and pale,  
 Resoun bigan to me hir tale.

She seide: 'Al hayle, my swetē frende!  
 Foly and childhoode wole thee sheende,  
 Which the have putt in gret affray; 3221  
 Thou hast bought deere the tyme of May,  
 That made thyn herte mery to be.

In yvell tyme thou wentist to see  
 The gardyne, wherof Idilnesse  
 Bore the keye and was maistresse,  
 Whanne thou yedest in the daunce  
 With hir, and haddest aqueyntaunce.

Hir aqueyntaunce is perilous,  
 First softe and aftir noious; 3230

She hath [thee] trashed withoutē wene.  
 The God of Love hadde the not sene,  
 Ne hadde Idilnesse thee conveyed  
 In the verger, where Myrthe hym pleyed.

If foly have supprised thee,  
 Do so that it recovered be,  
 And be wel ware to take nomore,  
 Counsel that greveth aftir sore.

He is wise that wole hym-silf chastise;  
 And though a yong man in ony wise  
 Trespace amonge and do foly, 3241

Late hym not tarye, but hastily  
 Late hym amende what so be mys.  
 And eke I counseile thee I-wys

The God of Love hoolly foryete,  
 That hath thee in sich peynē sette,  
 And thee in herte tormented soo.  
 I can not sene how thou maist goo  
 Other weyēs to garisoun;

For Daunger that is so feloun 3250  
 Folly purposith thee to werreye,  
 Which is ful cruel, the soth to seye.

And yitt of Daunger cometh no blame  
 In réwarde of my doughter Shame,  
 Which hath the roses in her warde,  
 As she that may be no musarde.

3228. MSS. *hadde*.

3240. MSS. *in ony wise*; cp. note to v. 3096.

And WIKKED-TUNGE is with these two,  
 That suffrith no man thider goo.

For er a thing be, do he shall,  
 Where that he cometh over-all, 3260

In fourty places, if it be sought,  
 Scyethyng that nevere was don newrought;  
 So moche tresoun is in his male,  
 Of falsnesse forto scyne a tale.

Thou delest with angry folk y-wis;  
 Whérfore to thee bettir is

Fróm these folk away to fare,  
 For they wole make thee lyve in care.

This is the yvell that love they calle,  
 Wherynne ther is but foly alle; 3270

For love is foly everydell.  
 Who loveth in no wise may do well,

Ne sette his thought on no good werk.  
 His scole he lesith, if he be clerk;

Of other craft eke if he be,  
 He shal not thryve therynne, for he

In love shal have more passioun  
 Than monke, hermyte, or chanoun.

The peyne is hard out of mesure,  
 The joye may eke no while endure; 3280

Afīd in the possessioun,  
 Is mych tribulacioun.

The joye it is so short lastyng,  
 And but in happe is the getyng.

For I see there many in travaill  
 That attē lastē foulē fayle.

I was no thyng thi counselor  
 Whanne thou were maad the omager

Of God of Love to hastily.  
 Ther was no wisdom, but foly; 3290

Thyne herte was joly but not sage,  
 Whanne thou were brought in sich a rage,

To yeldē thee so redily.  
 And to leve of his gret maistrie,

I rede thee Love away to dryve,  
 That makith thee recche not of thi lyve.

The foly more fro day to day  
 Shal growe, but thou it putte away.

Take with thy teeth the bridel faste 3299  
 To daunte thyne herte, and eke thee caste,

If that thou maist gete thee defence,  
 For to redresse thi first offence.

Who so his herte alwey wole leve  
 Shal fynde amonge that shal hym greve.

Whanne I hir herd thus me chastise,  
 3274. MSS. *a clerk*; Fr. 's'il est clers.

I answerd in ful angry wise ;  
 I prayed hir ceessen of hir speche,  
 Outher to chastise me or teche,  
 To biddè me my thought refreine, 3309  
 Which Love hath caught in his demeyne.  
 'What ! Wene ye Lovè wole consente,  
 That me assailith with bowè bente,  
 To drawe myne herte out of his honde,  
 Which is so quikly in his bonde ?  
 That ye counseyle may nevere be ;  
 For whanne he firste arestide me,  
 He took myne herte so hool hym tille,  
 That it is no thyng at my wille.  
 He taught it so hym forto obey,  
 That he it sparrede with a key. 3320  
 I pray yow late me be all stille,  
 For ye may well, if that ye willè,  
 Your wordis waste in idilnesse.  
 For utterly, withouten gesse,  
 All that ye seyst is but in veyne.  
 Me were lever dye in the peyne,  
 Than Lovè to-me-ward shulde arette  
 Falsheed, or tresoun on me sette.  
 I wole me getè prys or blame  
 And Lovè trewe to save my name ; 3330  
 Who that me chastith I hym hate.'  
 With that word Resoun wente hir gate,  
 Whanne she saugh for no sermōnyng  
 She myght me fro my foly brynge.  
 Thanne dismaied I, lefte all sool,  
 Forwery, forwandred, as a fool,  
 For I ne knewe no chevisaunce.  
 Thanne fell into my remembrance  
 How Lovè bade me to purveye  
 A felowe, to whom I myght seye 3340  
 My counsell and my pryvete,  
 For that shulde moche availè me.  
 With that bithought I me that I  
 Hādde a felowe fastè by  
 Tréwe and siker, curteys and hende ;  
 And he was called by name a FREENDE,  
 A trewer felowe was no wher noon.  
 In haste to hym I wente anon,  
 And to hym all my woo I tolde,  
 Fro hym right nought I wold witholde.  
 I tolde him all withoutè were, 3350  
 And made my compleynt on Daungere,  
 How forto see he was hidous,

3319. taught, MSS. thought.

3331. MSS. chastiseth

And to-me-ward contrarious ;  
 The whichè, thurgh his cruelte  
 Was in poynt to have meyned me.  
 With Bialacōil whanne he me sey  
 Withynne the gardeyn walke and pley,  
 Fro me he made hym forto go ;  
 And I, bilefte aloone in woo, 33  
 I durst no lenger with hym speke,  
 For Daunger seide he wolde be wreke,  
 Whanne that he sawè how I wente  
 The freshè bothon forto hente,  
 If I were hardy to come neer  
 Bitwene the hay and the Roser.

This freend, whanne he wiste of it  
 thought,

He discomforted me right nought,  
 But seidè, 'Felowe, be not so madde,  
 Ne so alaysshed, nor bystadde ; 331  
 My silf I knowe full well Daungere,  
 And how he is feers of his cheere  
 At primè temps love to manace.  
 Ful ofte I have ben in his caas ;  
 A feloun firste though that he be,  
 Afir thou shalt hym souple se.  
 Of longè passed I knewe hym well ;  
 Ungoodly first though men hym feele,  
 He wole meke afir in his beryng  
 Been, for service and obeyssyng. 338  
 I shal thee telle what thou shalt doo :  
 Mekely I rede thou go hym to,  
 Of hertè pray hym specially  
 Of thy trespass to have mercy,  
 And hotè well, [hym] here to plesce,  
 That thou shalt nevermore hym dis  
 plesce.

Who can best serve of flaterie,  
 Shall please Daunger most uttirly,  
 My freend hath seid to me so wel,  
 That he me esid hath somdell, 339  
 And eke allegged of my torment.  
 For thurgh hym had I hardement  
 Agayn to Daunger forto go,  
 To prove if I myght meke hym soo.  
 To Daunger came I all ashamed,  
 The which afor me hadde y-blameid,  
 Desiryng forto pese my woo.

3379. meke, MSS. make, 'amoloier.

3383. Of herte ; cp. 390a.

3385. well hym, Skeat's emendation for hym  
 well of MSS. (?) his ire to pese (pese aphetic form  
 of appese) ; cp. v. 3397.

But over hegge durst I not goo,  
 For he forbode me the passage.  
 fonde hym cruel in his rage 3400  
 And in his honde a gret burdoun.  
 To hym I knelide lowe a-doun,  
 Ful sneke of port and symple of chere,  
 And seide, 'Sir, I am comen heere  
 Oonly to aske of you mercy;  
 It greveth me full gretly  
 That evere my lyf I wratthid you.  
 But forto amenden I am come now,  
 With all my myght, bothe loude and stille,  
 To doon right at youre owné wille. 3410  
 For Lové made me forto doo  
 That I have trespassed hidirto,  
 Fro whom I ne may withdrawe myne herte.  
 Yit shall never for joy ne smerte,  
 What so bifallé, good or ille,  
 Offendé more ageyn youre wille;  
 Lever I have endure disese,  
 Than do that you shuldé displese.  
 If you require and pray that ye  
 Of me have mercy and piteé 3420  
 To stynte your ire that greveth soo.  
 That I wole swere for ever mo  
 To be redressid at youre likyng,  
 If I trespasse in any thyng.  
 Save that I pray thee graunte me  
 A thyng that may not warnéd be:  
 That I may lové all oonly,  
 Noon other thyng of you aske I.  
 I shall doon ellés well I-wys,  
 If of youre grace ye graunte me this; 3430  
 And ye may not, letten me,  
 For wel wot ye that love is free,  
 And I shall loven sithen that I wille,  
 Who evere like it, well or ille.  
 And yit ne wold I for all Fraunce  
 Do thyng to do you displesaunce.'  
 Thanne Daunger fille in his entent  
 Forto foryeve his male talent;  
 But all his wratthe yit atté laste

3398. *hegge*, probably mistake for *haye*.

3406. *It greveth*, MSS. *That greveth*.

3407. *evere my lyf*, read (?) *ever in my lyf*.

3422. *That*, (?) *And*; Fr. 'et.'

3429. *elles*, Th. *all*. Bell: *I shal don at your*

*my*, which aptly gives sense of original.

3437. *fille in his entent*, (?) failed.

Moult trovail Dangier dur et 'ont  
 De pardonner son mal talent.

Stent interprets 'condescended,' but has *fall*  
 such a meaning?

He hath relested, I preyde so faste. 3440  
 Shortly he seide, 'Thy request  
 Is not to mochel dishonest;  
 Né I wole not werne it thee;  
 For yit no thyng engreveth me.  
 For though thou love thus evermore,  
 To me is neither softe ne soore.  
 Love where the list, what recchith me,  
 So [thou] fer fro my roses be?  
 Trust not on me for noon assay,  
 If any tyme thou passe the hay.' 3450  
 Thus hath he graunted my priere.  
 Thanne wente I forth withouten were  
 Unto my freend, and tolde hym all,  
 Which was right joyfull of my tale.  
 He seide, 'Now goth wel thyn affaire,  
 He shall to thee be debonaire;  
 Though he aforw was dispitous,  
 He shall heere afir be gracious.  
 If he were touchid on somme good veyne,  
 He shuld yit rewen on thi peyne. 3460  
 Suffre I rede, and no boost make,  
 Till thou at good mes maist hym take.  
 By sufferaunce and wordis softe  
 A man may overcomé ofte  
 I hym that aforw he hadde in drede,  
 In bookis sothly as I rede.'  
 Thus hath my freend with gret comfort  
 Avaunced me with high disport,  
 Which wolde me good as mych as I.  
 And thanne anon full sodeynly 3470  
 I toke my leve, and streight I wente  
 Unto the hay, for gret talent  
 I hadde to sene the fresh bothoun  
 Wherynne lay my salvacioun.  
 And Daunger toke kepe, if that I  
 Kepe hym covenaut trewely.  
 So sore I dradde his manasyng  
 I durst not breké his biddyng,  
 For lest that I were of hym shent  
 I brake not his comaundément, 3480  
 For to purchase his good wille.  
 It was [nat] forto come ther-tille,  
 His mercy was to ferre bihynde;  
 I wepte for I ne myght it fynde.  
 I compleynéd and sighed sore,

3450. MSS. *I any tyme to passe*, 'se tu james  
 passes la haie.'

3482. *nat*, MSS. omit. Morris, etc. supply  
*hard*.

And langwished evermore,  
 For I durst not over goo  
 Unto the rose I loved soo.  
 Thurgh my demenyng outerly  
 [Thanne he had knowlege certanly,] 3490  
 That Love me laddle in sich a wise  
 That in me ther was no feyntise,  
 Falsheed, ne no trecherie.  
 And yit he full of vylanye,  
 Of disleyne, and cruelte,  
 Of me ne wolde have pite  
 His cruel will forto refreyne,  
 Though I wepe alwey-and me compleyne.  
 And while I was in this torment,  
 Were come of grace, by god sent, 3500  
 Fraunchise and with hir Pite.  
 Fulfild the bothen of bounte,  
 They go to Daunger anoon-right,  
 To forther me with all her myght,  
 And helpé in worde and in dede;  
 For well they saugh that it was nede.  
 First of hir grace dame Fraunchise  
 Hath taken [word] of this emprise;  
 She seide, 'Daunger, gret wrong ye do  
 To worche this man so myché woo, 3510  
 Or pynen hym so angerly;  
 It is to you gret villanye.  
 I can not see [ne] why ne how  
 That he hath trespassed ageyn you,  
 Save that he loveth; wherfore ye shulde  
 The more in cherete of hym holde.  
 The force of love makith hym do this;  
 Who wolde hym blame, he dide amys.  
 He leseth more than ye may do;  
 His payne is harde, ye may see lo, 3520  
 And Love in no wise wolde consente  
 That he have power to repente.  
 For though that quyk ye wolde hym sloo,  
 Fro love his herte may not goo.  
 Now, sweté Sir, is it youre ese  
 Hym forto angre or disese?  
 Allas, what may it you avaunce

3489. MSS. *Thurgh out my demyng outerly That he had . . .* (Gl. omits) *Thanne love we laddle*, etc.; Fr. 'Tant fis qu'il a certainement Veu a mon contenance Qu'Amors,' etc.

3522. *the bothen*, i.e. both, full of kindness, visit Daunger immediately. MSS. *the bothom*, which Skeat refers to the rosebud; Fr. 'car l'une a l'autre me vodroit.'

3505. (?) Omit *in* before *dede*.

3522. *he*, MSS. *ye*, a common scribal error.

To done to hym so gret grevaunce?  
 What worship is it agayn hym take,  
 Or on youre man a werré make, 3530  
 Sith he so lowly every wise  
 Is rely, as ye lust devise?  
 If Love hath caught hym in his lace  
 You for to beye in every caas,  
 And ben youre suget at youre will,  
 Shuld ye therfore willen hym ill?  
 Ye shulde hym sparé more all oute  
 Than hym that is bothe proude and stouthe  
 Curtesie wole that ye socour  
 Hem that ben meke undir youre cure. 3540  
 His herte is hard that wole not meke,  
 Whanne men of mekenesse hym bisce!  
 'That is certeyn,' seide Pite,  
 'We se ofte that humilite  
 Bothe ire and also felonye  
 Venquyssheth, and also malencolye.  
 To stondé forth in such duresse,  
 This cruelte and wikkidnesse.  
 Wherefore I pray you, Sir Daungere,  
 For to mayntene no lenger heere 3550  
 Such cruel werre agayn youre man,  
 As hoolly youre as ever he can;  
 Nor that ye worchen no more woo  
 On this caytif that langwished so,  
 Which wole no more to you trespasse,  
 But putte hym hoolly in youre grace.  
 His offense ne was but lite;  
 The god of Love it was to wite,  
 That he youre thrall so gretly is;  
 And if ye harme hym, ye done amys. 3560  
 For he hath hadde full hard penaunce,  
 Sith that ye refte hym thaquyнтаunce  
 Of Bialacoil, his mosté joye,  
 Which alle hise peynés myght acoye.  
 He was biforn anoyed sore,  
 But thanne ye doubled hem well more.  
 For he of blis hath ben full bare,  
 Sith Bialacoil was fro hym fare.  
 Love hath to hym do gret distresse,  
 He hath no nede of more duresse;  
 Voideth from hym youre ire, I rede,  
 Ye may not wynnen in this dede.  
 Makith Bialacoil repere ageyn,

3546. *Venquyssheth*, two syllables; cf. 351

3548. *This*, *This is*.

3554. *On*, MSS. *Upon*.

3566. *hem*, MSS. *hym*, 'ses anula.'

and haveth pite upon his peyne ;  
 or Fraunchise wole and I, Pite,  
 nat mercyful to hym ye be.  
 and sith that she and I accoffe  
 we upon hym misericorde,  
 or fyou pray and eke moneste  
 ought to refusenoure requeste. 3580  
 or he is hard and fell of thought,  
 nat for us twoo wole do right nought.  
 Daunger ne myght no more endure,  
 mekede hym unto mesurc.  
 wole in no wise, 'seith Daungere,  
 lenye that ye have asked heere,  
 were to gret uncurtesie ;  
 wole he have the companye  
 Bialacoil, as ye devise ;  
 wole hym letté in no wise.' 3590  
 Bialacoil thanne wente in hye  
 aunchise, and seide full curteislye :  
 'e have to longé be deignous  
 to this lover and daungerous,  
 o him to withdrawe your presence,  
 hiche hath do to him great offence,  
 at ye not wolde upon him se ;  
 therefore a sorouful man is he.  
 ape ye to paye him, and to please,  
 my love if ye wol have ease ; 3600  
 lyl his wyl, sith that ye knowe  
 unger is daunted and brought lowe  
 rough helpe of me and of l'yte ;  
 u dare no more aferd be.'  
 'I shal do right as ye wyl,'  
 aith Bialacoil, 'for it is skyl,  
 sith Daunger wol that it so be.'  
 Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me  
 Bialacoil at the begynnyng,  
 alued me in his commyng ; 3610  
 To straungenesse was in him sene,  
 To more than he ne had wrathed bene.  
 as fayre semblaunt than shewed he me,  
 and goodly, as aforne dyd he.  
 and by the honde withouté doute,  
 Within the haye right al aboute  
 he ladde me with right good chere,  
 and envyron the vergere  
 hat Daunger hadde me chased fro.  
 lowe have I leave over al to go, 3620

Nowe am I raysted at my devyse  
 Fro hellé unto paradise.  
 Thus Bialacoil of gentylnesse,  
 With al his payne and besynesse,  
 Hath shewed me onely of grace  
 The estres of the swote place.  
 I sawe the Rose when I was nygh  
 Was greater woxen and more high,  
 Ffresshe, roddy, and fayre of hewe,  
 Of coloure veer yliche newe. 3630  
 And whan I hadde it longé sene,  
 I sawe that through the leves grene  
 The Rosé spredde to spaunysshinge,  
 To sene it was a goodly thyng.  
 But it ne was so sprede on brede  
 That meyn within myght knowe the sede ;  
 For it covert was and close  
 Bothe with the leves and with the rose.  
 The stalke was even and grene upright,  
 It was theron a goodly syght, 3640  
 And wel the better, withouté wene,  
 For the seed was nat fy-sene.  
 Ful fayre it spraddé (God it blesse),  
 For suche another, as I gesse,  
 Aforne ne was, ne more vermayle.  
 I was abawed for marveyle,  
 For ever the fayrer that it was,  
 The more I am bounde in Lovés laas.  
 Longe I abode there, sothe to saye,  
 Tyl Bialacoil I ganne to praye, 3650  
 Whan that I sawe him, in no wyse  
 To me warnen his servyce,  
 That he me woldé graunt a thyng,  
 Whiche to remembre is wel syttinge.  
 This is to sayne, that of his grace  
 He wolde me yeve leysar and space,  
 To me that was so desyrus  
 To have a kyssynge precious  
 Of the goodly fresshé Rose,  
 That so swetely smelleth in my nose. 3660  
 'For if it you displeased nought  
 I woldé gladly, as I have sought,  
 Have a cosse therof freely  
 Of your yefte ; for certainly  
 I wol none have, but by your leve,  
 So lothe me were you for to greve.'  
 He sayd, 'Frende, so god me spede,

3596-3600. From Thynne; two leaves of  
 Glasgow MS. missing.  
 3604. dare, cp. note to v. 1089.

3622. Th. *hell*.

3656. (?) Omit me and read *wolde*.

3667. Th. *said*.



Of Chastite I have suche drede,  
 Thou shuldest nat warnéd be for me ;  
 But I dare nat for Chastyte. 3670  
 Agayne her dare I nat mysdo,  
 For alwaye byddeth she me so  
 To yeve no lover leave to kysse.  
 For who therto maye wynnē y-wisse,  
 He of the surplus of the praye  
 May lyve in hoope to gette some daye.  
 For who so kyssynge maye attayne  
 Of loves payne hath, soth to sayne,  
 The best and [the] most avenaunt,  
 And earnest of the remenaunt.' 3680

Of his answerē I sighed sore ;  
 I durst assaye him tho no more,  
 I hadde suche drede to greve him aye.  
 A man shulde nat to moche assaye  
 To chafe hys frende out of measure,  
 Nor putte his life in aventure.  
 For no man at the firstē stroke  
 Ne maye nat sellē downe an oke,  
 Nor of the reysyns have the wyne,  
 Tyl grapes be ripe, and wel afyne 3690  
 Be sore empressid, I you ensure,  
 And drawn out of the pressure.  
 But I forpeynéd wonder stronge,  
 Though that I aboode right longe  
 Aftir the kis in peyne and woo,  
 Sith I to kis desired soo ;  
 Till that, rewyng on my distresse,  
 Ther come Venus the goddessse,  
 Which ay werreyeth Chastité,  
 Came of hir grace to socoure me, 3700  
 Whos myght is knowē ferre and wide ;  
 For she is modir of Cupide,  
 The god of love, blynde as stoon,  
 That helpith lovers many oon.  
 This lady brought in hir right honde  
 Of brennyng fyre a blasyng bronde,  
 Wherof the flawme and hootē fire  
 Hath many a lady in desire  
 Of lovē brought, and sorē hette, 3710  
 And in hir servise her hertes sette.  
 This lady was of good entaile,  
 Right wonderfull of apparayle ;

Bi hir atyre so bright and shene  
 Men myght perceyvē well and sene  
 She was not of religioun.  
 Nor I nell fnakē menciou  
 Nor of robe nor of tresour,  
 Of broche nor of hir riche attour,  
 Ne of hir girdill aboute hir side, 3720  
 For that I nyll not longe abide.  
 But knowith wel that certeynly  
 She was araidē richely ;  
 Devoyde of pruyde certeyn she was.  
 To Bialacoil she wenēte apas,  
 And to hym, shortly in a clause,  
 She seidd, ' Sir, what is the cause  
 Ye ben of port so dangerous  
 Unto this lover and deynous,  
 To graunte hym nothyng but a kisse.  
 To werne it hym ye done amyse, 3730  
 Sith well ye wotē how that he  
 Is loves servaunt, as ye may see,  
 And hath beaute, wher-through is  
 Worthy of love to have the blis.  
 How he is semely, biholde and see  
 How he is faire, how he is free,  
 How he is swoote and debonaire,  
 Of agē yonge, lusty and faire.  
 Ther is no lady so hawteyne,  
 Duchesse ne countesse, ne chasteleyne,  
 That I nolde holde hir ungoodly 3740  
 Forto refuse hym utterly.  
 His breth is also good and swete,  
 And eke his lippis rody, and mete  
 Oonly to pleyen and to kisse ;  
 Graunte hym a kis of gentilnyss.  
 His teth arn also white and clene.  
 Me thenkith [it] wrong, withouten wene,  
 If ye now werne hym, trustith me,  
 To grauntē that a kis have he. 3750  
 The lasse to helpe hym that ye haste,  
 The morē tymē shul ye waste.'  
 Whanne the flawme of the verry bronde,  
 That Venus brought in hir right honde,  
 Hadde Bialacoil with hetē smete,  
 Anoon he bade me withouten lette,  
 Grauntede to me the Rosē kisse.  
 Thanne of my peyne I gan to lyse,  
 And to the Rose anoon wente I,  
 And kyside it full feithfully. 3760

3674. Th. *wynnen*.3688. Th. *fel*.3690. Skeat omits *be*, but unnecessarily.3698. Skeat reads *to me for come*.3700. *Came*, v. part. ? If so, *Come*.3718. *nor*, MSS. *neither*.  
 — *to kisse* MSS. *us kisse*.

nar no man aske if I was blithe  
 hanne the savour soft and lythe  
 roke to myn herte withoute more,  
 and me alleghed of my sore,  
 was I full of joye and blisse.  
 is faire sich a flour to kisse ;  
 was so swoote and savorous.  
 nyght not be so angwisshous,  
 that I [ne] mote glad and joly be,  
 hanne that I remembre me. 3770  
 t ever among, sothly to seyne,  
 suffre noye and moche peyne.  
 se see may never be so stille,  
 that with a litle wynde it nyll  
 overhelme and turne also,  
 it were woode in wawis goo.  
 tir the calme, the trouble soone  
 ote folowe, and change as the moone.  
 ght so farith Love, that selde in oon  
 oldith his anker : for right anon, 3780  
 hanne they in ese wene beste to lyve,  
 sey ben with tempest all fordryve.  
 ho serveth love can telle of woo ;  
 se stoundemele joie mote overgoo ;  
 ow he hurthet and now he cureth,  
 or selde in oo poynt love endureth.  
 Now is it right me to procede  
 ow Shame gan medle, and take hede,  
 surgh whom fele anges I have hadde.  
 and how the stronge wall was maad, 3790  
 and the castell of brede and lengthe,  
 that God of Love wanne with his  
 strengthe.

I this in Romance will I sette,  
 and for no thyng ne will I lette,  
 that it lykyng to hir be  
 that is the flour of beaute.  
 or she may best my labour quyte,  
 that I for hir love shal endite.  
 Wikkid-Tunge, that the covyne  
 every lover can devyne 3800  
 orste, and addith more somdell  
 or wikkid tunge seith never well),  
 ome-ward bare he right gret hate,  
 plying me erly and late,

3773 ff. Cp. *Berce*, 253 ff.

3774. *nylle*, MSS. *ville*.

3775. *Overwhelme*, (?) *Overwhelme*.

3779. *selde*, MSS. *ylde* (through *selde*).

3786. *selde*, MSS. *elde*.

3796. *beaute*, three syllables, as in v. 3733-

Till he hath sene the greté chere  
 Of Bialacoil and me I-feere.  
 He myghte not his tunge withstonde  
 Worse to reporté than he fonde,  
 He was so full of curséd rage ;  
 It satte hym well of his lynage, 3810  
 For hym an Irish womman bare.  
 His tunge was fyléd sharpe and square,  
 Poign[i]aunt, and right kervyng,  
 And wonder bitter in spekyng.  
 For whanne that he me gan espie,  
 He swoore, affermyng sikirlye,  
 Bitwené Bialacoil and me  
 Was yvel aquayntance and pryve.  
 He spake therof so foliye,  
 That he awakide Ielousy, 3820  
 Which all afrayed in his risyng,  
 Whanne that he herd [him] janglyng,  
 He ran anon as he were woode  
 To Bialacoil there that he stode ;  
 Which haddé lever in this caas  
 Have ben at Reynes or Amyas.  
 For foot-hoot in his felonye,  
 To hym thus seide Ielousie :  
 ' Why hast thou ben so negligent  
 To kepen, whanne I was absent, 3830  
 This verger heere left in this warde.  
 To me thou haddist no reward,  
 To truste, to thy confusioun,  
 Hym thus, to whom suspeccioun  
 I have right gret, for it is nede ;  
 It is well shewed by the dede.  
 Grete faute in thee now have I founde ;  
 By God, anon thou shalt be bounde,  
 And fasté loken in a tour,  
 Withouté refuyt or socour. 3840  
 For Shame to longe hath be thee froo ;  
 Over soone she was agoo.  
 Whanne thou hast lost bothe drede and  
 feere,

It semede wel she was not heere.  
 Shé was bisy in no wyse  
 To kepe thee and [to] chastise,  
 And forto helpen Chastite  
 To kepe the roser, as thenkith me.  
 For thanne this hoy knave so booldely  
 Ne shuldé not have be hardy, 3850

3805. *grete chere*, kindly welcome.

3826. *Reynes*, Rennes in Brittany; Fr. 'a Estampes. *Amyas* corresponds to Fr. 'a Mians.

[Ne] in this verger hadde such game,  
Which now me turneth to gret shame.  
Bialacoil nyst what to sey;  
Full fayn he wolde have fled away,  
For feere han hiddè, nere that he  
All sodeynly toke hym with me.  
And whanne I saugh he hadde soo,  
This Ielousie, take us twoo,  
I was a-stoned, and knewe no rede,  
But fledde away for verrey drede. 3860  
Thanne Shame cam forth full symplely.  
She wende have trespaced full gretly,  
Humble of hir port, and made it symple,  
Weryng a vayne in stele of wymple,  
As nonnyis don in her abbey.  
By cause hir herte was in affray,  
She gan to speke withynne a throwe  
To Ielousie right wonder lowe.  
First of his grace she bysoughte  
And seidè, 'Sire, ne leveth noughte 3870  
Wikkid-Tunge, that false espie,  
Which is so glad to feyne and lye.  
He hath you maad, thurgh flateryng,  
On Bialacoil a fals lesyng;  
His falsnesse is not now a-newe,  
It is to long that he hym knewe;  
This is not the firstè day,  
For Wikkid-Tunge hath custome ay  
Yóngè folkis to bewreye,  
And falsè lesynges on hem leye. 3880  
Yit nevertheles I see amonge  
Thát the loigne it is so longe  
Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure  
In Loves servyse forto endure,  
Drawyng such folk hym too,  
That he hath no thyng with to doo.  
But in sothnesse I trowè nought  
That Bialacoil hadde ever in thought  
To do trespace or vylonye.  
But for his modir Curtesie 3890  
Háth taught hym ever to be  
Good of aqueyntaunce and pryve.  
For he loveth noon hevynesse,  
But mirthe, and pley, and all gladnesse;  
He hateth all trechours,  
Sóleyñ folk and envyyou[r]s;

Fór ye witen how that he  
Wole ever glad and joyfull be,  
Hónestly with folk to pleye.  
I have be negligent in good feye  
To chastise hym; therfore now I,  
Of herte I crye you heere mercy  
That I have been so recheles  
To tamen hym, withouten lees.  
Of my foly I me repente.  
Now wole I hoole sette myn entente  
To kepè, bothè low[d]e and stille,  
Bialacoil to do yourè wille.  
'Sháme, shame,' seyde Ielousie,  
'To be bytrashed gret drede have I  
Lécherie hath clombe so hye,  
That almoost blerèd is myn ye:  
No wonder is if that drede have I;  
Over all regnyth Lecchery,  
Whós myght growith nyght and day  
Bóthe in cloistre and in abbey;  
Chástite is werried over all,  
Therfore I wole with siker wall  
Close bothè roses and roser.  
I have to longe in this maner  
Left hem unclosid wilfully;  
Wherefore I am right inwardly  
Sorowfull, and repented me.  
But now they shall no lenger be  
Unclosid, and yit I dredè sore  
I shall repented ferthermore;  
Fór the game goth all amys,  
Counsell I must newe y-wys.  
I have to longè trusted thee,  
But now it shal no lenger be;  
For he may best in every cost  
Disceyve that men tristen most.  
I see wel that I am nygh shent,  
But if I sette my full entent  
Rémedye to purveye.  
Thérfore close I shall the weye,  
Fro hem that wole the Rose espie,  
And come to wayte me vilonye.  
Fór in good feith and in trouthe,  
I wole not lettè for no slouthè,  
To lyve the more in sikimnesse,  
To make anon a fort[e]resse,  
Tenclose the roses of good savour.

3861. MSS. simply.

3880. MSS. lye.

3884. This verne, like 3895, has but three ac-

3942. *To*, MSS. *Do*.3943. *Tenclose* (i.e. to enclose), MSS. *Th*  
*close*, 'qui . . . clorra entor.'

In myddis shall I make a tour,  
 To putte Bialacoil in prison;  
 For evere I drede me of tresoun.  
 I trowe I shal hym kepé soo  
 That he shal have no myght to goo  
 Aboute, to maké compaignie  
 To hem that thanke of vylanye; 3950  
 : to no such as hath ben heere  
 orn, and founde in hym good chere;  
 hich han assailed hym to shende,  
 id with her trowandyse to blynde.  
 foole is eythé to bigyle;  
 it, may I lyve a litel while,  
 e shal forthenke his fair semblaunt.  
 And with that word came DREDEavaunt,  
 hich was abasshed and in gret fere.  
 'hanne he wiste Ielousie was there, 3960  
 e was for drede in sich affray,  
 hát not a word durst he say,  
 ut quakyng stode full still aloone,  
 il Ielousie his weye was gone,  
 ave Shamé, that him not forsoke.  
 othe Drede and she ful soré quoke,  
 han atté lasté Drede abreyde,  
 and to his cosyn Shamé seide:  
 Shame,' he seide, 'in sothfastnesse,  
 'o me it is gret hevynesse 3970  
 hát the noyse so ferre is go,  
 and the sclandre of us twoo;  
 hit sithe that it is byfall,  
 Né may it not ageyn call  
 Nhanne onys sprongen is a fame.  
 for many a yeer withouten blame  
 Wé han ben, and many a day;  
 For many an Aprill and many a May  
 Wé han passéd not [a-]shamed,  
 Till Ielousié hath us blamed 3980  
 Of mystrust and suspeioun,  
 Causeles, withoute enchesoun.  
 Go we to Daunger hastily,  
 And late us shewe hym openly  
 That he hath not aright [y-]wrought,  
 Whanne that he setté nought his thought  
 To kepé better the purprise.  
 In his doying he is not wise;  
 Hé hath to us do gret wronge,  
 That hath suffred now so longe 3990  
 Bialacoil to have his wille,

3967. *Then*, MSS. *That*.  
 3974. Skeat supplies *do* before *call*.

Al his lustés to fulfille.  
 He must amende it utterly,  
 Or ellys shall he vilaynesly  
 Exiled be out of this londe;  
 For he the werre may not withtonde  
 Of Ielousié, nor the greef,  
 Sith Bialacoil is at myscheef.  
 To Daunger, Shame and Drede anon  
 The righté weye ben goon. 4000  
 The cherle thei founden hem afor  
 Liggyng undir an hawethorn;  
 Undir his heed no pilowe was,  
 But in the stede a trusse of gras.  
 He slombred, and a nappe he toke,  
 Tyll Shamé pitously hym shoke,  
 And greté manace on hym gan make.  
 'Why slepist thou, whanne thou shulde  
 wake?'

Quod Shame. 'Thou doist us vylanye;  
 Who tristith thee, he doth folye, 4020  
 To kepé roses or bothouns  
 Whanne thei ben faire in her sesouns.  
 Thóu art woxe to familiere,  
 Wérou thou shulde be straunge of chere,  
 Stoute of thi porte, redy to greve.  
 Thou doist gret folye forto leve  
 Bialacoil here inne to calle  
 The yonder man, to shende us alle.  
 Though that thou slepé, we may here  
 Of Ielousie gret noysé heere. 4020  
 Art thou now late? Rise up an high,  
 And stoppe sone, and delyverly,  
 All the gappis of the hay;  
 Dó no favour, I thee pray.  
 It fallith no thyng to thy name  
 To make faire semblaunt, where thou  
 maist blame.

Yf Bialacoil be sweete and free,  
 Doggéd and fell thou shuldist be,  
 Froward and outerageous y-wis.  
 A cherl chaungeth that curteis is. 4030  
 This have I herd ofte in seying,  
 "Thát man may, for no dauntynge,  
 Máke a sperhauke of a bosarde."  
 Alle men wole holde thee for musarde

3994. *vilaynesly*, stress on second syllable as in v. 178 (*elys*, one syllable as usual).

3998. 'Sele l'acueilloit en haine'; possibly misread as 'Se belacueil l'ait en haine.'

4021. 'Esties vous ore couchies?'

4026. *where*, as extra syllable after caesura.

That debonair have founden thee.  
It sittith thee nought curteis to be,  
To do men plesance or servise;  
In thee it is recreaundise.  
Lete thi werkis fer and nere  
Be like thi name, which is Daungere.'

Thanne, all abawid in shewing, 4041  
Anoon spake Drede right thus seying,  
And seide, 'Daungere, I dredè me  
That thou ne wolt bisy be  
To kepè that thou hast to kepe;  
Whanne thou shuldist wakethou art aslepe.  
Thou shalt be grevèd certeynly,  
If the aspè Ielousie,  
Or if he syndè thee to blame.  
He hath to day assailèd Shame, 4050  
And chased away, with gret manace,  
Bialacoil oute of this place,  
And swereth shortly that he shall  
Enclose hym in a sturdy wall;  
And all is for thi wikkidnesse,  
For that thee failèth straungènesse.  
Thyne herte I trowe be failèd all.  
Thou shalt repente in speciall,  
If Ielousie the sooth knewe;  
Thou shalt forthenke and sorè rewè.' 4060

With that the cherl hisclubbeganshake,  
Frounyng his eyen gan to make,  
And hidous chere; as man in rage  
For ire he brente in his visage.  
Whanne that [he] herd hym blamèd soo,  
He seide, 'Oute of my witte I goo;  
To be discomfyt I have gret wronge.  
Certis I have now lyved to longe,  
Sith I may not this rosèr kepe.  
All quykke I wolde be dolen depe 4070  
If any man shal more repaire  
Into this gardyne, for foule or faire.  
Myne herte for ire goth a-ferè  
That I lete any entre heere.  
I have do folie, now I see;  
But now it shall amended bee.  
Who settith foot heere any more,  
Truly he shall repente it sore,  
For no man moo into this place  
Of me to entre shal have grace. 4080  
Lever I hadde with swerdis tweyne  
Thurghoute myne herte in every veyne  
Perced to be with many a wounde,

Thanne slouthè shulde in me be founde,  
From hennès forth, by nyght or day,  
I shall defende it, if I may,  
Withouten ony excepcioun  
Of ech maner condicioun.  
And if I it eny man graunte,  
Holdeth me for recreaunte.' 4090

Thanne Daunger on his feet gan stonde,  
And hente a burdoun in his honde.  
Wroth in his ire, ne leste he nought  
But thurgh the verger he hath sought;  
If he myght fyndè hole or trace,  
Where-thurgh that me mote forth by pace,  
Or ony gappe, he dide it close.  
That no man myghtè touche a rose. •  
Of the roser all aboute  
He shitteth every man withoute. 4100  
Thus day by day Daunger is wers,  
More wondirfull, and more dyvers,  
And feller eke than evere he was.  
For hym full ofte I synge 'allas,'  
For I ne may nought, thurgh his ire,  
Recovere that I moost desire.  
Myne herte, alas, wole brest a-twoo,  
For Bialacoil I wratthèd soo;  
For certeynly in every membre  
I quakè whanne I me remembre 4110  
Of the bothon which I wolde  
Full ofte a day sene and biholde.  
And whanne I thenke upon the kisse,  
And how mych joye and blisse  
I haddè thurgh the savour swete,  
For wante of it I grone and grete.  
Me thenkith I fele yit in my nose  
The sweté savour of the rose.  
And now I woot that I mote goo  
So fer the freschè flourès froo, 4120  
To me full welcome were the deth.  
Absens therof alas me sleeth.  
For whilom with this Rose, alas,  
I touchèd nosè, mouth, and face;  
But now the deth I must abide.  
But love consente another tyde  
That onys I touchèd may and kisse,  
I trowe my peyne shall never lisse.  
Theron is all my coveitise,  
Which brent myn herte in many wike.  
Now shal repaire agayn sighinge, 4130  
Long wacche on nyghtis, and no slepin

1ought in wisshing, torment and woo,  
 ith many a turnyng to and froo.  
 nat half my peyne I can not telle,  
 or I am fallen into helle  
 rom paradys, and wel the more  
 y turment greveth more and more.  
 noieith now the bittirnesse,  
 hat I to forn have felt swetnesse. 4140  
 nd Wikkid-Tunge thurgh his falshede  
 auseth all my woo and drede.  
 n me he leieth a pitous charge,  
 i-cause his tungé was to large.  
 Now it is tyme shortly that I  
 elle you som-thing of Ielousie,  
 hat was a gret suspicioun.  
 boute hym leste he no masoun,  
 hat stoon coude leyé, ne querroure ;  
 e hirede hem to make a tour. 4150  
 nd first, the roses forto kepe,  
 boute hem made he a diché deepe,  
 ight wondir large, and also broode.  
 pon the whiché also stode  
 quaréd stoon a sturly wall,  
 ich'on a cragge was founded all.  
 ight grete thikkenesse eke it bare  
 uten it was founded square,  
 hundred fademe on every side.  
 as aliché longe and wide ; 4160  
 t ony tyme it were assayed,  
 wel aboute it was batayled,  
 d rounde' enviroon eke were sette  
 many a riche and faire tourette.  
 every corner of this wall  
 s sette a tour full princypall,  
 d everich hadde, withouté fable,  
 porté-colys defensable  
 kepe of enemyes, and to greve  
 at there her forcé woldé preve. 4170  
 d eke amyddé this purprise  
 s maad a tour of gret maistrise ;  
 fairer saugh no man with sight,  
 rge, and wide, and of gret myght.  
 ey dreddé noon assaut  
 gynné, gunné, nor skaffaut.

The temprure of the mortere  
 Was maad of lycour wonder dere,  
 Of quykké lyme, persant and egre,  
 The which was tempred with vynegre.  
 The stoon was hard of ademan, 4181  
 Wherof they made the foundément.  
 The tour was rounde, maad in compas ;  
 In all this world no riccher was,  
 Ne better ordeigned therwith-all.  
 Aboute the tour was maad a wall,  
 So that bitwixt that and the tour  
 Rosers were sette of swete savour  
 With many roses that thei bere.  
 And eke withynne the castell were 4190  
 Spryngoldes, gunnes, bows and archers,  
 And eke aboven atté corners  
 Men seyn over the wallé stonde  
 Grete engynés, who were nygh honde.  
 And in the kernels heere and there  
 Of Arblasters grete plente were ;  
 Noon armure myght herstroke withstonde,  
 It were foly to prece to honde.  
 Withoute the diche were lystés maade  
 With wall batayléd large and brade, 4200  
 For men and hors shulde not atteyne  
 To neighe the dyche over the pleyne.  
 Thus Ielousie hath enviroon  
 Sétte aboute his garnysoun,  
 With wallés rounde and diché depe,  
 Oonly the roser forto kepe.  
 And Daunger bere erly and late  
 The keyés of the utter gate,  
 The whiché openeth toward the east.  
 And he hadde with hym atté leest 4210  
 Thrifty servautes, echon by name.  
 That other gaté kepté Shame,  
 Which openéd, as it was couth,  
 Toward the part[i]e of the south.  
 Sergeautes assignéd were hir too  
 Ful many, hir willé forto doo.  
 Thanne Dredé hadde in hir baillie  
 The keypyng of the Conestablerye,  
 Toward the north I undirstonde,  
 That openyde upon the lysté honde. 4220  
 The which for no thyng may be sure  
 Bút if she do bisy cure,  
 Erly on morowe and also late,  
 Strongly to shette and barre the gate.  
 Of every thing that she may see  
 Drede is aferd, wher so she be ;

4132. Possibly *he* is to be omitted. For *diche* 4205.

4160. *aliche*, MSS. all *lich*, (?) all *aliche*.

4166. *tour*, 'portaux'; (?) *port* or some such rd.

4172. *maistrise*, Fr. 'maistrise,' does not seem be an English word.

For with a puff of litell wynde  
Drede is a-stonyed in hir mynde.  
Therfore for stelyng of the Rose  
I redē hir nought the yate uncloze ; 4230  
A foulis flight wole make hir flee,  
And eke a shadowe if she it see.

Thanne Wikked-Tunge, full of envye,  
With sēdiours of Normandy,  
As hē that causeth all the bate,  
Was keper of the fourthē gate.  
And also to the tother three  
He wente full oftē forto see.  
Whanne his lotte was to wake anyght,  
His instrumentis wolde he dight 4240  
Fōrto blowe and makē sowne  
(Oftē thanne he hath enchesoun)  
And walken oft upon the wall,  
Corners and wikettis over all  
Full narwē serchen and espie.  
Though he nought fonde, yit wole he  
lye

Discordaunt ever fro armonye,  
And distonēd from melodie.  
Controve he wolde, and foulē fayle  
With hornēpipes of Cornēwaile ; 4250  
In floytēs made he discordaunce.  
And in his musyk with myschaunce,  
He woldē seyn with notēs newe  
Thāt he fonde no woman trewe,  
Ne that he saugh never in his lyf  
Unto hir husbonde a trewe wyf ;  
Ne noon so ful of honeste,  
That she nyl laughe and mery be  
Whanne that she hereth, or may espie,  
A man spoken of leccherie. 4260  
Everiche of hem hath somme vice ;  
Oon is dishonest, another is nyce ;  
If oon be full of vylanye,  
Another hath a likerous ighe ;  
If oon be full of wantonnesse,  
Another is a chideresse.

Thus Wikked Tunge (god yeve hem  
shame)

4249. *sayle*, make mistakes ; but it may be an error for *fall* (rhyming with Cornewall), in which case the meaning is to make mistakes in counterpoint.

4250. *with hornēpipes*, etc., 'as estives de Cornaille.'

4254 ff. This seems to be the part of the Romance that Chaucer refers to in *L. of G. W.* 431.

4264. *ighe*, a form of *ye*.

Can putt hem everychone in blame  
Withoute desert, and causēles.  
He lieth, though they ben giltles.  
I have pite to sene the sorwe  
Thāt waketh bothe eve and morwe,  
To Innocentis doith such grevauncē.  
I pray god yeve hym evel chaunce,  
Thāt he ever so bisie is  
Of ony womman to seyn amys.  
Eke Ielousiē God confounde,  
Thāt hath maad a tour so rounde,  
And made aboute a garisoun  
To sette Bealacoil in prisoun,  
The which is shette there in the tour  
Ful longe to holdē there sojour,  
There forto lyven in penaunce.  
And forto do hym more grevaunce  
Ther hath ordeynēd Ielousie  
An oldē vekkē forto espie  
The maner of his governaunce.  
The whichē devel in hir enfaunce  
Hadde lerned of lovēs art,  
And of his playēs toke hir parte.  
She was expert in his servise,  
She knewe eche wrenche and c  
gise

Of love, and every wile ;  
It was [the] harder hir to gile.  
Of Bealacoil she toke ay hede,  
Thāt evere he lyveth in woo and dredē  
He kepte hym koy and eye pryve,  
Lēst in hym she haddē see  
Ony folly countenaunce ;  
For she knewe all the oldē daunce.  
And afir this, whanne Ielousie  
Hadde Bealacoil in his baillie,  
And shette hym up that was so fre ;  
For seure of hym he woldē be.  
He trusteth sore in his castell,  
The strongē werk hym liketh well.  
He draddē not that no glotouns  
Shulde stele his roses or bothouns.  
The roses weren assured all,  
Defenced with the strongē wall.  
Now Ielousie full well may be  
Of drede devoide in liberte,

4272. MSS. *walketh*; cp. v. 2682 and 1 thereto.

4285. *Ther*, MSS. *Which*.

4291. *expert*, MSS. *except*, which even sense of 'acceptable' is not very clear.

whether that he slepe or wake,  
 or his roses may noon be take.  
 But I alas now morné shall  
 cause I was withoute the wall.  
 all moché doole and moone I made.  
 who hadde wist what woo I hadde,  
 trowe he wolde have had pite.  
 love to deere hadde soolde to me 4320  
 he good, that of his love hadde I.  
 wente a bought it all queyntly,  
 at now, thurgh doublyng of my peyne,  
 see he wolde it selle ageyne,  
 and me a newé bargeyn leere,  
 he which all-oute the more is deere ;  
 on the solace that I have lorn,  
 thanne I hadde it never afor.  
 certayn I am ful like in dedde 4329  
 to hym that caste in erthe his secede,  
 and hath joie of the newé spryng,  
 Vhanne it greneth in the gynnyng,  
 and is also faire and fresh of flour,  
 usty to seen, swoote of odour.  
 but er he it in shévés shere,  
 lay falle a weder that shal it dere,  
 and makén it to fade and falle,  
 the stalke, the greyne, and floures  
 alle,  
 that to the tylyer is fordone  
 he hopé that he hadde to soone. 4340  
 drede certeyn that so fare I ;  
 or hope and travaile sikerlye  
 ben me byraft all with a storme ;  
 the floure nel seeden of my corne.  
 or Love hath so avauncéd me  
 Vhanne I bigan my pryvite  
 to Bialacoil all forto telle,  
 Whom I ne fonde froward ne felle,  
 but toke a gree all hool my play.  
 but Love is of so hard assay, 4350  
 that all at oonys he revéd me,  
 Vhanne I wente best aboven have be.  
 it is of love as of fortune,  
 that chaungeth ofte, and nyl contune ;

4373. We get the best rhythm by reading *where*  
 and stressing *For* in the next line. *sons* is often  
 followed by an unaccented syllable ; cp.

Fr. 4314.

4322. MSS. *I wente aboute*. The correction is  
 aluza's (except that he reads *wende* for *wente*,  
 v. 4375) and is justified by the Fr. original.

4329. MSS. *tillyre*.

4352. MSS. *aboven to*.

Which whilom wole on folkes smyle,  
 And glowmbe on hem another while ;  
 Now freend, now foo, shaltow hir feele.  
 For [in] a twynklyng, turne hir wheele,  
 Shé can writhe hir heed away ;  
 This is the concours of hir play. 4360  
 She canne arisé that doth morné,  
 And whirle adown, and over turne.  
 Who sittith hieghst, but as hir lust ?  
 A foole is he that wole hir trust.  
 For it is I that am come down  
 Thurgh change and revolucioun.  
 Sith Bealacoil mote fro me twynne,  
 Shette in the prisoun yonde withynne,  
 His absence at myn herte I fele.  
 For all my joye and all myne hele 4370  
 Was in hym and in the rose,  
 That but yon walle, which hym doth close,  
 Opene that I may hym see,  
 Love nyl not that I curéd be  
 Of the peynes that I endure,  
 Nor of my cruel aventure.  
 A, Bialacoil, myn owné deere,  
 Though thou be now a prisoner,  
 Kepe atté leste thyne herte to me,  
 And suffre not that it daunted be ; 4380  
 Ne late not Ielousie in his rage  
 Putten thine herte in no servage.  
 Al though he chastice thee withoute,  
 And make thy body unto hym loute,  
 Have herte as hard as dyamaunt,  
 Stédéfast, and nought pliaunt ;  
 In prisoun though thi body be,  
 At largé kepe thyne herté free.  
 A trewé herté wole not plie,  
 For no manace that it may drye. 4390  
 If Ielousie doth thee payne,  
 Quyte hym his whilé thus agayne  
 To venge thee atté leest in thought,  
 If other way thou mai[e]st nought ;  
 And in this wisé sotilly  
 Wórche and wynné the maistrie.  
 But yit I am in gret affray  
 Lést thou do not as I say ;  
 I drede thou canst me gret maugre  
 That thou enprisoned art for me. 4400  
 But that [is] not for my trespass,

4355. MSS. *folk*.

4357. *shaltow*, MSS. *shall*.

4372. *walle*, MSS. *wole*.



For thurgh me never discovred was  
 That thyng that oughte be secree.  
 Wel more anyoé is in me  
 Than is in thee of this myschaunce,  
 For I endure more harde penaunce  
 Than ony [man] can seyn or thynke ;  
 That for the sorwe almost I synke.  
 Whanne I remembre me of my woo,  
 Full nygh out of my witt I goo. 4410  
 Inward myn herte I feelé blede ;  
 For comfortles the deth I drede.  
 Owe I not wel to have distresse  
 Whanne falsé thurgh hir wikkednesse  
 And traitours, that am envyous,  
 To noyen me be so curious ?  
 A, Bialacoil, full wel I see  
 That they hem shape to disceyve thee,  
 To make thee buxom to her lawe,  
 And with her cordé thee to drawe 4420  
 Where so hem lust, right at her wille ;  
 I drede they have thee brought thertille.  
 Withouté comfort thought me sleeth,  
 This game wole brynge me to my deeth ;  
 For if youre good[é] wille I leese,  
 I mote be deed, I may not chese ;  
 And if that thou foryeté me,  
 Myne herte shal nevere in likyng be,  
 Nor elles where syndé solace,  
 If I be putt out of youre grace, 4430  
 As it shal never been, I hope.  
 Thanne shulde I fallen in wanhope.  
 Allas—in wanhope ? nay pardee,  
 For I wole never dispeired be.  
 If hope me failé, thanne am I  
 Ungracious and unworthy.  
 In hope I wole comforted be,  
 For Love, whanne he bitaught hir me,  
 Seidé that Hope, where so I goo,  
 Shulde ay be reles to my woo. 4440  
 But what and she my baalis beete,  
 And be to me curteis and sweete ?  
 Shé is in no thyng full certeyne.  
 Lovers she putt in full gret peyne,  
 And makith hem with woo to deele ;  
 Hir faire biheeste disceyveth feele.  
 For she wole byhote sikirly,  
 And failen aftir outrely.  
 A, that is a full noyous thyng !

4403. MSS. *Yit*.4441. *what and*, what though.

For many a lover in lovyng 443  
 Hangeth upon hir, and trusteth fast,  
 Whiche leese her travel at the last.  
 Of thyng to comen she woot right  
 nought ;  
 Therefore if it be wysely sought,  
 Hig counseill foly is to take.  
 For many tymes whanne she wole make  
 A full good silogisme, I drede  
 That aftirward ther shal in deede  
 Folwe an evell conclusioun.  
 This putte me in confusioun ; 444  
 For many tymes I have it seen  
 That many have biggely been  
 For trust that they have sette in hope,  
 Which felle hem aftirward a-slope.  
 But nevertheles yit gladly she wolde  
 That he, that wole hym with hir holde,  
 Hadde allé tymes his purpos clere,  
 Withoute deceyte or ony were ;  
 That she desireth sikirly.  
 Whanne I hir blamed, I dide foly. 445  
 But what awayleth hir good wille ?  
 Whanne she ne may staunche my stound  
 ille,  
 That helpith litel that she may doo,  
 Outake biheest unto my woo.  
 And heesté certeyn, in no wise  
 Withouté yift is not to prise.  
 Whanne heest and deede a-sundry vari  
 They doon a gret contrarie.  
 Thus am I posséd up and down  
 With dool, thought, and confusioun ; 446  
 Of my disese ther is no noumbre.  
 Daunger and Shamé me encumbre,  
 Drede also, and Ielousie,  
 And Wikked-Tunge full of envie,  
 Of whiche the sharpe and cruel ire  
 Full ofte me putte in gret martire.  
 They han my joyé fully lette,  
 Sith Bialacoil they have bishette  
 Fro me in prisoun wikkidly,  
 Whóm I love so entierly 447  
 Thát it wole my bané bee  
 But I the sonner may hym see.  
 And yit more over, wurst of all,

4457. *silogisme*, read 'silogim.'4467. *his*, MSS. *her*.4472. *stounde*, perhaps read *wounde*.4492. *The sonner may hym see*, for *synle*  
 cp. 4515.

Ther is sette to kepe (foule hir bifall !)  
 A rympled vekke, ferre ronne in age,  
 Frowning and yelowe in hir visage,  
 Which in a-wayte lyth day and nyght,  
 That noon of hym may have a sight.  
 Now mote my sorwe enforced be ;  
 Full soth it is that Love yaf me 4500  
 Three wonder yiftes, of his grace,  
 Whiche I have lorn now in this place,  
 Sith they ne may, withoute drede,  
 Helpen but lytel, who taketh heede.  
 For here availleth no Swete-Thought,  
 And Sweete-Speche helpith right nought ;  
 The thridde was called Swete-Lokyng,  
 That now is lorn without lesyng.  
 Yiftes were faire, but not forthy  
 They helpen me but symply 4570  
 But Bialacoil looseth be,  
 To gon at large and to be free.  
 For hym my lyf lyth all in doute,  
 But if he come the rather oute.  
 Allas, I trowe it wole not bene !  
 For how shult I evermore hym sene ?  
 He may not oute, and that is wronge,  
 By cause the tour is so stronge.  
 How shulde he oute ? By whos prowesse,  
 Oute of so stronge a fortresse ? 4520  
 By me certeyn it nyl be doo ;  
 God woot I have no witte therto.  
 But wel I woot I was in rage,  
 Whonne I to Lové dide homage.  
 Who was the cause, in sothfastnesse,  
 But hir-silf Dame Idelnesse,  
 Which me conveyed, thurgh my praier,  
 To entre into that faire verger ?  
 She was to blame me to leve,  
 The which now doth me soore grevc.  
 A foolis word is nought to trowe, 4531  
 Ne worth an appel forto love.  
 Men shulde hym snybbé bittirly  
 At prymé temps of his folý.

4494. *Ther is*, one syllable.

4498. *hym*, MSS. *hem*.

4511. *But*, unless. (?) Add *all* after *Bialacoil*.

4527. *my*, MSS. *faire* from line below ; 'ma priere'.

4532. *love*, MSS. *love*, but *love*, 'to value,' is the regular word in this connection. Medial *v* and *w* were sometimes rhymed together in northern poems ; cp. note to v. 104. The scribe of Gl. writes *v* sometimes as *v* ; cp. *wode*, v. 4709, where MS. *vode*, Th. *words*.

I was a fool and she me leevde,  
 Thurgh whom I am right nought releved ;  
 She accomplisshid all my wille,  
 That now me greveth wondir ille.  
 Resoun me seide what shulde falle.  
 A fool my silf I may wel calle 4540  
 That love asyle I hadde not leyde,  
 And trowed that damé Resoun seide.  
 Resoun hadde bothé skile and ryght,  
 Whanne she me blamed with all hir myght

To medle of love that hath me shent ;  
 But certeyn now I wole repente.

And shulde I repente ? Nay, parde,  
 A fals traitour thanne shulde I be.  
 The devleges engynnes wolde me take,  
 If I my lorde woldé forsake, 4550  
 Or Bialacoil falsly bitraye.

Shulde I at myscheef hate hym ? Nay,  
 Sith he now for his curtesie  
 Is in prison of Ielousie.

Curtesie certeyn dide he me,  
 So mych that may not yolden be,  
 Whanne he the hay passen me lete  
 To kisse the Rosé faire and swete ;  
 Shulde I therfore kunne hym mawgre ?  
 Nay, certeynly, it shal not be ; 4560  
 For Love shall nevere, yif God wille,

Here of me, thurgh word or wille,  
 Offence or complaynt more or lesse,  
 Neither of Hope nor Idilnesse.  
 For certis it were wrong that I  
 Hated hem for her curtesie.

Ther is not ellys but suffre and thynke,  
 And waken whanne I shuldé wynke ;  
 Abide in hope til Love, thurgh chaunce,  
 Sende me socour or allegeaunce, 4570  
 Expectant ay till I may mete  
 To geten mercy of that swete.

Whilom I thenke how love to me  
 Seide he woldé take att gree  
 My servise, if unpacience  
 Causéd me to done offence.

He seide, 'In thank I shal it take,  
 And high maister eke thee make,  
 If wikkednesse ne reve it thee ;' 4579

But, sone, I trowe that shall not be.  
 These were his wordis by and by ;  
 It semede he lovede me trewely.  
 Now is ther not but serve hym welé,

If that I thenke his thanke to fele ;  
 My good, myne harme lyth hool in me.  
 In love may no défauté be,  
 For trewe Love ne failide never man ;  
 Sothly the faute mote nedys than,  
 As god forbede, be founde in me.  
 And how it cometh, I can not see ; 4590  
 Now late it goon as it may goo,  
 Whether Love wole socoure me or sloo ;  
 He may do hool on me his wille ;  
 I am so soré bounde hym tille,  
 From his servise I may not fleen ;  
 For lyf and deth, withouten wene,  
 Is in his hande, I may not chese,  
 He may me doo bothe wyne and leese.  
 And sith so sore he doth me greve,  
 Yit if my lust he wolde acheve 4600  
 To Bialacoil goodly to be,  
 I yeve no force what felle on me.  
 For though I dye as I mote nede,  
 I praye Love of his goodlyhede  
 To Bialacoil do gentylnesse,  
 For whom I lyve in such distresse,  
 That I mote deyen for penaunce.  
 But first withouté repentaunce,  
 I wole me confesse in good entent,  
 And make in haste my testament,  
 As lovers doon that feelen smerte.  
 To Bialacoil leve I myne herte  
 All hool withouté departyng,  
 Or doublenesse of repentyng.

Thus as I madé my passage  
 In compleynt, and in cruel rage,  
 And I not where to fynde a leche  
 That couthe unto myne helpyng eche,  
 Sodeynly agayn comen doun  
 Out of hir tour I saugh Resoun, 4620  
 Discrete, and wis, and full plesaunt,  
 And of hir porte full avenaunt.  
 The righte weye she tooke to me,  
 Which stode in gret perplexite,  
 That was possshed in every side,  
 That I nyst where I myght abide ;  
 Till she demurely sad of chere,  
 Seide to me, as she come nere,  
 'Myne owné freend, art thou yit greved ?  
 How is this quarell yit acheved 4630  
 Of Lovés side ? Anoon me telle.  
 Hast thou not yit of Love thi fille ?

Art thou not wery of thy servise  
 That the hath in siché wise ?  
 What joye hast thou in thy lovyng ?  
 Is it swete or bitter thyng ?  
 Canst thou yit chesé, late me see,  
 What best thi socour myght be ?  
 Thou servest a full noble lorde,  
 That maketh thee thrall for thi reward  
 Which ay renewith thi turment, 4640  
 With folý so he hath thee blent.  
 Thou fell in mycheef thilké day  
 Whanne thou didist, the sothe to say,  
 Óbeysaunce and eke homage.  
 Thou wroughtest no-thing as the sage,  
 Whanne thou bicam his liegè man ;  
 Thou didist a gret folý than,  
 Thou wistest not what fell therto,  
 With what lord thou haddist to do ; 4650  
 If thou haddist hym wel knowe,  
 Thou haddist nought be brought so low  
 For if thou wistest what it were,  
 Thou noldist serve hym half a yeer,  
 Nót a weke nor half a day,  
 Ne yit an hour withoute delay,  
 Ne never ha lovede paramours.  
 His lordshipp is so full of shoures,  
 Knowest hym ought ?

*L'Amaunt.* 'Ye, Dame, pard

*Raisoun.* 'Nay, nay.'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Yis, I.'

*Raisoun.* 'Wherof? late se

*L'Amaunt.* 'Of that heseidé I shuld be

Glád to have sich lord as he, 4660  
 And maister of sich seignorie.'

*Raisoun.* 'Knowist hym no more?'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Nay, certis, !

Save that he yaf me rewles there,  
 And wente his wey, I nysté where,  
 And I aboode bounde in balaunce.'

*Raisoun.* 'Lo, there a noble conisaunt  
 But I wille that thou knowe hym now,  
 Gynnyng and eendé, sith that thou 4670  
 Art so anguisshous and mate,  
 Disfigured oute of a-state ;

Ther may no wrecche have more of wo  
 Ne caytyfe noon enduren soo.

It were to every man sitting  
 Of his lord have knowleching ;  
 For if thou knewe hym oute of doute,

... I must have word like harmed after he

ightly thou shulde escapen oute  
f the prisoun that marreth thee.'

*L'Amaunt.* 'Ye, Damé, sith my lord  
is he, 4680

nd I his man maad with myn honde,  
woldé right fayne undirstonde  
o known of what kynde he be,  
f ony wolde enformé me.'

*Raisoun.* 'I wolde,' seidè Resoun,  
'thee lere

ith thou to lerne hast sich desire,  
nd shewé thee withouten fable,  
thyng that is not demonstrable.  
hou shalt [wite] withouten science,  
ff knowe withouten experience, 4690  
The thyng that may not known be,  
le wist ne shewid in no degre.  
Thou maist the sothe of it not witen,  
Thoug in thee it weré writen.  
Thou shalt not knowe therof more,  
While thou art reuled by his lore.  
But unto hym that love wole flee  
The knotté may unclosed bee,  
Which hath to thee, as it is founde,  
So long be knette and not unbounde.  
Now sette wel thyne entencioun, 4701  
To here of love discrepcioun.

Love it is an hatefull pees,  
A free acquitaunce withoute relees,  
A truthe frette full of falsheede;  
A sikernesse all sette in drede,  
In hertis a dispeiryng hope,  
And full of hope it is wanhope;  
Wise woodnesse and wode resoun,  
A sweté perell in to droune, 4710  
An hevvy birthen lyght to bere;  
A wikked wawe alwey to warc,  
It is Karibdous perilous;  
Disagreable and gracious;  
It is discordaunce that can accorde,

4687. *withouten*, perhaps dissyllabic.

4693, 4694. These obscure lines not in Fr.; perhaps we should connect v. 4693 with v. 4592 reading *now witen* for *not witen*, and v. 4694 with v. 4695.

4705. MSS. *And thurgh the*. The correction s. Tyrwhitt's.

4705. *frette full*; cp. *Lg. of G. IV.* 1117.

4709. Cp. note to v. 4532.

4712. 'A dangerous sea always to be avoided, it is Charybdis perilous.' The MS. reading *may to were* (nothing in Fr. corresponding) does not make good sense.

And accordaunce to discorde;  
It is kunnyng withoute science,  
Wisdomé withouté sapience,  
Witte withouté discrecioun,  
Havoire withoute possessioun; 4720  
It is sike hele and hool sekenesse,  
A thrust drownéd in dronknesse;  
An helthé full of maladie,  
And charite full of envie;  
An hunger full of habundaunce,  
And a gredy suffisaunce;  
Delite right ful of hevynesse,  
And drierihed full of gladnesse;  
Bitter swetnesse and swete errour,  
Right evell savoured good savour; 4730  
Syn[né] that pardoun hath withynne,  
And pardoun spotted oute with synne;  
A peyne also it is joious,  
And felonyé right pitous;  
Also pley that selde is stable,  
And stedefast [stat] right mevable.  
A strengthe weykéd to stonde upright,  
And feblenessé full of myght;  
Witte unavisé, sage folie,  
And joie full of turmentrie; 4740  
A laughter it is, weping ay,  
Reste that traveyleth nyght and day;  
Also a sweté helle it is,  
And a soroufull paradys;  
A plesaunt gayl and esy prisoun,  
And, full of froste, [a] somer sesoun,  
Prýme temps full of frostés white,  
And May devoide of al delite;  
With seer braunches blossoms ungrene,  
And newe fruyt fillid with wynter tene.  
It is a slowe may not forbere 4751  
Ragges ribaned with gold to were;  
For also well wole love be sette  
Under ragges as riche rochette,  
And eke as wel by amourettes  
In mournyng blak, as bright burnettes.

4722. MSS. *A trust . . . and dronknesse*.

4723. MSS. *And helth*.

4725. MSS. *And anger*.

4728. *drierihed*, MSS. *drieded*.

4732. *oute with*, MSS. *withoute*.

4751. *C'est taigne qui riens refuse*  
*Les porpres et les burlans use*.

The word *taigne* (moth) of the Fr. is probably a mistake for *caigne* (cp. Hatfield-Darnesteter s.v. *cagne*). At least that seems to be the word here translated *slowe*, 'a vagabond.'

For noon is of so mochel pris,  
 Ne no man founden [is] so wys,  
 Ne noon so high is of parage,  
 Ne no man founde of witt so sage, 4760  
 No man so hardy, ne so wight,  
 Ne no man of so mychel myght,  
 Noon so fulfilled of aboute,  
 That he with love [ne] may daunted be.  
 All the world holdith this wey,  
 Love makith all to goon myswey,  
 But it be thetyf of yvel lyf  
 Whom Genius cursith man and wyf,  
 That wrongly werke ageyn nature.  
 Noon such I love, ne have no cure 4770  
 Of sich as lovës servantes bene,  
 And wole not by my counsel fene.  
 For I ne preisë that lovyng,  
 Wherthurgh men at the laste eendlyng  
 Shall calle hem wrecchis full of woo,  
 Love greveth hem and shendith soo.  
 But if thou wolt wel love eschewe  
 Forto escape out of his mewe,  
 And make al hool thi sorwe to slake,  
 No bettir counsel maist thou take 4780  
 Than thynke to fleen wel I-wis.  
 Maynought helpe elles; forwite thou this:  
 It thou fle it, it shal flee thee;  
 Folowe it, and folowen shal it thee.'

Whanne I hadde herde all Resoun  
 seyne,  
 Which haddë spilt hir speche in veyne,  
 'Dáme,' seide I, 'I dar wel sey,  
 Of this avaunt me wel I may,  
 That from youre scole so devyaunt  
 I am, that never the more avaunt 4790  
 Right nought am I thurgh youre doctrine.  
 I dulle under youre discipline,  
 I wote no more than wist [I] ever;  
 To me so contrarie and so fer  
 Is every thing that ye me lere,  
 And yit I can it all by *par cuer*,  
 Myne herte foryetith therof right nought,  
 It is so writen in my thought;  
 And depé greven it is so tendir  
 That all by herte I can it rendre, 4800  
 And rede it over comunely;  
 But to my-silf lewedist am I.  
 But sith, ye love discreven so,  
 And lak and preise it bothë twoo, '

4764. Cd. similar mistake in v. 3774.

Defyneth it into this letter  
 That I may thenke on it the better;  
 For I herde never diffyne it ere,  
 And wilfully I wolde it lere.'

*Raisoun.* 'If love be serched wel an  
 sought,

It is a sykenesse of the thought, 481  
 Annexed and knet bitwixë tweyne  
 Which male and female with oo cheyne  
 So frely byndith that they nyll twynne,  
 Whether so therof they leese or wyne.  
 The rootë springith thurgh hooë brennyng  
 Into disordinat desiryng  
 Forto kissen and embrace,  
 And at her lust them to solace;  
 Of other thyng love recchith nought  
 But setteth her herte and all her thought  
 Móre for delectacioun 482  
 Than ony procreacioun  
 Of other fruyt by engendrure;  
 (Which love to god is not plesure),  
 For of her body fruyt to gete  
 They yeve no force, they are so sette  
 Upon delite to play in-feere.  
 And somme have also this manere,  
 To feynen hem for lovë seke.  
 Sich love I preise not at a leke,  
 For paramours they do but feyne,  
 To lovë truly they disdeyne;  
 They falsen ladies traitoursly,  
 And swerne hem othes utterly,  
 With many a lesyng and many a fable,  
 And all they fynden deceyvable;  
 And whanne they han her lust [y]geten,  
 The hootë ernes they al foryeten.  
 Wymmen the harme they bien full sore, 484  
 But men this thenken evermore;  
 That lasse harme is, so mote I the,  
 Deceyve them than deceyved be;  
 And namely where they ne may  
 Fynde none other menë wey.  
 For I wote wel, in sothfastnesse,  
 What wight doth now his bisynesse  
 With ony womman forto dele  
 For ony lust that he may fele,  
 But if it be for engendrure,  
 He doth trespassse, I you ensure.

4807. MSS. *diffyned heere.*

4814. *Whether for wether.*

4822. *pleasure.* MSS. *pleyng.*

For he shulde setten all his wille  
 To geten a likly thyng hym tille,  
 And to sustenē, if he myght,  
 And kepē forth, by kyndes right,  
 His ownē lyknesse and semblable.  
 For because all is corumpable,  
 And failē shulde successioun,  
 Ne were ther generacioun  
 Oure sectis strenē forto save, 4859  
 Whanne fader or moder arn in grave,  
 Her children shulde, whanne they ben  
 deede,

Full diligent ben in her steede  
 To use that werke on such a wise,  
 That oon may thurgh another rise.  
 Therefore sette Kynde therynne delite;  
 For men therynne shulde hem delite,  
 And of that deede be not erke,  
 But oftē sithes haunt that werke.  
 For noon wolde drawe therof a draught,  
 Ne were delite which hath hym kaught.  
 Thus hath sotillē Dame Nature; 4871  
 For noon goth right, I thee ensure,  
 Ne hath entent hool ne parfit,  
 For her desir is for delyte;  
 The which for tenē crece, and eke  
 The pley of love for-oftē seke,  
 And thrall hem self they be so nyce  
 Unto the prince of every vyce;  
 For of ech synne it is the rote  
 Unlefull lust, though it be sote, 4880  
 And of all yvell the iacyne,  
 As Tullius can determynē  
 (Which in his tymē was full sage,)  
 In a boke he made OF AGE,  
 Whēre that more he preyseth eelde;  
 Though he be croked and unweelde,  
 And more of commendacioun  
 Than youthe in his discripcioun,  
 For youthe sette bothe man and wyf  
 In all perell of soule and lyf, 4890  
 And perell is, but men have grace,  
 The perell of yough[th] forto pace  
 Withoutē any deth or distresse,  
 It is so full of wyldēnesse.

4871. Thus hath sotillē (MSS. *This had sotillē, etc.*), 'soutiva,' i.e. thus hath Nature subtly reasoned.

4875. for tene crece (MSS. *fortened crece*); error, i.e. increase.

4890. Sleat and Kaluza read *tyme for perell*.

So ofte it doth shame or damage  
 To hym, or to his lynage.  
 It ledith man now up, now down,  
 In mochel dissolucioun,  
 And makith hym love yvell compnyne,  
 And lede his lyf drewillye, 4900  
 And halt hym payed with noon estate.  
 Withynne hym-self is such debate,  
 He chaungith purpos and entente  
 And yalte [him] into somme covente,  
 To lyven afir her emprise,  
 And lesith fredom and fraunchise,  
 That nature in hym haddē sette.  
 The which ageyne he may not gette,  
 If he there make his mansioun,  
 For to abide professioun. 4910  
 Though for a tyme his herte absente,  
 It may not fayle, he shal repente,  
 And eke abide thilkē day  
 To leve his abite and gone his way;  
 And lesith his worship and his name,  
 And dar not come ageyn for shame,  
 But al his lyf he doth so morne,  
 By cause he dar not hom retourne.  
 Freedom of kynde so lost hath he,  
 That never may recured be, 4920  
 But that if God hym grauntē grace  
 That he may, or he hennēs pace,  
 Conteyne undir obedience  
 Thurgh the vertu of pacience.  
 For youthe sett man in all folye,  
 In unthrift and [in] ribaudie,  
 In lecherie and in outrage,  
 So ofte it chaungith of corage.  
 Youthe gynneth oftē sich bargeyne  
 That may not eende withouten peyne.  
 In gret perell is sett youthe, 4931  
 Delite so doth his bridil leede.  
 Delite thus hangith, drede thee nought,  
 Bothe mannys body and his thought  
 Oonly thurgh youth, [his] chamberere,  
 That to done yvell is custommere,  
 And of nought elles taketh hede  
 But oonly folkēs forto lede  
 Into disporte and wyldēnesse,  
 So [she] is frowarde from sadnesse. 4940  
 But Eelde drawith hem therfro,

4933. MSS. *this for thus*, 'ainsinc.'

4933. drede thee nought, i.e. you may be sure.

4940. Omitted subject.

Who wote it nought, he may wel goo  
 And moo of hem that now arn olde,  
 That whilom youthhed hadde in holde,  
 Which yit remembre of tendir age,  
 How it hem brought in many a rage,  
 And many a foly therynne wrought.  
 But now that Eelde hath hem thourgh  
 sought,

They repente hem of her folye,  
 That youthe hem putte in jupardye, 4950  
 In perell, and in mychē woo,  
 And made hem ofte amys to do,  
 And suen yvell companye,  
 Riot and avouterie.

But Eeldē can ageyn restreyne  
 From sich foly, and refreyne  
 And sette men by her ordinaunce  
 In good reule and in governaunce.  
 But yvell she spendith hir servise  
 For no man wole hir love ne preise, 4960  
 She is hated, this wote I welle,  
 Hir acqueyntaunce wolde noman fele  
 Ne han of Eldē companye,  
 Men hate to be of hir alye;  
 For noman wolde bicomē olde  
 Ne dye, whanne he is yong and bolde.  
 And Eelde mervailith right gretlye,  
 Whanne thei remembre hem inwardly,  
 Of many a perelous emprise, 4969  
 Whiche that they wrought in sondry wise,  
 How evere they myght, withoutē blame,  
 Escape away withoutē shame.  
 In youthē withoutē damage  
 Or reproof of her lynage,  
 Losse of membre, shelyng of blodē,  
 Perell of deth, or losse of good.  
 Woste thou nought where Youthe abit,  
 That men so preisen in her witt?  
 With Delite she halt sojour,  
 For bothe they dwellen in oo tour. 4980  
 As longe as Youthe is in sesoun  
 They dwellen in oon mansioun.  
 Delite of Youthe wole have servise  
 To do what so he wole devise;  
 And Youthe is redy evermore  
 Forto obey for smerte of sore

4943. *moo*, 'demant,' either verb meaning *to ask* or mistake for some such word. Cp. v. 5390 and note.

4944. *youthhed*, MSS. *youthe*.

MSS. *neither*: cp. v. 1718.

Unto Delite, and hym to yive  
 Hir servise while that she may lyve.  
 Where Elde abit I wole thee telle  
 Shortly, and eno whilē dwelle, 4990  
 For thidir byhoveth thee to goo.  
 If deth in youthe [hath] thee not sloo,  
 Of this journey thou maist not faile.  
 With hir Labour and Travaile  
 Logged ben, with Sorwe and Woo  
 That never out of hir court goo.  
 Peyne and Distresse, Syknesse and Ire  
 And Malencoly, that angry sire,  
 Ben of hir paleys senatours; 4995  
 Gronyng and Grucchying hir herbejours  
 The day and nyght hir to turment,  
 With cruell deth they hir present;  
 And tellen hir, erliche and late,  
 That Deth stont armēd at hir gate.  
 Thanne brynge they to her remembraunce  
 The foly dedis of hir insaunce,  
 Whiche causen hir to mourne in woo  
 That Youthe hath hir bigilēd so,  
 Which sodeynly away is hasted.  
 She wepeth the tyme that she hath waste  
 Compleynnyng of the preterit 5000  
 And the present, that not abit,  
 And of hir oldē vanite;  
 That, but aforē hir she may see  
 In the future somme socour,  
 To leggen hir of hir dolour,  
 To graunte hir tyme of repētaunce,  
 For her synnes to do penaunce,  
 And at the laste so hir governe  
 To wynne the joy that is eterne, 5005  
 Fro which go bakward Youthe her mē  
 In vanite to droune and wade,—  
 For present tyme abidith nought,  
 It is more swift than any thought,  
 So litel while it doth endure  
 That ther nys comptē ne mesure.  
 But how that evere the gamē go  
 Who list to have joie and mirth also  
 Of lovē, be it he or she

5004. MSS. *stondith*.

5022. The conclusion seems to have been fr by the translator; Fr.

'Et qu'ele a sa vie perdue  
 Se du futur n'est secourue,' etc.

So supply after 5022:

Al her lyf she hath forlorn.

5028. *have* (MSS. *love*), read *I have*.

High or lowe, who it be, 5030  
 In fruyt they shuld hem delyte;  
 Her part they may not ellès quyte,  
 To save hem-silf in honeste.  
 And yit full many one I se  
 Of wymmyn, sothly forto seyne,  
 That desire and woldè sayne  
 The play of love, they be so wilde,  
 And not coveite to go with childe.  
 And if with child they be perchaunce,  
 They wole it holde a gret myschaunce;  
 But what-som-ever woo they sele, 5041  
 They wole not pleynè but concele,  
 But if it be ony fool or nyce  
 Whom that Shame hath no justice.  
 For to delyte echone they drawe,  
 That haunte this werke bothe high and  
 lawe,

Sáve sich that arn worth right nought  
 That for money wole be bought.  
 Such love I preise in no wise,  
 Whanne it is given for covetise. 5050  
 I preise no womman though she be wood  
 That yeveth hir-silf for ony good.  
 For litel shulde a man telle,  
 Of hir that wole hir body selle,  
 Bè she mayldè, be she wyf,  
 That quyk wole selle hir, bi hir lif.  
 How faire chere that evere she make  
 He is a wrecche, I undirtake,  
 That loved such one, for swete or sour,  
 Though she hym calle hir paramoure,  
 And laugheth on hym, and makith hym  
 feeste; 5061

For certeynly no such beeste  
 To be loved is not worthy,  
 Or bere the name of druerie.  
 Noon shulde hir please, but he were  
 woode,

That wole dispoile hym of his goode.  
 Yit nevertheles I wole not sey  
 That she for solace and for play  
 Ne may a jewel or other thyng  
 Take of her lovès fre yevyng; 5070  
 But that she aske it in no wise,  
 For drede of shame of covetise.  
 And she of hirs may hym certeyn  
 Withoutè sclandre yeven ageyn,

5051. MSS. *though so be wood*; (?) read *to be  
 good*. 'Men ja certes n'iert fame bone.'

And joyne her hertes to-gidre so  
 In love, and take and yeve also.  
 Trówe not that I wolde hem twynne  
 Whanne in her love ther is no synne;  
 I wole that they to-gedre go,  
 And don al that they han ado, 5080  
 As curteis shulde and debonaire,  
 And in her love beren hem faire,  
 Withoutè vice, bothe he and she,  
 So that alwey in honeste  
 Fro foly love they kepe hem clere,  
 That brenneth hertis with his fere,  
 And that her love in only wise  
 Bé devoide of covetise.  
 Góod love shulde engendrid be  
 Of trewe herte, just and secre, 5090  
 And not of such as sette her thought  
 To have her lust, and ellis nought.  
 So are they caught in lovès lace,  
 Truly for bodily solace,  
 Fleshly delite is so present  
 With thee, that sette all thyne entent,  
 Withoutè more (what shulde I glose?)  
 Fórtó gete and have the Rose,  
 Which makith [thee] so mate and woode,  
 That thou desirest noon other goode. 5100  
 But thou art not an inche the nerre,  
 But evere abidist in sorwe and werre,  
 As in thi facè it is sene;  
 It makith thee bothe pale and lene;  
 Thy myght, thi vertu goth away.  
 A sory geste, in goodè fay,  
 Thou herberest then in thyne inne,  
 The God of Love whanne thou let inne.  
 Wherefore I rede thou shette hym oute,  
 Or he shall greve thee, oute of doute;  
 For to thi profit it wole turne, 5111  
 If he nomore with thee sojourne.  
 In gret myscheef and sorwe sonken  
 Ben hertis that of love arn drenken,  
 As thou peraunter knownen shall  
 Whanne thou hast lost thi tyme all,  
 And spent thy youth in ydilnesse  
 In waste and wofull lustynesse.  
 If thou maist lyve the tyme to se  
 Of love forto delyvered be,

5085. *they*, MSS. *to*.

5107. *then*, MS. *hem*; Th. omits.

5116. *thi tyme*, 'ton tens,' MSS. *the tyme*.

5117. *thy youth*, 'ta jonesce,' MSS. *by thought*.



Thy tyme thou shalt biwepè sore,  
 The whichè never thou maist restore,  
 For tyme lost, as men may see,  
 For no thyng may recured be.  
 And if thou scape yit attè laste  
 Fro Lovè that hath thee so faste  
 Knytt and bounden in his lace,  
 Certeyn I holde it but a grace.  
 For many oon, as it is seyne,  
 Have lost and spent also in veyne 5130  
 In his servise, withoute socour,  
 Body and soule, gool and tresour,  
 Witte and strengthe and eke richesse,  
 Of which they hadde never redresse.'

Thus taught and prechéd hath resoun,  
 But Lovè spiltè hir sermoun,  
 That was so ymped in my thought,  
 That hir doctrine I sette at nought.  
 And yitt ne seide she never a dele  
 That I ne undirstode it wele, 5140  
 Word by word the mater all;  
 But unto love I was so thrall,  
 Which callith over-all his pray,  
 He chasith so my thought al day,  
 And halt myne herte undir his sele,  
 As trust and trew as ony stele.  
 Sô that no devocioun  
 Né hadde I in the sermoun  
 Of dame Resoun, ne of hir rede.  
 It toke no sojour in myne heile, 5150  
 For all yede oute at [that] oon ere,  
 That in that other she dide lere;  
 Fully on me she lost hir lore.  
 Hir speche me grevèd wondir sore.

Than unto hir for ire I seide,  
 For anger as I dide abraide:  
 'Dame, and is it youre wille algate  
 That I not love, but that I hate  
 Allè men, as ye me teche?  
 For if I do astir youre speche, 5160  
 Sith that ye seyne love is not good,  
 Thanne must I nedis say with mood,  
 If I it leve, in hatrede ay  
 To lyven, and voidè love away  
 From me, [and be] a synfull wrecche,

Hated of all that [love that] tecche;  
 I may not go noon other gate,  
 For other must I love or hate.  
 And if I hatè men of newe  
 More than love, it wole me rewe, 517  
 As by youre preching semeth me,  
 For Love no thing ne preisith thee.  
 Ye yève gool counsel sikirly,  
 That prechith me al day that I  
 Shulde not lovès lore alowe,  
 He were a foole wolde you not trowe.  
 In speche also ye hanðme taught  
 Another love that knowen is naught,  
 Which I have herd you not repreve,  
 To love ech other. By youre leve, 51  
 If ye wolde diffyne it me,  
 I wolde gladly here to se,  
 Attè the leest, if I may lere,  
 Of sondry lovès the manere.'

*Raisoun.* 'Cértis freend a fool art thou  
 Whan that thou no thyng wolt allowe,  
 That I for thi profit say.  
 Yit wole I sey thee more in fay,  
 For I am redy at the leste  
 To accomplishè thi requeste. 5  
 But I not where it wole avayle,  
 In veyn perauntre I shal travayle.  
 I love ther is in sondry wise,  
 As I shal thee heere devise.  
 For somme love leful is and good;  
 I mene not that which makith thee wo  
 And bringith thee in many a fitte  
 And ravysshith fro thee al thi witte,  
 It is so mervelouse and queynte;  
 With such love be no more aqueynte.

Love of freendship also ther is,  
 Which makith no man done amys,  
 Of willè knytt bitwixè two,  
 That wole not breke for wele ne woo  
 Which long is likly to contune  
 Whanne wille and goodis ben in comu  
 Grounded by goldis ordinaunce,  
 Hoole withoutè discordaunce;  
 With hem holdyng comunte  
 Of all her goode in charite;  
 That ther be noon excepcioun  
 Thurgh chaungyng of entencioun;  
 That ech helpe other at her neede,

517a. *preisith thee*, 'Tout me vaille Amour  
 denier.'

5144. *al day*, MSS. *ay*; cp. v. 5174.

5145. *halt*, MSS. *holdith*.

5162. *say*, an aphetic form of *assay*, to attempt.

5164. MSS. omit *'a*.

5165. The bracketed words (Skeat's readings)

are necessary to the sense.

And wisely hele bothe word and dede ;  
Trewes of menyng, devoide of slouthes,  
For witt is nought withoute trouthe,  
So that the ton dar all his thought,  
Seyn to his freend and sparé nought  
As to hym silf, withoute dredyng  
To be discovered by wreyng. 5220  
For glad is that conjunccioun  
Whanne ther is noon susspeciou, [Ne lak in hem] whom they wolde  
prove,

That trewe and parfit weren in love.  
For no man may be amiable,  
But if he be so ferme and stable  
What fortune chaunge hym not, ne blynde ;  
But that his freend all-wey hym synde,  
Bothe pore and riche, in oon estate.  
For if his freend, thurgh ony gate, 5230  
Wole compleyne of his poverté,  
He shulde not bide so long til he  
Of his helpyng hym requere ;  
For goode dede done thurgh priere  
Is sold and bought to deere, I wys,  
To hert that of grette valour is.  
For hert fulfilled of gentilnesse  
Can yvel demenç his distresse,  
And man, that worthy is of name,  
To asken often hath gret shame. 5240  
A good man brenneth in his thought  
For shamé, whanne he axeth ought  
He hath gret thought, and dredeth ay  
For his disese, whanne he shal play  
His freend, lest that he warnéd be,  
Til that he preve his stabilte.  
But whanne that he hath founden oon,  
That trusty is and trewe as stone,  
And [hath] assaied hym at alle, 5250  
And founde hym stedefast as a walle  
And of his freendship be certeyne,  
He shal hym shewe bothe joye and  
peyne,

And all that [he] dar thyne or sey,  
Withouté shame, as he wel may.  
For how shulde he a-shamed be  
Of sich one as I toldé thee ?  
For whanne he woot his secre thought,

5223. *Tres mors* (meurs) avoir doivent et seulent  
Qui parfontement amer veulent.

The bracketed words were supplied by Professor Skeat.

The thridde shal knowe therof right  
nought ;

For tweyne of noumbre is bet than thre  
In every counsell and secre. 5260  
Repreve he dredeth never a deele  
Who that bisett his wordis wele.  
For every wise man, out of drede,  
Can kepe his tunge til he se nede ;  
And foolés can not hokle her tunge—  
“ A foolés belle is sooné runge.”  
Yit shal a trewe freend do more,  
To helpe his felowe of his sore,  
And socoure hym, whanne he hath neede,  
In all that he may done in deede ; 5270  
And gladder [be] that he hym plesith,  
Than his felowe, that he esith.  
And if he do not his requeste,  
He shal as mochel hym moleste  
As his felow, for that he  
May not fulfille his volunte  
Fully, as he hath requered.  
If bothe the hertis Love hath fered,  
Joy and woo they shull departe  
And take evenly ech his parte ; 5280  
Half his anoy he shal have ay,  
And comfort [him] what that he may ;  
And of his blisse parte shal he,  
If lové wel departed be.

And whilom of this unyte  
Spake Tullius in a ditec,  
Man shuldé maken his requeste  
Unto his freend that is honeste,  
And he goodly shulde it fulfille,  
But if the more were out of skile ; 5290  
And other wise not graunte therto,  
Except oonly in causes twoo ;  
If men his freend to deth wolde drive,  
Late hym be bisy to save his lyve ;  
Also if men wolen hym assayle  
Of his wurship to make hym faile,  
And hyndren hym of his renoun ;

5274. *He*. Perhaps read *That* or *It*, as a reflexive verb *molest* is unusual.

5282. *comfort him* (MSS. omit *him*), ‘le conforte.’

5284. *wel* (MSS. *wole*), ‘a droit.’

5287. *Man* (MSS. *And*) *shulde*, one should ‘devons.’

5290. MSS. *But it*. *more* is either a subset meaning *request*, or a similar mistake to that in

v. 4943.

5292. *causes* (MSS. *cause*), *cases*.

Late hym, with full entencioun,  
His dever done in eche degre  
That his freend ne shaméd be, 5300  
In this two causes with his myght,  
Taking no kepe to skile nor right  
As ferre as love may hym excuse ;  
This ought no man to refuse.  
This love, that I have tolde to thee,  
Is no thing contrarie to me ;  
This wole I that thou folowe wele,  
And leve the tother everydele ;  
This love to vertu all entendith,  
The tothir foolés blent and shendith. 5310

Another love also there is,  
That is contrarie unto this ;  
Which desire is so constreyned  
That [it] is but willé feyned.  
Away fro trouthe it doth so varie,  
That to good love it is contrarie,  
For it maymeth in many wise  
Siké hertis with coveitise.  
All in wynnyng and in profit  
Sich love settith his delite. 5320  
This love so hangeth in balaunce,  
That if it lese his hope perchaunce  
Of lucre that he is sett upon,  
It wole faile and quenche anoon.  
For no man may be amerous,  
Ne in his lyvyng virtuous,  
But he lovè more in moodle  
Men for him-silf than for her goodde.  
For love that profit doth abide  
Is fals, and bit not in no tyde 5330  
[This] lovè cometh of Dame Fortune,  
That litel whilè wole contune ;  
For it shal chaungen wonder soone,  
And take Eclips ; right as the moone  
Whanne he is from us lett  
Thurgh erthé, that bitwixe is sett  
The sonne and hir, as it may falle,  
Be it in partie or in all.  
The shadowe maketh her bemys merke,  
And hir hornes to shewe derke 5340  
That part where she hath lost hir lyght  
Of Phebus fully, and the sight ;  
Til, whanne the shadowe is overpaste,

She is enlumyned ageyn as faste  
Thurgh the brightnesse of the sonnè bemes,  
That yeveth to hir ageyne hir lemes.  
That love is right of sich nature,  
Now is faire, and now obscure,  
Now bright, now clipsi of manere,  
And whilom dymme, and whilom clere.  
As soone as poverte gynneth take, 535  
With mantel and [with] wedis blake  
Hidith of love the light away,  
That into nyght it turneth day ;  
It may not see riches shyne,  
Till the blaké shadowes fyne.  
For whanne riches shyneth bright  
Love recovereth ageyn his light,  
And whanne it failith, he wole flit ;  
And as he groweth, so groweth it. 536  
Of this love here what I sey :  
The richè men are lovèd ay,  
And namely tho that sparand bene,  
That wole not wasshe her hertes clene  
Of the filthe, nor of the vice  
Of gredy brennyng avarice.

The riche man full fonnèd is y-wys,  
That weneth that he loved is ;  
If that his herte it undirstode,  
It is not he, it is his goode ; 537  
He may wel witen in his thought  
His good is loved and he right nought.  
For if he be a nygard eke,  
Men wole not sette by hym a leke,  
But haten hym, this is the sothe.  
Lo, what profit his catell doth ?  
Of every man that may hym see,  
It geteth hym nought but enmyte.  
But he amende hym of that vice,  
And knowe hym silf, he is not wys. 538  
Certys he shulde ay freendly be,  
To gete him love also ben free,  
Or ellis he is not wise ne sage,  
Nomore than is a gote ramage.

That he not loveth his dede provetl  
Whan he his riches so wel loveth  
That he wole hide it ay and spare,  
His poré freendis sene forfare  
To kepen alway his purpose,

5301. MSS. *caas*.5327. Perhaps insert *if* after *But*.5342. Such displacements as this of *and* were  
common in 15th century verse.5351. *take*, 'l'asuble.'5353. *Hidith*. Skeat reads *It hit*, and perh.  
rightly.5379. *hym*, MSS. *hymself*.5380. *akway*, MSS. *ay* ; cp. v. 5144.

fil for drede his yen close, 5390  
 And til a wikked duth hym take.  
 Hym hadde lever a-sondre shake  
 And late hise lymes a-sondre ryve;  
 Than leve his riches in his lyve;  
 He thenkith parte it with no man.  
 Certayn no love is in hym than;  
 How shuld love withynne hym be,  
 Whanne in his herte is no pite?  
 That he trespasseth wel I wat,  
 For ech man knowth his estate. 5400  
 For wel hym ough to be reproved  
 That loveth nought, ne is not loved.  
 But sen we arn to fortune comen,  
 And hath oure sermoun of hir nomen,  
 A wondir will y telle thee now;  
 Thou herdist never sich oon I trowe.  
 I note where thou me leven shall,  
 Though sothfastnesse it be at all.  
 As it is writen and is soth,  
 That unto men more profit doth 5410  
 The froward fortune and contraire,  
 Than the swote and debonaire;  
 And if thee thyne it is doutable  
 It is thurgh argument provable;  
 For the debonaire and softe  
 Filsith and bigilith ofte.  
 For lyche a moder she can cherishe,  
 And mylken [hem] as doth a norys;  
 And of hir goodle to hem deles,  
 And yeveth hem parte of her joweles,  
 With grete riches and dignite; 5421  
 And hem she hoteth stabilite  
 In a state that is not stable,  
 But chaungynge ay and variable;  
 And fedith hym with glorie veyne,  
 In worldly blisse noncerteyne.  
 Whanne she hem settith on hir whele  
 Thanne weneth they to be right wele,  
 And in so stable state withall  
 That never they weneth forto falle. 5430  
 And whanne they sette so high be,  
 They wene to have in certeynte

Of hertly freendis so grete noubre  
 That no thyng myght her state encombre.  
 They trust hem so on every side,  
 Wenying with hem they wolde abide  
 In every perell and myschaunce,  
 Without chaunge or variaunce  
 Bothe of catell and of goode.  
 And also forto spende her bloode, 5440  
 And all her membris forto spille,  
 Only to fulfille her wille.  
 They maken it hole in many wise,  
 And boten hem her full servise,  
 How soré that it do hem smerte,  
 Into her naked sherte.  
 Herte and all so hole they yive,  
 For the tyme that they may lyve.  
 Só that with her flaterie,  
 They maken foolis glorie 5450  
 Of her wordis spekyng,  
 And han ther-of a rejoysyng,  
 And trowe hem as the Evangile:  
 And it is all falsheede and gile,  
 As they shal astirward se  
 Whanne they arn falle in poverté,  
 And ben of good and catell bare;  
 Thanne shulde theysene whofreendis ware.  
 For of an hundred certeynly,  
 Nor of a thousande full scarsly, 5460  
 Ne shal they fynde unethis oon  
 Whanne poverté is comen upon.  
 For this Fortune that I of telle  
 With men whanne hir lust to dwelle,  
 Makith hem to leese her conisaunce,  
 And norishith hem in ignoraunce.  
 But froward Fortune and perverse,  
 Whanne high estat is she doth reverse,  
 And maketh hem to tumble doune  
 Of hir whele, with sodeyn tourne, 5470  
 And from her riches doth hem fle,  
 And plongeth hem in poverté,  
 As a stepmoder envious  
 And leieth a plastre dolorous  
 Unto her hertis wounded egre,  
 Which is not tempered with vynegre

5393. MSS. late all.  
 5390. MSS. wel I wot.  
 5401. For, (T) read Full, 'moult.'  
 5405. Cp. Boec, 583 ff.  
 5408. as all (MSS. it all), altogether.  
 5419. deles, (T) dele infinitive construed with  
 can and rhyming with joweles; cp. v. 209a. If so,  
 read yere in v. 5420.  
 5426. In, MSS. And, Fr. 'en.'

5433. so, MSS. to, Fr. 'tant.'  
 5452. ther-of, MSS. cheer of, (Kaluza).  
 5463. this, MSS. thus, 'ceste.'  
 5470. Of, off.  
 5473. The And of next verse seems to belong  
 before As, else v. 5474 precedes v. 5473.  
 Et lor assiet comme marastre  
 Au cuer un dolorous emplastre.

But with poverte and indigence—  
 Forto shewe by experience  
 That she is Fortune verelye,  
 In whom no man shulde affye, 5480  
 Nor in hir yestis have fauence,  
 She is so full of variance.  
 Thus kan she maken high and lowe,  
 Whanne they from richesse arn [y]-throwe,  
 Fully to knowen without were  
 Freend of affect and freend of chere;  
 And which in love were trewe and stable,  
 And whiche also were variable,  
 After Fortune her goddesse,  
 In poverte outhir in richesse. 5490  
 For all she yeveth here, out of drede,  
 Unhappe bereveth it in dede;  
 For in-fortune late not oon  
 Of freendis, whanne Fortune is gone—  
 I mene tho freendis that wole fle  
 Anoon, as entreth poverte;  
 And yit they wole not leve hem so,  
 But in ech placé where they go,  
 They calle hem "wrecchē," scorne, and  
 blame,  
 And of her myshappe hem diffame. 5500  
 And namely siche as in richesse  
 Pretendid most of stablenessse,  
 Whanne that they sawe hym sette on lofte,  
 And were of hym socoured ofte,  
 And most yholpe in all her neede;  
 But now they take no maner heede,  
 But seyn in voice of flaterie,  
 That now apperith her folye  
 Over-all where so they fare,  
 And syngē "Go fare-wel, feldefare." 5510  
 All suchē freendis I be-hewe,  
 For of trewe ther be to fewe,  
 But sothfast freendis, what so bitide,  
 In every fortune wolen abide;  
 Thei han her hertis in suche noblesse  
 That they nyl love for no richesse,  
 Nor for that fortune may hem sende

5486. *affect*, see *New English Dictionary*, s.v.  
 5487. Cp. Chaucer's *Fortune*, v. 34, and *Flouce*,  
 590 ff.

5491. *she*, MSS. *that*; 'Car ceus que beneurte  
 donne.'

5493. *late*, (?) *leveth*, 'remain.'

5493. *oon* is subject of *late*, 'remains.'

5502. MSS. *pretendith*.

5510. *Go fare-wel*, etc., v. *New English Dict.*  
 under *Farewell*.

Thei wolen hem socoure and defende,  
 And chaunge for softe ne for sore;  
 For who is freend loveth evermore. 5520  
 Though men draweswerde his freend to sle  
 He may not hewe her love a-two,  
 But in case that I shall sey;  
 For pride and ire lese it he may,  
 And for reprove by nycete,  
 And discovering of privite;  
 With tongē woundyng as feloun,  
 Thurgh venomous detraccioun.  
 Frende in this case wole gone his way.  
 For no thyng greve hym more ne may  
 And for nought ellis wole he fle, 5530  
 If that he love in stabilite.  
 And certeyn he is wel bigone,  
 Among a thousand that syndith oon;  
 For ther may be no richesse  
 Ageyns frendshipp of worthynesse;  
 For it ne may so high atteigne  
 As may the valoure, soth to seyne,  
 Of hym that loveth trew and well.  
 Frendshipp is more than is catell, 5540  
 For freend in court ay better is,  
 Than peny in purs certis.  
 And Fortune myshappynge,  
 Whanne upon men she is fallyng  
 Thurgh mysturnyng of hir chaunce,  
 And casteth hem oute of balaunce,  
 She makith thurgh hir adversite  
 Men full clerly forto se  
 Hym that is freend in existence,  
 From hym that is by apparence. 5550  
 For yn-fortune makith anoon,  
 To knowe thy freendis fro thy foyn,  
 By experience right as it is.  
 The which is more to preise y-wis,  
 Than is myche richesse and tresour.  
 For more clothe profit and valour  
 Poverté and such adversite  
 Bi fer than doth prosperite;  
 For the toon yeveth conyaunce,  
 And the tother ignoraunce. 5560

And thus in poverte is in dele  
 Tróute declared for falsheed,  
 For seynte freendis it wole declare,  
 And trewe also what wey they fare.

5519. *And*. *Ne* with semicolon after *it*  
 would make better sense.

5544. *fallyng*, MS. *fablyng*, 'cheat.'

For whanne he was in his richesse,  
 these ffeendis ful of doublenesse  
 offrid hym in many wise  
 Iért, and body, and servise;  
 What wolde he thanne have to ha bought  
 to knowen openly her thought, 5570  
 That he now hath so clerly seen?  
 The lasse bigiled he shulde have bene,  
 And he hadde thanne perceyved it;  
 But richesse nold not late hym witte.  
 Nel more avauntage doth hym thanne,  
 Sith that it makith hym a wise man,  
 The gret myscheef that he receyveth,  
 Than doth richesse that hym deceyveth.  
 Ychesse riché ne makith nought  
 hym that on tresour sette his thought,  
 For richesse stonte in suffisaunce 5581  
 And no-tyng in habundaunce;  
 For suffisaunce all oonly  
 Makith men to lyvé riché.  
 For he that at mycches tweyne,  
 Ne valued [is] in his demeine,  
 Lyveth more at ese, and more is riche,  
 Than doth he that is chliche,  
 And in his berne hath, soth to seyn,  
 An hundred mowis of whete greyne, 5590  
 Though he be chapman or marchaunte,  
 And have of golde many [a] besaunte.  
 For in the getyng he hath such woo,  
 And in the keypyng drede also,  
 And sette evermore his bisynesse  
 Forto encrese, and not to lesse,  
 Forto aument and multiplic.  
 And though on hepis that lyc hym bye  
 Yit never shal maké his richesse  
 Asseth unto his gredynesse. 5600  
 But the povere that recchith nought,  
 Save of his lyfode, in his thought,  
 Which that he getith with his travaile,

5569. *give*, MSS. *give*, p. pt. of *give*. Read to be as one word. The thought is borrowed from Boethius; see Chaucer's *River*, 590.

5573. *And*, if.

5577. *receyveth*, MSS. *perceyveth*, 'recoit.'

5585. *at*, MSS. *hath*. 'Car tex n'a pas voillant deus miches.'

5586. *Ne valued is*, MSS. *Ne value*; cp. v. above.

5590. *mowis*, MSS. *minis*, 'mins.'

5598. *that*, i.e. the gold; (?) read *they*, referring to the *besauntes*.

5599. He shall never make his riches satisfy (*asseth*) his greed.

He dredith nought that it shall faile,  
 Though he have lytel worldis goode,  
 Mete, and drynke, and esy foode,  
 Upon his travel and lyvyng,  
 And also suffisaunt clothyng.  
 Or if in syknesse that he fall,  
 And lothé mete and drynke withall, 5610  
 Though he have not his mete to bye  
 He shal bithynke hym hastily  
 To putte hym oute of all daunger,  
 That he of mete hath no myster;  
 Or that he may with lytel eke  
 Be founden, while that he is seke;  
 Or that men shull hym berne in haste,  
 To lyvé til his syknesse be paste,  
 To somme maysondewe beside; 5619  
 Or he caste nought what shal hym bitide—  
 He thenkith nought that evere he shall  
 Into ony syknessé fall.  
 And though it falle, as it may be,  
 That all be-tymé spare shall he  
 As mochel, as shal to hym suffice  
 While he is sike in ony wise,  
 He doth [that] for that he wole be  
 Cōtente with his poverte,  
 Withouté nede of ony man. 5630  
 So myche in litel have he can,  
 He is apaid with his fortune;  
 And for he nyl be importune  
 Unto no wight, ne honerous,  
 Nor of her goodés covetous,  
 Therefore he spareth, it may wel bene,  
 His pore estate forto sustene.  
 Or if hym lust not forto spare,  
 But suffrith forth as not ne ware,  
 Atte last it hapneth as it may  
 Right unto his lasté day, 5640  
 And taketh the world as it wolde be;  
 For evere in herté thenkith he,  
 The sonner that [the] deth hym slo,  
 To paradys the sonner go  
 He shal, there forto lyve in blisse,

5617. *berne* for *beren*; cp. *myxnes*, v. 6496.

5620. Or supplied from Fr. 'ou.'

5638, 5639. Fr.

Ainsi viengnent il froit et il chaut  
 En la fin qui morir le face;

so perhaps read:

But suffrith frost as hot ne ware,  
 He lat it hapne as it may.

5641. MSS. *take*.

Where that he shal noo good misse ;  
 Thider he hopith God shal hym sende,  
 Aftir his wrecchid lyves ende.  
 Pictagoras hym silf rehersedes  
 In a book, that the Golden Verses 5650  
 Is clepid for the nobilite  
 Of the honourable ditee,  
 That whanne thou goste thy body fro,  
 Fre in the eir thou shalt up go,  
 And leven al humanite,  
 And purely lyve in deite.  
 He is a foole withouten were  
 That trowh have his Countre heere ;  
 In erthe is not oure Countre— 5659  
 That may these clerkis seyn, and see  
 In Boice of Consolacioun,  
 Where it is makéd mencoun  
 Of oure countre pleyn at the ye  
 By teching of Philosophie ;  
 Where lewid men myght lerè witte,  
 Who so that wolde translaten it.  
 If he be sich that can wel lyve  
 Aftir his renté may hym yive,  
 And not desireth more to have,  
 Than may fro poverté hym save. 5670  
 A wise man'seide, as we may seen,  
 Is no man wrecche but he it wene,  
 Be he kyng, knyght, or ribaude ;  
 And many a ribaude is mery and baude  
 That swynkith and berith bothe day and  
 nyght  
 Many a burthen of gret myght,  
 The whiché doth hym las-e offense  
 For he suffrith in pacience.  
 They laugh and dauncé, trippe and synge,  
 And ley not up for her lyvyng, 5680  
 But in the taverne all dispendlith  
 The wynnyng that God hem sendith.  
 Thanne goth he fardeles forto bere,  
 With as good chere as he hidde ere ;  
 To swynke and traveile he not feynith,  
 For for to robben he disdeynith ;  
 But right anon aftir his swynke

5650. (?) Omit *the*; there is no article in the Fr. The book referred to is the *Aurra Carmina*, extant in the Middle Ages as a work of Pythagoras.

5653. That, MSS. *Thanne*.

5661. of *Consolacioun*, 'de Consolacione.' Jehan de Meung refers to I, pr. v.

5663. MSS. *eye*.

5672. MSS. *wrecched*; cp. Boece, 394.

He goth to taverne forto drynke.  
 All these ar riche in abundaunce,  
 That can thus havé suffisaunce  
 Wel more than can an usurere,  
 As God wel knowith, withoute were  
 For an usurer, so God me se,  
 Sha! nevere for richesse riché bē,  
 But evermore pore and indigent,  
 Scarce and gredy in his entent.  
 For soth it is, whom it displesse,  
 Ther may no marchaunt lyve at ese.  
 His herte in sich a wētre is sett,  
 That it quyk brenneth more to gete,  
 Ne never shal enough have geten,  
 Though he have gold in gerners yet  
 For to be nedly he dredith sore,  
 Wherefore to geten more and more  
 He sette his herte and his desire.  
 So hote he brennyth in the fire,  
 Of coveitise, that makith hym wood  
 To purchase other mennés goode.  
 He undirfongith a gret peyne  
 That undirtakith to drynke up Seyn  
 For the more he drynkith ay  
 The more he leveth, the soth to say  
 This is thurst of fals getyng,  
 That laste ever in coveityng,  
 And the angwisshe and distresse,  
 With the fire of gredynesse.  
 She fightith with hym ay and stryve  
 That his herte a-sondre ryveth ;  
 Such gredynessé hym assaylith,  
 That whanne he most hath, most he fe  
 Phisiciens and advocates  
 Gōne right by the samé yates ;  
 They selle her science for wynnyng,  
 And haunte her crafte for gret gety  
 Her wynnyng is of such swetnesse,  
 That if a man falle in sikenesse,  
 They are full glad for her encrease ;  
 For by her wille, withouté lees,  
 Everiché man shuldé be seke,  
 And though they die, theysette nota  
 After, whanne they the gold have t  
 Full litel care for hem they make ;  
 They wolde that fourty were seke ato

5701. *enough have*, MSS. *though h* (Kaluza).

5706. Cp. Boece, 325.

5713. Kaluza reads *This* for *Thus*.

e ii hundred in flesh and bony,  
 nd yit ii thousand, as I gesse,  
 orto encrece her richesse.  
 hey wole not worchen in nō wise,  
 út for lucre and covetise.  
 or *Physic* gynneth first by 'Fy'  
 (The *Phisicien* also sotliely);  
 and sithen it goth for "Fy" to "Sy,"  
 'o truste on hem [it] is foly,  
 or they nyl, in no maner gre,  
 nō right nought for charite.

Eke in the samē tēcte ar sette  
 All tho that prechen forto gete  
 Nōrshipes, honour, and richesse.  
 her hertis arn in grete distresse,  
 [hat folk [ne] lyve not holiy.  
 But aboven all specially  
 sich as prechen [in] veynglorie,  
 And toward god have no memorie,  
 But forth as ypocritēs trace,  
 And to her soul's deth purchase  
 An outward shewing holynesse,  
 Though they be full of cursidnesse,  
 Not liche to the apostles twelve.  
 They deceyve other and hem selve;  
 Bigilēd is the giler thanne,  
 For prechyng of a cursēd man  
 Though [it] to other may profite,  
 Hymself it vailith not a myte.  
 For ofte goode predicacioun  
 Cōmeth of evel entencioun.  
 To hym not vailith his preching,  
 All helpe he other with his teching.  
 For where they good ensaumple take,  
 There is he with veynglorie shake.  
 But late us leven these prechoures,  
 And speke of hem that in her toures  
 Hepe up her gold, and fastē shette,  
 And sore theron her hertē sette.  
 They neither lovē God ne drede,  
 They kepē more than it is nede,  
 And in her baggēs sore it bynde;

5739-5742. The key of the pun is found in v. 5742: 'Phynyc' goes from 'fying' = trusting, to 'sying' = sighing and groaning. The joke was probably an old one in our author's time, for it depends for its fullest point on the earlier form of 'sien', viz. 'sien', still used by Chaucer, and by the translator of the 'A' part of the *Romaunt* (cp. v. 1641).

5755. *Am*, MSS. *And*.

5762. MSS. *availith*; cp. v. 5765.

Out of the sonne, and of the wynde.  
 They putte up more than nedē ware.  
 Whanne they seen pore folk forfare,  
 For hunger die, and for cold quake,  
 God can wel vengeaunce therof take. 5780  
 Thre gret myschevēs hem assailith,  
 And thus in gadring ay travaylith:  
 With mychel peyne they wyne richesse,  
 And drede hem holdith in distresse  
 To kepē that they gadre faste,  
 With sorwe they leve it at the laste;  
 With sorwe they bothē dye and lyve  
 That unto richesse her hertis yive.  
 And in defeaute of love it is,  
 As it shewith ful wel I-wys;  
 For if this gredy, the sothe to seyn,  
 Lovedēf and were loved ageyn, 5790  
 And goodē Love regned over-all,  
 Such wikkidnesse ne shuldē fall.  
 But he shulde yeve, that most good hadde,  
 To hem that weren in nede bistadde;  
 And lyve withoutē false usure,  
 For charite, full clene and pure.  
 If they hem yevē to goodnesse,  
 Defending hem from ydelnesse, 5800  
 In all this world thanne pover noon  
 We shuldē fynde, I trowe not oon.  
 But chaungēd is this world unstable,  
 For love is over-all vendable;  
 We se that no man loveth nowē,  
 But for wynnyng and for prowē.  
 And love is thrallēd in servage,  
 Whanne it is sold for avauntage;  
 Yit wommen wole her bodyes selle—  
 Suche soules goth to the devel of helle.

Whanne Love hadde told hem his entent,

5801. *power*, MSS. *poire*; cp. v. 6489.  
 5811. The translation is here interrupted, ll. 5137-10694 of the French (*Michel*, i. p. 171, l. 5876—p. 355, l. 11443; *Marleau*, ii. p. 70, l. 5397—iii. p. 48, l. 11060) not having been translated. The following is a synopsis (abridged from Bell's Chaucer) of the missing portion:—Reason shows the vanity of natural love and the capriciousness of Fortune, and exhorts l'Amant to fix his heart on Charity. l'Amant maintains his loyalty to the God of Love, and Reason leaves him. He then consults l'Ami, who advises him to approach Bel-Acueil's prison by a road called Trop-Donner, constructed by Largesse. l'Ami then gives l'Amant directions as to how he is to conduct himself towards his mistress and his wife, and leaves him to pursue his adventure. l'Amant



The baronage to councel went ; 5812  
 In many sentences they fille,  
 And dyversly they seide hir wille.  
 But aftir discorde they accorded,  
 And her accord to Love recorded :  
 'Sir,' seiden they, 'we ben atone  
 Bi evene accorde of everichone,  
 Outaké Richesse al ononly,  
 That sworne hath ful hauteynly, 5820  
 That she the castell nyl not assaile,  
 Ne smyte a stroke in this bataile  
 With darte ne macé, spere ne knyf,  
 For man that spekiþ or berith the lyf,  
 And blameth youre emprise, I-wys,  
 And from oure hoost departed is,  
 Atte lest wey as in this plyte,  
 So hath she this man in dispite.  
 For, she seith, he ne loved hir never,  
 And therefore she wole hate hym evere.  
 For he wole gadre no tresoure, 5831  
 He hath hir wrath for evermore ;  
 He agylte hir never in other caas,  
 Lo, heere all hoodly his trespas.  
 She seith wel that this other day  
 He axide hir leve to gone the way  
 That is clepid "To-moche-yevyng,"  
 And spak full faire in his praiyng.  
 But whanne he praide hir, pore was he,  
 Therefore she warnid hym the entre ; 5840  
 Ne yit is he not thryven so  
 That he hath geten a peny or two,  
 That quytyly is his owne, in holde.  
 Thus hath Richesse full of all[é] tolde ;  
 And whanne Richesse us this recorded,  
 Withouten hir we ben accorded.  
 And we fynde in oure accordaunce  
 That False-Semblant and Abstinence,  
 With all the folk of her bataille,  
 Shull at the hyndre gate assaile, 5850  
 That Wikkid-Tunge hath in kepyng  
 With his Normans full of janglyng ;  
 And with hem Curtesie and Largesse,  
 That shull shewe her hardynesse  
 To the oldé wyf, that kepte so harde  
 Fair-Welcomyng withynne her warde ;

approaches the castle, but Richesse bars his entrance. The Girl of Love comes to his assistance, first convoking a council of his barons. Here the English begins again.

5850. *Fair-Welcomyng*, hitherto called *Blat-poil*.

Thanne shal Delite and Wel-Heelyng  
 Fondé Shame adowne to bryngé,  
 With all her oost early and late  
 They shull assaile that ilké gate ; 5  
 Agaynes Drede shall Hardynesse  
 Assaile, and also Sikernesse  
 With all the folk of her ledyng,  
 That never wist what was fleying ;  
 Fraunchise shall fight and eke Pite  
 With Daunger, full of Cruelte ;  
 Thus is youre hoost ordeyned wele.  
 Doune shall the castel every-dele,  
 If everiché do his entent,  
 Só that Venus be present,  
 Youré modir full of vesselage  
 That can ynough of such usage.  
 Withouten hir may no wight spede  
 This werk, neithir for word ne deede  
 Therefore is good ye for hir sende,  
 For thurgh hir may this werk amende  
 'Lordynges, my modir, the godde  
 That is my lady and my maistresse,  
 Nis not [at] all at my willyng,  
 Ne doth not all my desiryng ;  
 Yit can she some tyme done labour,  
 Whanne that hir lust, in my socour,  
 As my nede is forto a-cheve.  
 But now I thanke hir not to geve ;  
 My modir is she, and of childehede,  
 I bothé worshiþe hir and drede.  
 For who that dredith sire ne dame,  
 Shal it abyte in body or name.  
 And netheles yit kunné we  
 Sende aftir hir if nedé be ;  
 And were she nygh she comen woldé  
 I trowe that no thyng myght hir holé  
 Mi modir is of gret prowessse,  
 She hath tan many a forteresse,  
 That cost hath many a pounce, er th  
 There I nas not present y-wis ;  
 And yit men seide it was my dede.  
 But I come never in that stede,  
 Ne me ne likith, so mote I the,  
 That suche toures ben take withoute  
 For why me thenkith that in no wis  
 It may bene clepid but marchandise

5883. *As my nede is*. Kalusa reads *as neede*, and perhaps rightly ; 'mes bevoi  
'affair', read as 'mes besoignes' ('needs').  
 similar translation in *Boece*, 147.  
 5886. MSS. *she drede*.

So bye a courser, blak or white,  
And pay therfore, than art thou quyte;  
The marchaunt owith thee right nought,  
Né thou hym, whanne thou it bought.

Wole not selleng clepé "yevyng,"  
For selleng axeth no guerdonyng,  
Here lith no thank ne no merite;  
That oon goth from that other al quyte.

But this selleng is not semblable;  
For whanne his hors is in the stable,  
He may it selle ageyn, parde,  
And wynnen on it, such happe may be;  
All may the man not leese I-wys,  
For at the leest the skynne is his.  
On ellis if it so bitide

That he wole kepe his hors to ride,  
Yit is he lord ay of his hors.  
But thilké chaffare is wel wors,  
There Venus entremetith ought.

For who-so such chaffare hath bought,  
He shal not worchen so wisely,  
That he ne shal leese al outerly  
Bothe his money and his chaffare.

But the seller of the waré  
The prys and profit havé shall,  
Certeyn the biér shal leese all.  
For he ne can so dere it bye

To have lordship and full maistrie,  
Ne have power to maké lettynge  
Neithir for yift ne for prechyng,  
That of his chaffare, maugre his,

Another shal have asmoche, I-wis,  
If he wole yeve as myche as he,  
Of what contrey so that he be;

Or for right nought, so happe may,  
If he can flater hir to hir pay.

Bén thanne siché marchauntz wise?  
Nó but foolés in every wise,  
Whanne they bye sich thyng wilfully  
There as they leese her good fully.

But natheles this dar I say,  
My modir is not wont to pay,  
For she is neither so fool ne nyce  
To entremete hir of sich vyce.  
But trusteth wel he shal pay all,  
That répent of his bargeyn shall,

5915. *All is object of leese.*  
5931. *make lettynge, i.e. put hindrance in his way.*

5948. *fully, MSS. folly, 'ou tant perdent.'*

5947. *MSS. trust.*

Whanne poverte putte hym in distresse,  
All were he scolar to Richesse,

That is for me in gret yernyng  
Whanne she assentith to my wyllyng.

But [by] my modir seint Venus,  
And by hir fader Saturnus,  
That hir engendride by his lyf  
(But not upon his weddid wyf)—

Yit wole I more unto you swere  
To make this thyng the sikerere:—  
Now by that feith and that leaute  
That I owe to all my britheren fre,

Of which ther nys wight undir heven  
That kan her fadris names neven,  
So dyverse and so many ther be,  
That with my modir have be prive;

Yit woffie I swere for sikirnesse,  
The pole of helle to my witnesse,  
Now drynke I not this yeere clarre,  
If that I lye or forsworne be!

(For of the goddes the usage is,  
That who so hym forswereth amys  
Shal that yeer drynke no clarre.)

Now have I sworne ynough pardee,  
If I forswere me, thanne am I lorne—  
But I wole never be forsworne.

Syth Richesse hath me failed heere,  
She shal abyte that trespas dere,  
Atté leest wey but hir arme  
With swerd, or sparth or [with] gysarme.

For certis sith she loveth not me  
Fro thilké tyme that she may se  
The castell and the tour to-shake,  
In sory tyme she shal awake.

If I may grype a riché man,  
I shal so pulle hym, if I can,  
That he shal in a fewé stoundes  
Leese all his markis and his poundis;

I shal hym make his pens outslynge,  
Bút they in his gerner sprynge.  
Oure maydens shal eke pluk hym so,  
That hym shal neden fetheres mo,

And make hym selle his londe to spende  
But he the bet kunne hym defende.  
Pore men han maad her lord of me;

5958. *sikerere, MSS. seuerer, (Kaluza's emendation) based on vv. 6147, 7308.*

5959. *leaute, MSS. beaute. The same error occurs in v. 6006.*

5976. *dere, MSS. ful dere, 'chiers.'*

5988. *'S'il ne li sourdent en greniers.'*

Al though they not so myghty be  
That they may fede me in delite,  
I wole not have hem in despise;  
No good man hateth hem as I gesse.  
For chynche and feloun is richesse;  
That so can chase hym and dispise,  
And hem defoule in sondry wise. 6000  
They loven full bet, so God me  
spede,

Than doth the riché chynchy gnele;  
And ben in goode feith more stable,  
And trewer and more serviable.  
And therfore it suffisith me  
Her goodé herte and her leaute.  
They han on me sette all her thought,  
And therfore I forgete hem nought;  
I wolde hem bringe in grete noblesse,  
If that I were god of richesse, 6010  
As I am god of love sothely,  
Sich routhe upon her pleynt have I.  
Therfore I must his socour be  
That peyneth hym to serven me,  
For if he deide for love of this,  
Thanne semeth in me no love ther is.

'Sir,' seide they, 'soth is every deel  
That ye reherce, and we wote wel  
Thilke oth to holde is resonable.  
For it is good and covenable 6020  
That ye on riché men han sworne;  
For, Sir, this wote we wel biforne:  
If Riché men done you homage,  
That is, as foolcs done, outrage.  
But ye shull not forsworen be,  
Ne lette, therfore, to drynke clarre  
Or pyment makid fresh and newe.  
Ladies shull hem such pepir brewc,  
If that they fall into her laas, 6029  
That they for woo mowe seyn, "Allas!"  
Ladies shullen evere so curteis be,  
That they shal quyte youre oth all  
free.

Ne sekith never othir vicaire,  
For they shal speke with hem so faire,  
That ye shal holde you paid full welc,  
Though ye you medle never a dele.  
Late ladies worché with her thyngis  
They shal hem telle so sele tidynges,  
And move hem eke so many requestis,  
Bi flateri, that not honest is; 6040

6002. MSS. *rede for mede*.

And therto yeve hym such thankynges  
What with kysying, and with talkynges  
That certis, if they trowed be,  
Shal never lève hem londe ne fee,  
That it nyl as the moeble fare  
Of which they first delyverid are. 60  
Now may ye telle us all youre wille,  
And we youre heestés shal fulfille.

But Fals-Semblaunt dar not for dre  
Of you, Sir, medle hym of this dede;  
For he seith that ye ben his foo,  
He note if ye wole wërche hym woo.  
Wherfore we pray you alle, Beausire,  
That ye forgyve hym now your Ire,  
And that he may dwelle as your man  
With Abstinence, his dere lemman.  
This oure accord and oure wille now  
'Parfay,' seide Love, 'I graunte it you  
I wole wel holde hym for my man,  
Now late hym come.' And he forth  
'Fals-Semblant,' quod Love, 'in this  
I take thee heere to my servise,  
That thou oure freendis helpe away,  
And hyndreth hem neithir nyght ne  
But do thy myght hem to releve;  
And eke oure enemyes that thou grev  
Thyne be this myght, I graunte it the  
My Kyng of Harlotes shalt thou be,  
We wole that thou have such honour.  
Certeine thou art a fals traitour,  
And eke a theef; sith thou were born  
A thousand tyme thou art forsworne;  
But nethéles in oure heryng,  
To putte oure folk out of doutyng  
I bidde thee teche hem, wostowe how  
Bi somme general signé now,  
In what place thou shalt founden be,  
If that men had myster of thee,  
And how men shal thee best espye;  
For thee to knowe is gret maistrie.  
Téle in what place is thyn haundyng.  
'Sir, I have felé dyverse wonyng,  
That I kepe not rehersed be;  
So that ye wolde respiten me.

6041, 6042. *thankynges*, 'coleen'; Kaluza  
reads *thwakynges*. Similarly *talkynges* doe  
seem happy for 'coleen'; (?) read *wakynges*.  
vv. 2682, 4272.

6057. *This*, this is.

6068. *Kyng of Harlotes*, 'roi des ribauds  
provost-marshal.

For if that I tellē you the sothe,  
 I may have harme and shamē bothe ;  
 If that my felowes wisten it,  
 My talis shulden me be quyēt,  
 For certeyne they wolde hatē me  
 If ever I knewe her crulte. 6090  
 For they wolde overall holde hem stille  
 Of trouthe that is ageyne her wille ;  
 Suche tales kepen they not here.  
 I myght eftsoone bye it full deere,  
 If I seide of hem ony thing  
 That ought displeasē to her heryng.  
 For what word that hem prikketh or bitheth,  
 In that word noon of hem deliteth,  
 As were it gospel the Evangile,  
 That wolde reprove hem of her gile. 6100  
 For they are cruel and hauteyne,  
 And this thyng wote I well certeyne ;  
 If I speke ought to peire her loos,  
 Your court shal not so well be cloos  
 That they ne shall wite it attē last.  
 Of good men am I nought agast,  
 For they wole taken on hem no thyng,  
 Whanne that they knowe al my menyng.  
 But he that wole it on hym take,  
 He wole hym-silf suspicioun make 6110  
 That he his lyf let covertly,  
 In gile and in Ipocrisie  
 That me engendred and yaf fostryng,  
 'They made a full good engendryng,'  
 Quod Love, 'for who so sothly telle,  
 They engendred the Devel of Helle.  
 But nedely, how so evere it be,'  
 Quod Love, 'I wole and chargē thee  
 To telle anon thy wonyng places, 6119  
 Heryng ech wight that in this place is,  
 And what lyf that thou lyvest also ;  
 Hide it no lenger now—Wherto ?  
 Thou most discovere all thi wurchyng,  
 How thou servest, and of what thyng,  
 Though that thou shulddest for thisothe-sawe  
 Ben alto beten and to-drawe.  
 And yit art thou not wont pardēe.  
 But natheles though thou beten be,  
 Thou shalt not be the first that so  
 Hath for sothasawe suffred woo.' 6130  
 'Sir, sith that it may liken you,  
 Though that I shulde be slayne right now,  
 I shal done youre comaundement,

6111. *let*, leads.

For therto have I gret talent.'  
 Withouten wordis mo right thanne  
 Fals-Semblant his sermon biganne,  
 And seide hem thus in audience :  
 'Barouns, take heede of my sentence :  
 That wight that list to have knowing  
 Of Fals-Semblant, full of flatering, 6140  
 He must in worldly folk hym seke,  
 And certes in the cloistres eke,  
 I wone no where but in hem twey ;  
 But not lyk even, soth to sey.  
 Shortly, I wole herberwe me  
 There I hope best to holstred be ;  
 And certeynly sikerest hidyng,  
 Is undirneath the humblest clothing.  
 Religious folk ben full covert,  
 Seculer folk ben more appert. 6150  
 But natheles I wole not blame  
 Religious folk, ne hem diffame ;  
 In what habit that ever they go,  
 Religious unble and trewe also,  
 Wole I not blame, ne dispise,  
 But I nyl love it in no wise—  
 I mene of false religious,  
 That stoutē ben and malicious,  
 That wolen in an abit goo,  
 And setten not her herte therto. 6160  
 Religious folk ben al pitous,  
 Thou shalt not seen oon dispitous ;  
 They loven no pridē, ne no strif,  
 But humbely they wole lede her lyf.  
 With which folk wole I never be,  
 And if I dwelle, I feyne me.  
 I may wel in her abit go,  
 But me were lever my necke a-two  
 Than lete a purpose that I take,  
 What covenannt that ever I make. 6170  
 I dwelle with hem that proudē be,  
 And full of wiles and subtilite,  
 That worship of this world coveiten,  
 And grete nedes kunnen espleiten,  
 And gone and gadren gret pitaunces,  
 And purchase hem the acquyentaunces  
 Of men that myghty lyf may leden,  
 And feyne hem pore, and hem silf feden  
 With godē morcelis delicious,

6146. MSS. *hulstred*.6172. MSS. *subtilite*.6174. MSS. *grete nede*, 'les grans besoignes' cp. note to 5883.

And drinken good wyne precious, 6180  
 And preche us povert and distresse,  
 And fissen hem silf gret richesse  
 With wily nettis that they cast ;  
 It wole come foule out at the last.  
 They ben fro clene religioun went,  
 They make the world an argument,  
 That [hath] a foule conclusioun :  
 " I have a robe of religioun,  
 Thanne am I all religious."

This argument is all roignous, 6190  
 It is not worth a croked brere ;  
 Abit ne makith neiθhir monk ne frere,  
 But clene lyf and devocioun  
 Makith godē men of religioun.  
 Nēthēles ther kan noon answerē,  
 How high that evere his heed hē shere  
 With rasour whetted never so kene,  
 That Gile in braunches kut thrittene ;  
 Ther can no wight distincte it so,  
 That he dare sey a word therto. 6200

But what herberwe that ever I take  
 Or what Semblant that evere I make,  
 I mene but gile, and folowe that.  
 For right no mo than Gibbe oure cat,  
 That awaiteth myce and rattes to kyllen,  
 Ne entende I but to bigilen.  
 Ne no wight may by my clothing  
 Wite with what folk is my dwellyng,  
 Ne by my wordis yit, parde,  
 So softe and so plesaunt they be. 6210  
 Biholde the dedis that I do,  
 But thou be blynde thou oughtest so.  
 For varie her wordis fro her deede,  
 They thenke on gile withoutē dreede,  
 What maner clothing that they were  
 Or what estate that evere they bere  
 Lered or lewdē, lord or lady,  
 Knyght, squyer, burgeis, or bayly.'

Right thus while Fals - Semblant  
 sermoneth

Eftsones Love hym aresoneth, 6220  
 And brake his tale in his spekyng,  
 As though he had hym tolde lesyng,

6197. MSS. *resoun for rasour*.

6198. *That has noon* for its antecedent, and the allusion is to the twelve monks and prior who made up a convent.

6204. *Gibbe*, i.e. 'Gib', a common English name for a cat.

6205. Only in Th., but found in Fr.

6206. *G. bielivn.*

And seide, 'What Devel is that I her  
 What folk hast thou us nempned heer  
 May men syndē religioun  
 In worldly habitacioun ?'

'Ye, Sir, it folowith not that they  
 Shulde lede a wikked lyf, parfey,  
 Ne not therfore her soulē leese,  
 That hem to worldly clothēs chese ;  
 For certis it were gret pitee.

Men may in secular clothēs see  
 Florishen hooly religioun.  
 Full many a seynt in keeld and tounē,  
 With many a virgine glorious,  
 Devoute and full religious

Han deied, that comyn cloth ay beerē  
 Yit seyntēs nevere the lesse they were  
 I coudē reken you many a ten,  
 Ye wel nygh [al] these hooly wymme

That men in chirchis herie and seke,  
 Bothe maydens and these wyves eke,  
 That baren full many a faire child he  
 Wered alwey clothis secularē,

And in the samē dieden they,  
 That seyntes weren, and ben alwey.  
 The xi. thousand maydens deere,  
 That beren in heven her ciergis clere

Of whiche men rede in chirche and sy  
 Were take in secular clothing,  
 Whanne they resseyvū martirdome,  
 And wonnen hevēne unto her home.

Good hertē makith the goodē though  
 The clothing yeveth ne reveth nough  
 The goodē thought and the working  
 That makith the religioun flowryng--

Ther lyth the goode religioun,  
 Aftir the right entencioun.

Whoso took a wether's skynne,  
 And wrapped a grede wolf therynne  
 For he shulde go with lambis whyte,  
 Wenest thou not he wolde hem bite

Yis, neverthelasse, as he were woodē  
 He wolde hem wery and drinke  
 bloode,

And wel the rather hem disceyve ;  
 For sith they coudē not perceyve  
 His tregēt and his cruelte,  
 They wolde hym folowe al wolde he

If ther be wolves of sich hewe

6243. Perhaps omit *full*.

6264. MSS. *the bloode*, 'for sanc.'

amonges these apostlis newe, 6270  
thou, Hooly Chirche, thou maist be  
wailed,

ith that thy Citee is assayed  
thourgh knyghtis of thyn owné table.  
Iodwote thi lordship is doutable,  
f thei enforce [hem] it to wynne,  
that shulde defende it fro withynne.  
Who myght defense ayens hem make?  
Vithouté stroke it mote be take  
If trepeget, or mangonel, 6280  
Vithout displaying of pensel.  
And if God ny! done it socour,  
but lat [it] renne in this colour,  
thou most thyn heestis laten be;  
thanne is ther nought but yeldé thee,  
Or yeve hem tribute doutlees,  
And holde it of hem to have pees.  
but gretter harme bitideth thee  
that they al maister of it be.  
Vel konne they scorné thee withal;  
by dayé stuffen they the wall, 6290  
And al the nyght they mynen there.  
Way, thou planten most elles where  
Thyn ympés, if thou wolt fruyt have;  
Abide not there thi-silf to save.

But now pees! Heere I turne ageyne,  
wole nomore of this thing seyne,  
f I may passen me herby.  
myghté maken you wery;  
but I wole heten you al-way  
to helpe youre freendis, what I may, 6300  
so they wollen my company;  
for they be shent al outerly,  
but if so fallé that I be  
Ofte with hem and they with me.  
And eke my lemman mote they serve,  
Or they shull not my love deserve.  
Forsothe I am a fals traitour,  
Iod jugged me for a theef trichour;  
Forsworne I am, but wel nygh none 6310  
Wote of my gile til it be done.  
Thurgh me hath many oon deth  
resseyved,

That my treget nevere aperceyved;  
And yit resseyveth, and shat resseyve,

6281. 'Et se d'eus (misread as *deus*) ne la vus  
'ecorre.'  
6290. MSS. *day*. Skeat supplies *wel* before  
*tu*.

That my falsnesse shal nevere aperceyve.  
But who so doth, if he wise be,  
Hym is right good be war of me.  
But so sligh is the deceyvyng  
That to hard is the aperceyvyng.  
For Protheus, that cowde hym chaunge,  
In every shap homely and straunge, 6320  
Cowde nevere sich gilé ne tresoune  
As I. For I come never in toune,  
Thére as I myght knowen be;  
Though men mé bothe myght here and see,  
Full wel I can my clothis chaunge,  
Take oon and make another straunge.  
Now am I knyght, now chastéleyn,  
Now prelat, and now chapéleyn,  
Now prest, now clerk, and now forstere;  
Now am I maister, now scolere, 6330  
Now monke, now chanoun, now baily;  
What ever myster man am I,  
Now am I prince, now am I page,  
And kan by herte every langage;  
Somtyme tyme am I hore and olde,  
Now am I yonge, [and] stoute, and bolde;  
Now am I Robert, now Robyn,  
Now Frere Menour, now Iacobyn.  
And with me folwith my loteby,  
To done me solas and company, 6340  
That hight Dame Abstynencé-Streyned.  
In many a queynte array feyned,  
Ryght as it cometh to hir lykyng,  
I fulfille al hir desiryng;  
Somtyme a wommans cloth take I,  
Now am I maydè, now lady;  
Somtyme I am religious,  
Now lyk an anker in an hous;  
Somtyme am I Prioress,  
And now a nonne, and now Abbess; 6350  
And go thurgh allé regiouns,

6314. *shal* often thus makes an extra unac-  
cented syllable.

6317, 6318. Supplied by Kaluza from Fr.  
MSS. have *aperceyving* for *deceyving* in 6317,  
and G leaves blank space for 6318, which appears  
in Th. as *That al to late cometh knowyng*.

6337. *Robert*, i.e. gentleman.

6337. *Robyn*, i.e. clown.

6338. *Frere Menour*, i.e. Franciscan.

6338. *Iacobyn*, i.e. Dominican.

6341. MSS. and *reyned* for *streyned*.

6344. *To fulfille*, with comma after *streyned*  
and full stop after *desiryng*, would better trans-  
late Fr.

6346. MSS. *a mayde*.

Sekyng all religiouns.

But to what ordre that I am sworne,  
I take the shawre, and lete the corne  
To joly folk I enhabite ;

I axe nomore but her abite.

What wole ye more ? In every wise,

Right as me lyst, I me disgise :

Wel can I wre me undir wele,

Unlyk is my word to my dede.

6360

[I] make into my trappis falle,

Thurgh my pryveleges, alle

That ben in Cristendome alyve,

I may assoile and I may shryve

(That no prelat may letté me)

All folk where evere thei foundé be ;

I note no prelate may done so,

But it the pope be, and no mo,

That madé thilk establisshing.

Now is not this a propre thing ?

6370

But where my sleight is aperceyved,

Of hem I am nomore rescayved,

As I was wont ; and wostow why ?

For I dide hem a tregetrie.

But therof yeve I lytel tale ;

I have the silver and the male.

So have I prechid, and eke shriven,

So have I take, so have me yiven

Thurgh her foly husbonde and wyf,

That I lede right a joly lyf,

6380

Thurgh symplesse of the prelacye ;

They knowe not al my tregettrie.

But for asmoche as man and wyf

Shulde shewe her paroch-prest her lyf

Onys a yeer, as seith the book,

6354. *lete*, MSS. *bete* ; cp. 5544, 5959, 6006.

6355. The Fr. texts vary here. The verse should run: *To bynde folk ther I enhabit*, and be taken with v. 6356. *Joly* is perhaps a mistake for *sely*, translating 'por gens avugler' misread as 'por gens avuglen'.

6359. *were*, MSS. *were* ; Skeat and Kaluza *bere* ; 'Moult sont en moi mûe li vers.'

6365. *That*, 'ce.'

6371. *where*, MSS. *mere*.

6371. *sleight is*, MSS. *sleightis*. Other editions retain reading of MSS. See next note.

6372. Missing from MSS. ; here supplied from Fr. :

Mes mes traits ont aperçus  
Si n'en sui mes al recelus.

Bell :

I shulde no longer ben receivel.

Morris :

Ne shulde I no re ben rescayved.

But the statement in Fr. is not conditional.

6375. MSS. *a litel tale* ; cp. v. 6346.

Er only wight his housel took,

Thanne have I pryvylegis large

That may of myché thing discharge.

For he may seie right thus, parde :—

“ Sir Preest, in shrift I telle it thee, 63

That he to whom that I am shryven

I hatþ me assoiled, and me yiven

For penaunce sothly for my synne

Which that I fonde me gilty ynne ;

Ne I ne have nevere entencioun,

To makè double confessioun,

Ne reherce este my shrift to thee ;

O shrift is right ynough to me.

This oughtè thee sufficè wele,

Ne be not rebel never a dele, 6

For certis, though thou haddist it swo

I wote no prest ne prelat borne

That may to shrift este me constreyne.

And if they done, I wole me pleyne,

For I wote where to pleyne wele.

Thou shalt not streynè me a dele

Ne enforcè me, ne not me trouble

To makè my confessioun double.

Ne I have none affuccioun,

To have double absolucioun.

The firste is right ynough to me,

This latter assoilyng quyte I thee.

I am unbonde—What ! Maist thoufyn

More of my synnes me to unbynde !

For he that myght hath in his honde

Of all my synnes me unbonde,

And if thou wolt me thus constreyne

That me mote nedis on thee pleyne,

There shall no juggle imperial

Ne bisshop, ne official,

Done jugement on me ; for I

Shal gone and pleyne me openly

Unto my shrifteladir newe,

That hightè not Frere Wolf untrewè

And he shal chevys hym for me,

For I trowe he can hampre thee.

But lord ! he wolde be wrooth withal

If men hym woldè Frere Wolf call ;

For he wolde have no pacience,

But done al cruel vengeance ;

He wolde his myght done at the lees

No thing spare, for goddis heest.

And god so wys be my socour,

But thou yeve me my Savyour

At Ester, whanne it likith me,

Withoutē presyng more on thee,  
 wole forth and to hym gone,  
 And he shal housel me anon,  
 For I am out of thi grucchiſſing;  
 kepe not dele with thee no thing." 6440  
 Thus may he shryve hym that forsaketh  
 his paroch prest, and to me takith;  
 And if the prest wole hym refuse,  
 am full redy hym to accuse,  
 And hym punysshē and hampre so  
 That he his churche shal forgo.  
 But who so hath in his felyng  
 The consequence of such shryvynge,  
 shal sene that prest may never have myght  
 To knowe the conscience a-right 6450  
 Of hym that is undir his cure.  
 And this ageyns I holy Scripture,  
 That biddith every heerde honeste  
 Have verry knowing of his beeste.  
 But pore folk that gone by strette,  
 That have no gold, ne sommēs grete,  
 Hem wolde I lete to her prelates;  
 Or lete her prestis knowe her statys.  
 Forto me right nought yevē theye.  
 'And why?'

'It is for they ne may.  
 They ben so bare I take no kepe, 6461  
 But I wole have the fattē sheepe;  
 Lat parish prestis have the lene,  
 I yevē not of her harme a bene,  
 And if that prelates grucche it,  
 That oughten wroth be in her witt  
 To leese her fattē beestes so,  
 I shal yevē hem a stroke or two  
 That they shal leesen with [her] force  
 Ye bothe her mytre and her croce. 6470  
 Thus jape I hem, and have do longe,  
 My pryvelges ben so stronge.'  
 Fals - Semblaunt wolde have stynted  
 heere,  
 But Love ne made hym no such cheere  
 That he was wery of his sawe,  
 But forto make hym glad and fawe

6436. *presyng*, pressing.  
 6440. i.e. I don't care to deal with you in any way.

6452. *this*, this is.

6466. MSS. *not*.

6469. *her*, Skeat *the*, Kaluza suggests *by seint* loc., referring to *Tales*, D 483. Fr. :

Que lever feral tes boies  
 Qu'il en perdrait mitres et croces.

He seide : 'Telle on more specially,  
 How that thou servest untrewly;  
 Telle forth, and shame thee never a dele,  
 For as thyn abit shewith wele 6480  
 Thou semest an hooly heremyte.'  
 'Sothe is, but I am an ypocrite.'  
 'Thou goste and prechest povertē.'  
 'Ye sir but riches hath pouste.'  
 'Thou prechest abstinence also.'  
 'Sir, I wole fillen, so mote I go,  
 My paunche of good mete and [good]  
 wync,

As shulde a maister of dyvyne;  
 For how that I me pover feyne,  
 Vit all[ē] pore folk I disdeyne. 6490  
 I Lovē bettir thacqueyntaunce  
 Ten tymē of the Kyng of Fraunce,  
 Than of a pore man of mylde mode,  
 Though that his soule be also gode.  
 For whanne I see beggers quakyng  
 Naked on myxnys al styngyng  
 For hungre crie, and eke for care,  
 I entremete not of her fare.  
 They len so pore and ful of pyne, 6499  
 They myght not oonys yevē me a dyne,  
 For they have no thing but her lyf;  
 What shulde he yevē that likketh his  
 knyf?

It is but foly to entremete,  
 To seke in houndes nest fat mete.  
 Lete here hem to the spitel anon,  
 But for me comfort gete they noon.

But a richē sike usurere  
 Wolde I visite and drawē nere;  
 I hym wole I comforte and rehetē,  
 For I hope of his gold to gete. 6510  
 And if that wikkid deth hym have,  
 I wole go with hym to his grave;  
 And if ther only reprove me  
 Why that I lete the pore be,  
 Wōstow how I mot a-scape?

6481. *semeist*, MSS. *servest*.

6482. *an*, MSS. *but an*.

6492. *Ten tymē*, Fr. 'cent mil tans.'

6493. Skeat omits *a*. Kaluza *mylde*, which seems better; cp. Fr. 'Que d'un pover par nostre Dame'; *pover*, too, is more frequent than *pore* in the poem.

6500. Kaluza and Skeat omit *a*.

6507. *usurere* seems to be disyllabic here, like *secular* in v. 6263.

6515. *mot*, MSS. *not*.



I sey and swerè hym ful rape  
 That richè men han morè wrecches,  
 Of synnè than han porè wrecches,  
 And han of counsel more mister,  
 And therfore I wole drawe hem ner.  
 But as grete hurt, it may so be, 6521  
 Hath soule in right grete povertè  
 As soule in grete richesse, forsothe,  
 Al be it that they hurten bothe;  
 For richesse and mendicitees  
 Ben clepid il. extremytees;  
 The mene is clepèd suffisaunce,  
 Ther lyth of vertu the aboundaunce.  
 For Salamon, full wel I wote, 6530  
 In his Parablis us wrote,  
 As it is knowe to many a wight,  
 In his thrittene chapitre right:  
 "God thou me kepe, for thi pouste,  
 Fro richesse and mendicite;  
 For if a richè man hym dresse,  
 To thènke to myche on [his] richesse,  
 His herte on that so fer is sett,  
 That he his créatour foryett;  
 And hym that begging wole ay greve,  
 How shulde I bi his word hym leve?  
 Unnethe [is] that he nys a mycher 6541  
 Forsworne or ellis God is lyer."  
 Thus seith Salamonès sawes.  
 Ne we fynde writen in lowis  
 And namely in oure Cristen lay  
 (Whoso seith, "Ye," I dar sey, "Nay,")  
 That Crist ne his apostlis dere,  
 While that they walkide in erthè heere,  
 Were never seen her bred beggyng;  
 For they nolde beggen for no thing. 6550  
 And right thus was men wont to teche,  
 And in this wisè wolde it preche  
 The maistres of divinite  
 Somtyme in Parys the citee.  
 And if men wolde ther-geyn appose  
 The nakid text and lete the glose,  
 It myghte soone assoiled be.

6522. MSS. a soule.

6532. *thrittene*, it should be thirtieth (Prov. xxx. 8, 9), 'trentesme.'6536. *his richesse*, 'sa richesse.'6539. *begging*, MSS. *beggith* (corrected by Kaluza).6539. *wole greve*, 'mendicitee guerroye.'6542. *God is*, MSS. *goddis*. Cp. 6541.6543. *Salamonès*, MSS. *Salamon* (Kaluza).6551. *men*, one.

For men may wel the sothè see,  
 That, parde, they myght aske a thing  
 Pléynly forth without begging; 65  
 For they were Goddis herdis deere,  
 And cure of soulès badden heere.  
 They noldè no thing begge her fode;  
 For aftir Crist was done on rode  
 With ther propre hondis they wrought,  
 And with travel, and ellis nought,  
 They wonnen all her sustenaunce,  
 And lyveden forth in her penaunce,  
 And the remenaunt yaf away  
 To other porè folkis alwey. 6  
 They neither bilden tour ne halle,  
 But ley in houses smale with-alle.  
 A myghty man that can and may,  
 Shulde with his honde and body alway  
 Wynne hym his fode in laboryng,  
 If he ne have rent or sich a thing,  
 Al though he be religious,  
 And god to serven curious.  
 Thus mote he done, or do trespas,  
 But if it be in certeyn cas, 6  
 That I can reherce if myster be  
 Right wel, whanne the tyme I se.  
 Seke the book of seynt Austyne,  
 Be it in papir or perchemyne,  
 There as he writ of these worchynges;  
 Thou shalt seen that noon excusynges  
 A parfit man ne shuldè seke  
 Bi wordis, ne bi dedis eke,  
 Al though he be religious  
 And god to serven curious, 6  
 That he ne shal, so mote I go,  
 With propre hondis and body also,  
 Gète his fode in laboryng,  
 If he ne have proprete of thing.  
 Vit shulde he selle all his substaunce  
 And with his swynk have sustenaunce  
 If he be parfit in hounte;  
 Thus han tho bookès toldè me.  
 For he that wole gone ydilly  
 And usith it ay beasily  
 To haunten other mennès table,  
 He is a trechour ful of fable,

6568. *penaunce*, 'en patience, so perhaps Kaluza suggests, read *patience*.6581. Perhaps omit *That*.6592. Kaluza reads *honde*, citing v. 6574;

cp. v. 6585.

6600. *beasily*, MSS. *desily*.

Ne he ne may by gode resoun  
 Excuse hym by his orisoun ;  
 For men bihoveth in somme gise  
 Blynne somtyme in Goddis service  
 To gone and purchasen her nede.  
 Men, mote eten, that is no drede,  
 And slepe, and eke do other thing ;  
 So longe may they leve praiyng ; 6610  
 So may they eke her praier blynne,  
 While that they werke her mete to wynne.  
 Seynt Austyn wole therto accorde  
 In thilké book that I recorde.  
 Justinian eke, that madé lawes,  
 Hath thus forboden, by old dawes.  
 No man up peyné to be dede,  
 Mighty of body, to begge his brede,  
 If he may swynke it forto gete ;  
 Men shulde hym rather mayme or bete,  
 Or done of hym aperte justice, 6621  
 Than suffren hym in such malice.  
 They done not wel, so mote I go,  
 That taken such almescé so,  
 But if they have somme pryvelege,  
 That of the peyne hem wole allege.  
 But how that is, can I not see,  
 But if the prince disseyved be.  
 Ne I ne were not sikerly  
 That they may have it rightfully. 6630  
 But I wole not determine  
 Of prynces power, ne defyne,  
 Ne by my word comprende, I-wys,  
 If it so ferre may strecche in this ;  
 I wole not entremete a dele.  
 But I trowe that the book seith wele,  
 Who that takith almescis that be  
 Déwe to folk, that men may se  
 Lámé, feble, wery and bare,  
 Póre or in such maner care, 6640  
 That konné Wynne hem never mo,  
 For they have no power therto,  
 He etith his owné dampnyng,  
 But if he lye that made al thing.  
 And if ye such a truaunt fynde,  
 Chastise hym wel, if ye be kynde.  
 But they wolde haté you percas,  
 And if ye fillen in her laas,

They wolde eftsoonys do you scathe,  
 If that they myghté, late or rathe. 6650  
 For they be not full pacient,  
 That han the world thus foulé blent.  
 And witeth wel, that [though] God bad  
 The good-man selle al that he had,  
 And folowe hym, and to pore it yive,  
 He wolde not therfore that he lyve  
 To serven hym in mendience,  
 For it was nevere his sentence.  
 But he bad wirken whanne that neede is,  
 And folwe hym in goodé dedis. 6660  
 Seynt Poule, that loved al Hooly Chirche,  
 He bade thapostles forto wirche,  
 And wynnen her lyfode in that wise,  
 And hem defended truaundise ;  
 And seide, "Wirketh with youre honden" ;  
 Thus shulde the thing be undirstonden.  
 He nolde, I-wys, have bidde hem begging,  
 Ne sellen gospel ne prechyng,  
 Lest they berafte, with her askyng,  
 Folk of her catel or of her thing. 6670  
 For in this world is many a man  
 That yeveth his good for he ne can  
 Werne it for shame, or ellis he  
 Wolde of the asker delivered be ;  
 And for he hym encombrith so,  
 He yeveth hym good to late hym go.  
 But it can hem no thyng profit  
 They lese the yift and the meryte.  
 The goodé folk that Poule to preched  
 Profred hym ofté, whan he hem teched,  
 Somme of her good in charite. 6681  
 But therfore right no thing toke he,  
 But of his hondwerk wolde he gete  
 Clothes to wryne hym, and his mete.  
 "Telle me thanne how a man may lyven,  
 That al his good to pore hath yiven,  
 And wolé but oonly bidde his bedis,  
 And nevere with hondes labour his nede is.  
 May he do so ?"

'Ye sir.'

'And how ?'

6653. *though*, supplied by Kaluza ; but *ther* (=where) would come closer to Fr. 'à au Diex comande.'

6654. *The good-man*, Fr. 'prodona.'

6677. *hym*, MSS. *hym*, Fr. 'lor prouffite.'

6688. Found only in Thynne, but according nearly enough with Fr. *nede is*, Th. *nedis* ; labour in sense of 'to labour for' is not otherwise known in M.E.

6606. *Blynne*, MSS. *Ben*. Skeat and Kaluza read *somtyme leuen*.

6615. *Justinian*, cod. Justin. xi. 25. *De medicantibus validis* (Bell).

Sir, I wole gladly tellé yow. 6690  
 Seynt Austyn seith a man may be  
 In houses that han proprete,  
 As Templers, and Hospitellers,  
 And as these Chanouns Regulars,  
 Or Whité monkes or these Blake—  
 I wole no mo ensamplis make—  
 And take therof his sustenyng,  
 For therynne lyth no begging;  
 But other wey[é]s not, y-wys,  
 Yif Austyn gabboth not of this. 6700  
 And yit full many a monke laboreth,  
 That God in hooly chirche honourth;  
 For whanne her swynkyng is agone,  
 They rede and syng in chirche anone.  
 And for ther hath ben gret discorde,  
 As many a wight may bere recorde,  
 Upon the estate of mendience,  
 I wole shortly, in youre presence,  
 Telle how a man may begge at neide,  
 That hath not wherwith hym to feide.  
 Maugre this felones jangelyngis, 6711  
 For sothfastnesse wole none hidyngis;  
 And yit percas I may abey,  
 That I to yow sothly thus sey.

Lo heere the caas especial:  
 If a man be so bestial,  
 That he of no craft hath science,  
 And nought desireth ignorance,  
 Thanne may he go a-begging yerne,  
 Til he somme maner crafte kan lerne;  
 Thurgh which withoute trauandying 6721  
 He may in trouthe have his lyvyng.  
 Or if he may done no labour  
 For elde, or sykenesse, or langour,  
 Or for his tendre age also,  
 Thanne may he yit a-begging go.  
 Or if he have peraventure,  
 Thurgh usage of his norriture,  
 Lyved over deliciously,  
 Thanne oughten good folk comunly 6730  
 Han of his myscheef somme pitee,  
 And suffren hym also that he  
 May gone aboute and begge his breed,  
 That he be not for hungur deed.  
 Or if he have of craft kunnyng,

And strengthe also, and desiryng  
 Tó wirken as he had what  
 But he fynde neithir this ne that,  
 Thanne may he beggè, til that he  
 Have geten his necessite. 67  
 Or if his wynnyng be so lite  
 That his labour wole not acqute  
 Sufficiantly al his lyvyng,  
 Yit may he go his breed begging;  
 Fro dore to dore he may go trace,  
 Til he the remenaunt may purchace.  
 Or if a man wolde unortake  
 Ony emprise forto make  
 In the rescous of oure lay,  
 And it defenden as he may, 67  
 Be it with armés or lettrure  
 Or other covenable cure,  
 If it be so he pore be,  
 Thanne may he beggè til that he  
 May fynde in trouthe forto swynke,  
 And gete hym clothe, mete and drynke  
 Swynke he with hondis corporell  
 And not with hondis espiituell.  
 In al this caas and in semblables,  
 If that ther ben mo resonables, 67  
 He may begge as I telle you heere,  
 And ellis nought in no manere;  
 As William Seynt Amour wolde precl  
 And ofté wolde dispute and teche,  
 Of this mater all openly  
 At Parys full solempnely.  
 And, also god my soule blesse,  
 As he had in this stedfastnesse  
 The accorde of the universite  
 And of the puple, as semeth me, 67  
 No good man oughte it to refuse,  
 Ne ought hym therof to excuse.  
 Be wrothe or blithé who-so be,  
 For I wole speke and telle it thec,  
 Al shulde I dye, and be putt down  
 As was seynt Poule in derke prisoun,  
 Or be exiled in this caas  
 With wrong, as maister William was,  
 That my moder, Ypocrisie,  
 Bánysshéd for hir gret envye.

6749. *i.e.* in the defence of our religion.6759. *this*, plural.

6763. William Seynt Amour, a doctor of Sorbonne who wrote a book against friars the 13th century.

6769. *Th'accord of th'universite*.6700. *Yif*, MSS. *Yif*, 'Se.'6707. MSS. *mendience*.6711. MSS. *his felones*, Fr. 'Maugre les felonesses jangles,' *i.e.* these felonous jangling.

My modir flemed hym, Seynt Amour :  
 The noble didé such labour  
 To susteyne evere the loyalte,  
 That he to moche agilté mæ;  
 He made a book, and lete it write  
 Wheryn hys lyfe he dyd al write,  
 And wolde ich reneycé begging,  
 And lyvcd by my traveylyng,  
 If I ne had rent ne other goode.  
 What ! Wenéd he that I were woode ? 6790  
 For labour myght me never plesce,  
 I have more wille to bene at esc,  
 And have wel lever, soth to sey,  
 Bifore the puple patre and prey;  
 And wrie me in my foxerie  
 Under a cope of papelardie.  
 Quod Love, 'What devel is this that I heere ?  
 What wordis tellest thou me heere ?'  
 'What, Sir ?'

'Falsnesse that apert is ;  
 Thanne dredist thou not god ?'

'No certis ;  
 For selde in grete thing shal he spede  
 In this worldé, that god wole drede. 6802  
 For folk that hem to vertu yyven,  
 And truly on her owné lyven,  
 And hem in goodnesse ay contene,  
 On hem is lytel thrif t y-sene.  
 Such folk drinken gret mysese ;  
 That lyf may me never plesce.  
 But se what gold han usurers  
 And silver eke in [her] garners, 6810  
 Taylagiers and these monyours,  
 Bailiffs, bedels, provost countours  
 These lyven wel nygh by ravyne.  
 The smalé puple hem mote encline,  
 And they as wolvés wole hem eten.  
 Upon the poré folk they geten  
 Full moche of that they spende or kepe.  
 Nis none of hem that he nyl strepe,  
 And wrine hem silf wel atté fulle ;  
 Withouté scaldyng they hem pulle. 6820  
 The stronge the feble overgoth,  
 But I, that were my symple cloth,

Robbe bothé robbéd and robbours,  
 And gilé giléd and gilours.  
 By my tregret, I gadre and threste  
 The gret tresour into my cheste,  
 That lyth with me so fasté bounde.  
 Myn highé paleys do I founde,  
 And my delités I fulfille  
 With wync at feestés at my wille 6830  
 And tables full of entremees.  
 I wole no lyf but esc and pees,  
 And wynné gold to spende also.  
 For whanne the greté bagge is go,  
 It cometh right with my japes.  
 Make I not wel tumble myn apes ?  
 To wynnen is alwey myn entent,  
 My purchace is bettir than my rent ;  
 For though I shuldé beten be,  
 Ovcr-al I entremeté me ; 6840  
 Withouté me may no wight dure.  
 I walké soulés forto cure,  
 Of al the worldé cure have I  
 In brede and lengthé. Bold[é]ly  
 I wole bothe preche and eke counceilen ;  
 With hondis wille I not traveilen,  
 For of the Pope I have the bull,  
 I ne holde not my wittés dull.  
 I wole not stynten in my lyve  
 These emperouris forto shryve, 6850  
 Or kyngis, dukis, lordis grete ;  
 But poré folk al quyte I lete,  
 I love no such shryvyng, parde ;  
 But it for other causé be,  
 I rekké not of poré men—  
 If astate is not worth an hen ;  
 Where fyndest thou a swynker of labour  
 I have me unto his confessour ?  
 But emperesses and duchesses,  
 These queenes, and eke countesses, 6860  
 Thise abbessis, and eke bygyngs,  
 These greté ladyes palasyns,  
 These joly knyghtis and baillives,  
 Thise nonnes, and thise burgeis wyves  
 That riché ben and eke plesyng,  
 And thise maidens welfaryng,  
 Wher so they clad or naked be,  
 Uncounceiled goth ther noon fro me.

6786. As in Th. and Fr. : G in late hand,  
*Of thyngis that he beste myghte.*

6802. MSS. *world*, but as in v. 6843 the metre  
 requires two syllables.

(810. MSS. omit *Ac*, 'for greniers.'

6819. *urine*, (7) *urwen*. The scribe frequently  
 confuses *u* and *e*.

6823, 6824. MSS. *robbyng, giling*.

6838. Cp. *Tales*, D 145.

6850. MSS. *emperours*.

6862. *ladyes palasyns*, i.e. court ladies.

And for her soulés savete  
At lord and lady and her meyne 6870  
I axe, whanne thei hem to me shryve,  
The proprete of al her lyve,  
And make hem trowe, bothe meest and  
leest,

Hir paroch prest nys but a beest  
Ayens me and my companye,  
That shrewis ben as gret as I.  
Fro whiche I wole not hide in holde  
No pryvete that me is tolde,  
That I, by word or signe y-wis,  
[Nyl] make hem knowé what it is. 6880  
And they wolen also tellen me,  
They hele fro me no pryvete,  
And forto make yow hem perceyven,  
That usen folk thus to disceyven,<sup>6</sup>  
I wole you seyn withouten drede  
What men may in the gospel rede  
Of seynt Mathew, the gospelere,  
That seith as I shal you sey heere :

“ Upon the chaire of Moyses  
[Thus is it glased] doutlées : 6890  
That is the Oldé Testament,  
For ther-by is the chairé ment)  
Sitte Scribes and Pharisen  
(That is to seyn, the cursid men  
Whiche that we ypocritis calle).  
Doth that they preche, I rede you alle,  
But doth not as they don a dele ;  
That ben not wery to seye wele,  
But to do wel no will have they.  
And they wolde bynde on folk al-wey, 6900  
That ben to be giled able,  
Burdons that ben importable.  
On folkés shuldris thinges they couchen,  
That they nyl with her fyngris touchen.”

‘ And why wole they not touche it ? ’

‘ Why,

For hem ne lyst not sikirly,  
For saddé burdons that men takén,  
Make folkes shuldris aken.  
And if they do ought that good be,  
That is for folk it shuldé se. 6910  
Her bordurs larger maken they,  
And make her hemmes wide alwey,  
And loven setés at the table,

The firste and mosté honourable,  
And forto han the firste chaieris  
In synagogis to hem full deere is,  
And willen that folk hem loute and gret  
Whanne that they passen thurgh the stret  
And wolen be cleped “ Maister ” also.  
But they ne shulde not willen so, 69  
The gospel is ther-ageyns, I grasse,  
That shewith wel her wikkidnesse.

Another custome usé we.  
Of hem that wole ayens us be ;  
We hate hym deedly @verichone,  
And we wole werrey hym as oon ;  
Hym that oon hatith hate we alle,  
And congecte how to done hym falle.  
And if we seen hym wyne honour,  
Richesse, or preis, thurgh his valour, 69  
Provendé, rent, or dignyte,  
Full fast y-wys compassen we  
Bi what ladder he is clomben so ;  
And forto maken hym doun to go  
With traisoun we wole hym defame,  
And done hym leese his goodé name.  
Thus from his ladder we hym take,  
And thus his freendis foes we make.  
But word ne wité shal he noon,  
Till all hise freendis ben his soon. 69  
For if we dide it openly  
We myght have blamé redily ;  
For hadde he wist of oure malice,  
He hadde hym kept, but he were nyc

Another is this, that if so falle  
That ther be oon amonge us alle  
That doth a good turne out of drede,  
We seyn it is oure alder dede.  
Ye sikerly though he it feyned,  
Or that hym list, or that hym deyned  
A man thurgh hym avauncéd be,  
Therof all parseners be we,  
And tellen folk where so we go,  
That man thurgh us is sprongen so.  
And forto have of men preysyng,  
We purchase thurgh oure flateryng  
Of riché men of gret pouste  
Lettres to witnesse oure bounte,  
So that man weneth that may us see  
That allé vertu in us be.  
And al-wey poré we us feyne ;

6880. Nyl, MSS. Wole.

6887. Matt. xiii. 1-8.

6912. MSS. burdons, ‘philaterea.’

6906. as oon, ‘par accord,’ ? at oon.  
6950. hym deyned, he vouchsafed.

But how so that we begge or pleyne,  
 We ben the folk without lesyng  
 That all thing have without havynge.  
 Thus be we dred of the puple y-wis.  
 And gladly my purpos is this :  
 I delē with no wight but he  
 I have gold and tresour gret plente ;  
 Her acqueyntauncē wel love I,  
 This is moche my desire shortly. 6970  
 I entremete me of brokages,  
 I makē pees and mariages,  
 I am gladly executour,  
 And many tymes procuratour ;  
 I am somtyme messenger  
 (That fallith not to my myster),  
 And many tymes I make enquestes—  
 For me that office not honest is.  
 To dele with other mennes thing,  
 That is to me a gret lykyng. 6980  
 And if that ye have ought to do  
 In place that I repeire to,  
 I shal it speden thurgh my witt,  
 As soone as ye have told me it.  
 So that ye servē me to pay,  
 My servyse shal be youre alway ;  
 But who-so wole chastisē me,  
 Anoon my lovē lost hath he.  
 For I love no man in no gise  
 That wole me repreve or chastise ; 6990  
 But I wolde al folk undirtake,  
 And of no wight no teching take ;  
 For I that other folk chastic,  
 Wole not be taught fro my folie.  
 I love noon hermitagē more ;  
 All desertēs, and hollēs hore,  
 And gretē wodēs everichon,  
 I lete hem to the Baptist John.  
 I quethe hym quyte, and hym relese  
 Of Egypt all the wildirnesse. 7000  
 To ferre were alle my mansiouns  
 Fro al citees and goodē townes ;  
 My paleis and myn hous make I  
 There men may renne ynnē openly ;  
 And sey that I the world forsake,  
 But al amydde I bilde and mak

6970. 'Ce sont auques tuit ni desir.'  
 6974. MSS. a *procuratour*. We have seen  
 hat the scribe frequently inserts a in such  
 case.

6998. *i.e.* the reputed founder of asceticism.  
 7002. G omits *al*.

My hous, and swimme and pley therynne,  
 Bet than a fish doth with his fynne.  
 Of Antecristes men am I,  
 Of whiche that Crist seith openly, 7010  
 They have abit of hoolynesse,  
 And lyven in such wikkednesse.  
 Outward lambren semen we,  
 Full of goodnesse and of pitee,  
 And inward we withouten fable  
 Ben gredy wolvēs ravysable.  
 We enviroune bothe londe and se,  
 With all the worldē werrien we ;  
 We wole ordeyne of allē thing,  
 Of folkis good and her lyvyng. 7020  
 If ther be castel or citee  
 Wherynne that ony bourgerons be,  
 Al though that they of Milayne were  
 (For therof ben they blamēd there) ;  
 Or if a wight out of mesure  
 Wolde lene his gold and take usure,  
 For that he is so coveitous ;  
 Or if he be to leccherous,  
 Or these that hauntē symonye,  
 Or provost full of trecherie, 7030  
 Or prelat lyvyng jolyly,  
 Or prest that halt his quene hym by,  
 Or oldē horis hostilers,  
 Or other bawdes or bordillers,  
 Or ellēs blamed of ony vice  
 Of whiche men shulden done justice :  
 Bi all the seyntēs that me pray,  
 But they defende them with lamprey,  
 With luce, with elys, with samons, 7040  
 With tendre gees, and with capons,  
 With tartēs, or with chesis fat,  
 With deyntē flawnis brode and flat,  
 With caleweis, or with pullaylle,  
 With conynges, or with fynē vitaille,  
 That we undir our clothēs wide  
 Maken thourgh oure golet glide,  
 Or but he wole do come in haste  
 Roo-venysoun bake in paste,  
 Whether so that he loure or groynē,

7007. *swimme*, G *swimme* ; cp. *Tales*, D 1926.  
 7021 ff. The conclusion to these conditions  
 is found in v. 7049 ff.

7022. *bourgerons* (G *begger*), 'bogre', sodom-  
 ites.

7029. Skeat reads *these or* for *these that*,  
 following 'lerres ou' ; but this may have been  
 misread (Y. *lerres an*, etc.

7041. MSS. *cheffis*.

He shal have of a corde a loigne 7050  
With which men shal hym bynde and  
lede

To brenne hym for his synful deede,  
That men shull here hym crie and rore,  
A myle-wey aboute and more;  
Or ellis he shal in prisoun dye,  
But if he wole his frendship bye,  
Or smerten that that he hath do  
More than his gilt amounteth to.  
But and he couthe thurgh his sleight  
Do maken up a tour of height, — 7060  
Nought rought I whethir of stone, or tree,  
Or erthe or turvys though it be,  
Though it were of no vounde stone  
Wrought with squyre and scantilone,  
So that the tour were stuffed well  
With allé richesse temporell—  
And thanne that he wolde updresse  
Engyns bothé more and lesse,  
To cast at us by every side  
To bere his goodé namé wide, 7070  
Such flightés [as] I shal yow nevene,  
Barelles of wyne by sixe or sevene  
Or gold in sakkis gret plente,  
He shuldé soone delyvered be.  
And if he have noon sich pitaunces,  
Late hym study in equipolences,  
And laté lyes and fallaces,  
If that he wolde deserve oure graces;  
Or we shal bere hym such witnesse  
Of synne and of his wrecchidnesse, 7080  
And done his loos so widé renne,  
That al quyk we shulden hym brenne,  
Or ellis yeve hym suche penaunce  
That is wel wors than the pitaunce.  
For thou shalt never for no thing  
Kep knownen a-right by her clothing  
The traitours full of trecherie,  
Bet thou her werkis can a-spie.  
And ne hadde the good keyping be  
Whidom of the universite 7090  
That kepith the key of Cristendome  
We had bene tarmented, al and some.

7056. *his frendship bye*, i.e. pay for his relief;  
Skeat changes *his* to *myr*.

7057. *that that*, (1) for *that*.

7063. *vounde*, Skeat reads *founde*; Fr. 'de quel  
pierre.' Cole's *Dictionary* gives *vound stone*,  
*free-stone*, with query 'found or foundation.'

7096. As in Th.; G of *al that here are just*  
*their dome*, in late hand over blank space.

Suche ben the stynkyng prophets;  
Nys none of hem that good prophete is,  
For they thurgh wikked entencion,  
The yeer of the Incarnacioun  
A thousand and two hundred yeer,  
Fyve and fifty, ferther ne ner,  
Broughten a book with sory grace  
To yeven ensample in comune place, 71  
That seide thus though it were fable:  
"This is the Gospel Perdurable,  
That fro the Holy Goost is sent."—  
Wel were it worthi to bene brent!  
Entitled was in such manere  
This book, of which I tellé heere  
Ther nas no wight in all Parys  
Biforne Oure Lady at parvyys  
That he ne mighté bye the book  
To copy, if hym talent toke. 71  
There myght he se by gret tresoun  
Full many fals comparisoun:—  
"As moche as thurgh his greté myght  
Be it of heté or of lyght,  
The sonnè sourmounteth the mone,  
That troublé is and chaungith soone,  
And the noté kernell the shell—  
(I scorné not, that I yow tell)—  
Right so, withouten ony gile,  
Sourmounteth this noble Evangile 7  
The word of ony evangelist."  
And to her title they token Crist.  
And many such comparisoun  
Of which I make no mencion,  
Mighté men in that book fynde  
Who so coude of hem have mynde.

The Universite, that tho was a-sleij  
Can forto braide and taken kepe,  
And at the noys the heed upcast,  
Ne never sithen slept it fast;  
But up it stert, and armés toke

7098. *ferther ne ner* (G *ferther newer*), '1  
bons vivans qui m'en damente', i.e. nei  
earlier nor later.

7099. *a book*, the *Evangelium Eterni*;  
Skeat refers to Southey's *Book of the Chn*  
ch. xi.

7104. MSS. *worth*.

7109. G omits: Th. *That they no might*  
*booke by*.

7110. Th. inserts before 7110 *The scrn*  
*pleased hem well truly*, and adds aft.  
*Of the Evangelistes book*. Fr. contains  
G's single line.

7115. G (*same for some*).

7116. MSS. *troublers*, 'trouble'.

Ayens this false horrible boke,  
 Al redy bateil for to make,  
 And to the juge the booke to take.  
 But they that broughten the boke there  
 Hent it anon away for fere;  
 They moldé shewé more a dele  
 But thenne it kept, and kepen will,  
 Til such a tyme that they may see  
 That they so strongé woxen be, 7140  
 That no wyght may hem wel withstonde.  
 For by that booke they durst not stonde.  
 Awey they gonne't forto bere,  
 For they ne dursté not answe're  
 By exposicioun ne glose  
 To that that clerkis wole appose  
 Ayens the cursédnesse y-wys  
 That in that booke written is.  
 Now wote I not, ne I can not see  
 What maner eende that there shal be 7150  
 Of al this [bokes] that they hyde;  
 But yit algate they shal abide  
 Til that they may it bet defende,  
 This trowe I best wole be her ende.  
 Thus Antecrist abiden we,  
 For we ben alle of his meyne;  
 And what man that wole not be so,  
 Right soone he shal his lyf forgo.  
 We wole a puple upon hym areyde,  
 And thurgh oure gilé done hym seise,  
 And hym on sharpe speris ryve, 7161  
 Or other weyes brynge hym fro lyve,  
 But if that he wole folowe y-wis  
 That in oure booke written is.  
 Thus mych wole oure booke signifie,  
 That whilé Petre hath maistrie,  
 May never Iohn shewe well his myght.  
 Now have I you declaréd right  
 The menyng of the bark and rynde,  
 That makith the entenciouns blynde; 7170  
 But now at erst I wole bigynne,  
 To expowné you the pith withynne:—

And the seculers comprehende,  
 That Cristes lawé wole defende,  
 And shulde it kepen and mayntenen  
 Ayens hem that all sustenen,

7151. MSS. omit *bokes*, 'cis livres.'

7172. One or two verses have been lost corresponding to 'Par Pierre voit le Pape entendre.'

7173. *the seculers*, (?) read *clerkes seculers*, *clerks seculers*.

And falsly to the puple techen.  
 That Iohn bitokeneth hem that prechen  
 That ther nys lawé covenable  
 But thilké Gospel Perdurable, 7180  
 That fro the Holygost was sent  
 To turné folk that ben myswent.  
 The strengthe of Iohn, they undirstonde  
 The grace in whiche they seie they stonde,  
 That doth the synfull folk converté  
 And hem to Iesus Crist reverte.  
 Full many another orriblite  
 May men in that booke se,  
 That ben comaunded douteles  
 Ayens the lawe of Rome expres; 7190  
 And all with Antecrist they holden,  
 As men may in the booke biholden.  
 And thanne comaunden they to sleen  
 Alle tho that with Petre been;  
 But they shal nevere have that myght,  
 And God to-forne for strif to fight,  
 That they ne shal enowé fynde,  
 That Petres lawé shal have in mynde,  
 And evere holde, and so mayntene;  
 That at the last it shal be sene 7200  
 That they shal allé come therto  
 For ought that they can speke or do.  
 And thilké lawé shal not stonde  
 That they by Iohn have undirstonde,  
 But, maugre hem, it shal adowne,  
 And bene brought to confusioun.  
 But I wole stynt of this matere,  
 For it is wonder longe to here.  
 But hadde that ilké booke endured, 7210  
 Of better estate I were ensured;  
 And freendis have I yit pardee  
 That han me sett in gret degre.  
 Of all this world is Emperour  
 Gylé my fadir, the trechour,  
 And Emperis my moder is,  
 Maugre the Holygost y-wis.  
 Oure myghty lynage and oure rowte  
 Regneth in every regne aboute.  
 And well is worthy we [maystres] be;  
 For all this world governé we, 7220  
 And can the folk so wel disceyve,  
 That noon oure gilé can perceyve;  
 And though they done, they dar not sey,

7178. *that*, MSS. *to*.

7197. *enowé*, MSS. *ynough*.

7219. *maistres*, MSS. *wynstres*.



The sothé dar no wight bywray.  
 But he in Cristis wrath hym ledith  
 That more than Crist my britheredredith.  
 He nys no full good champioun  
 That dredith such simulacioun,  
 Nor that for peyne wole refusen  
 Us to correcté and accusen. 7230  
 He wole not entremete by right,  
 Ne have God in his eyé-sight;  
 And therfore God shal hym punyce.  
 But me ne rekketh of no vice,  
 Sithen men us loven comunably,  
 And holden us for so worthy,  
 That we may folk repreve echoon,  
 And we nyl have repref of noon.  
 Whom shulden folk worshipen so  
 But us, that stynten never mo 7240  
 To patren while that folk may us see,  
 Though it not so bihynde hem be.  
 And where is moré wode folye  
 Than to enhauncé chyvalrie,  
 And lové noble men and gay,  
 That joly clothis weren alway?  
 If they be sich folk as they semen,  
 So clene as men her clothis demen,  
 And that her wordis folowe her dede,  
 It is gret pité, out of drede, 7250  
 For they wole be noon ypocritis!  
 Of hem me thynketh [it] gret spite is;  
 I can not love hem on no side.  
 But beggers with these hodels wide,  
 With sleigh and palé faces lene,  
 And greyé clothis not full clene,  
 But fretted full of tatarwagges,  
 And highé shoés knopped with dagges,  
 That frouncen lyke a quailé-pipe,  
 Or botis revelyng as a gype, 7260  
 To such folk as I you dyvye  
 Shulde princes and these lordis wise  
 Take all her londis and her thingis,  
 Bothe werre and pees in governyngis;  
 To such folk shulde a prince hym yive,  
 That wolde his lyf in honour lyve.  
 And if they be not as they seme,  
 That serven thus the world to queme,  
 There wolde I dwellé to disceyve  
 The folk, for they shal not perceyve. 7270  
 But I ne speke in no such wise

7268. *serven*, (7) *semen*; but 'emblent.'  
 7270. G To for *the*.

That men shulde humble abit dispise,  
 So that no pride ther-undir be.  
 No man shulde hate, as thynkith me,  
 The poré man in sich clothyng.  
 But God ne preisith hym no thing  
 That seith he hath the world forsake,  
 And hath to worldly glorie hym take,  
 And wole of siche delices use.  
 Who may that begger wel excuse,  
 That papelard that hym yeldith so,  
 And wole to worldly esé go,  
 And scith that he the world hath left  
 And greedily it grypeth este?  
 He is the hounde, shame is to seyn,  
 That to his castyng goth ageyn.  
 But unto you dar I not lye;  
 But myght I felen or aspie  
 That ye perceyvé it no thyng,  
 Ye shuldé have a stark lesyng  
 Right in youre honde thus, to bigynr  
 I nolde it letté for no synne.'

The god lough at the wondir tho,  
 And every wight gan laugh also,  
 And seide:—'Lo heere a man, a riȝt  
 Forto be trusty to every wight!'

'Falssemblant,' quod Love, 'se  
 me,

Sith I thus have advauncéd thee  
 That in my court is thi dwellyng,  
 And of rilawdis shalt be my kyng,  
 Wolt thou wel holden my forwardis  
 'Yhe, sir, from hennes forewardis;  
 I hadde never youre fadir heere bifor  
 Servaunt so trewe, sith he was born

'That is ageynés all nature.'

'Sir, putte you in that aventure;  
 For though ye borowes take of me,  
 The sikerer shal ye never be  
 For ostages, ne sikirnese,  
 Or chartres, forto bere witnesse  
 I take youre self to recorde heere,  
 That men ne may, in no manere,  
 Teren the wolf out of his hide,  
 Til he be slayen bak and side,  
 Though men hym bete and al defil  
 What! Wene ye that I wole bigil  
 For I am clothéd mekely,  
 Ther-undir is all my trechery;  
 Myn herté chaungith never the mo

7314. *slayen*, MSS. *slayn*, 'uncorchit'

For noon abyt in which I go. 7320  
 (though I have chere of symplenesse,  
 am not wery of shrewidnesse.  
 syn lemman Streyneth-Abstynence,  
 hath myster of my purveaunce;  
 she hadde ful longe ago be dede,  
 were my counceyl and my rede;  
 sette hir allone and you and me.'

And Love answerde: 'I truste thee  
 Withoute bogowe for I wole noon.'

And Falssemblant, the thief, anon  
 tyght in that ilk samé place, 7331  
 that hadde of tresour al his face  
 tyght black withynne and white withoute,  
 thankyth hym, gan on his knees loute.

Thanne was thernought but 'Every man  
 how to assaut that sailen can,'  
 quod Love, 'and that full hardyly I'  
 'hanne armed they hem commonly  
 of sich armour as to hem selle. 7339  
 Vhanne the were armed fers and felle,  
 they wente hem forth all in a route,  
 and set the castel al aboute.  
 they will nought away for no drede,  
 till it so be that they ben dede,  
 or till they have the castel take.  
 and fouré batels they gan make,  
 and parted hem in fouré anon,  
 and toke her way and forth they gone,  
 the fouré gatés forto assaile,  
 of whiche the keepers wole not faile. 7350  
 or they ben neithir sike ne dede,  
 but hardy folk and stronge in dede.

Now wole I seyn the countynaunce

of Falssemblant and Abstynance,  
 that ben to Wikkid-Tongé went.  
 but first they heelde her parlement  
 whether it to doné were  
 to maken hem be knownen there,  
 or elles walken forth disgyed.  
 but at the lasté they devysed 7361  
 that they wolde gone in tapinage,  
 as it were in a pilgrimage,  
 yke good and hooly folk.unfeyned.  
 and Damé Abstynence-Streyned  
 toke on a robe of kameylene;  
 and gan hir graithe as a bygyne.  
 a largé coverchief of threde  
 he wrapped all aboute hir heele;  
 and she forgate not hir sawter;

A peire of bedis eke she bere 7370  
 Upon a lace all of white threde,  
 On which that she hir bedés bede.  
 But she ne bought hem never a dele,  
 For they were geven her I wote wele,  
 God wote, of a full hooly frere,  
 That seide he was hir fadir dere  
 To whom she haddé offer went  
 Than ony frere of his covent.

And he visited hir also,  
 And many a sermoun seide hir to; 7380  
 He noldé lette for man on lyve  
 That he ne wolde, hir ofté shrive,  
 And with so great devocion  
 They madé her confession,  
 That they had ofté, for the nones,  
 Two heedes in one hooode at ones.

Of fayre shappe I devyse her the,  
 But pale of face somtyme was she;  
 That falsé traytouresse untrewé,  
 Was lyke that salowe horse of hewe, 7390  
 That in the Apocalips is shewed,  
 That signifyeth tho folke beshrewed,  
 That ben al ful of trecherye  
 And palé through hypocrisye.  
 For on that horse no colour is,  
 But onely deed and pale y-wis,  
 Of suche a colour enlangoured  
 Was Abstynence i-wys coloured;  
 Of her estate she her repented,  
 As her visagé represented. 7400

She had a burdowne al of Thefte,  
 That Gyle had yeve her of his yefte;  
 And a skryppe of Faynte Distresse,  
 That ful was of elengénese.  
 And forthe she walkéd sobrelly;  
 And False Semblant saynt *je vous die*,  
 Had, as it were for suche mistere,  
 Done on the copé of a frere.  
 With cheré symple and ful pytous,  
 Hys lokyng was not disdeynous 7420  
 Ne proude, but meke and ful pesyble.  
 About his neck he bare a byle,  
 And squierly forthé gan he gon;

7385-7376 are lost from G.

7387. Th. *devysed*.

7392. Th. *to*; cp. note to 7270.

7406. *saynt* is generally taken for *ceint*,  
 'girdled'; but no such Eng. adj. is known. Fr.  
 is 'qui bien se ratorne.' I read *saynt*, i.e. *paie*.  
 7407. MSS. *And for Had*.

And, for to rest his lymmes upon,  
 He had of Treson a potent ;  
 As he were feble his way he went.  
 But in his sleve he gan to thring  
 A rasour sharpe, and wel bytyng,  
 That was forged in a forge, 7419  
 Whiche that men clepen Coupé-gorge.  
 So longé forthe her waye they nomen,  
 Tyl they to Wicked-Tonge comen.  
 That at his gaté was syttyng,  
 And sawe folke in the way passyng.  
 The pilgrymes sawe he fasté by,  
 That beren hem ful mekely,  
 And humbly they with him mette,  
 Dame Abstynence first him grette,  
 And sythe him False-Semblant salued,  
 And he hem ; but he not remeued, 7430  
 For he ne dredde hem not a dele.  
 For whan he sawe her faces wele,  
 Alway in herté hem thought so,  
 He shuldé knowe hem bothé two ;  
 For wel he knewe Dame Abstynauce,  
 But he ne knewe not Constreynauce.  
 He knewe nat that she was constrayned,  
 Ne of her thevès lufe [y-]fayned,  
 But wende she come of wyl al free ;  
 But she come in another degree ; 7440  
 And if of good wyl she beganne  
 That wyl was fayled her [as] thanne.  
 And False-Semblant had he sayne also,  
 But he knewe nat that he was false.  
 Yet false was he, but his falsnesse  
 Ne coude he nat espye nor gesse ;  
 For Semblant was so slyc wrought,  
 That Falsenesse he ne espyed nought.

But haddest thou knownen hym beforne  
 Thou woldest on a hoke have sworne, 7450  
 Whan thou him saugh in thylke araye,  
 That he that whilome was so gaye,  
 And of the dauncé joly Robyn,  
 Was tho become a Iacobyn.  
 But sothely what so menne hym calle,  
 Freres Prechours bene good menne alle,  
 Her order wickedly they beren,  
 Suche myn[é]strelles if they weren.

So bene Augustyns and Cordyleres  
 And Carmés, and eke Sackéd freeres 7460  
 And allé frerés, shodde and bare,

7442. MSS. omit *as*.7459. *Augustyns*, read *Austins*.

(Though some of hem bengret and sque  
 Ful hooly men, as I hem deme.  
 Everyche of hem wolde good man senn  
 But shalte thou never, of apparence  
 Séne conclude good consequence  
 In none argument y-wis  
 If existens al fayled is.  
 For menne maye fynde alwaye sophyr  
 The consequence to envenyme,  
 Who so that hath hadde the subtelte  
 The double sentence for to se.

Whan the pylgrymes comen were  
 To Wicked-Tonge that dwelled there  
 Her harneys nygh hem was algate ;  
 By Wicked-Tonge adowne they sate,  
 That badde hem nere him for to com  
 And of tidynge's telle him some,  
 And sayd hem : ' What case maketh  
 To come in-to this placé now ? '

' Sir,' sayd Strayned-Abstynauce,  
 ' We, for to dryé our penaunce  
 With hertés pytous and devoute  
 Are comen, as pylgrimes gon about  
 Wel nygh on fote alway we go ;  
 Ful dusty ben our heeles two.  
 And thus bothé we ben sent  
 Throughout this worlde that is misw  
 To yeve ensample, and preche also.  
 To fysshen synful menne we go,  
 For other fysshynge, ne fysshé we.  
 And, sir, for that charyte,  
 As we be wonte, herborowe we crav  
 Your lyfe to amendé, Christ it save,  
 And so it shulde you nat displese,  
 We wolden, if it were your ese,  
 A shorte sermon unto you sayne.'

And Wicked-Tonge answered agayn

' The house,' quod he, ' such as )  
 Shal nat be warnéd you for me,  
 Say what you lyst, and I wol here.'

' Graunt mercy, sweté sir, dere,'  
 Quod alderfirst Dame Abstynence,  
 And thus began she her sentence :

' Sir, the firste vertue certayne,  
 The greatest, and mooste soverayn  
 That may be founde in any man  
 For havynge or for wytte he can,  
 That is his tongé to refrayne.  
 Therto ought every wyght him payn

7486. Th. *doughty*.

For it is better stylle be  
Than for to speken harme, parde ; 7511  
And he that herkeneth it gladly,  
He is no good map sykerly.

And, sir, aboven al other synne,  
In that arte thou moste gilty inne.  
Thou spake a jape not long ago  
(And, sir, that was ryght yvel do)  
Of a yonge man, that here repayed  
And never yet this place apayred. 7520  
Thou saydest he awayted nothyng  
But to disceyve Fayre-Welcomyng.  
Ye sayde nothyng sothe of that ;  
But, sir, ye lye, I tel you plat ;  
He ne cometh no more, ne gothe, parde !  
I trowe ye shal him never se.

Fayre-Welcomyng in prison is,  
That ofte hath played with you er this  
The fayrest gamés that he coude,  
Withouté fylthé, styl or loudé ; 7530  
Nowe dare he nat him selfe solace.  
Ye han also the manne do chace,  
That he dare neyther come ne go ;  
What meveth you to hate him so,  
But properly your wicked thought,  
That many a false lesyng hath thought,  
That meveth your foole cloquence,  
That jangleth ever in audyence,  
And on the folke areyseth blame,  
And doth hem dishonour and shame, 7540  
For thyng that maye have no prevyng  
But lykelynesse, and contryvyng ?

For I dare sayne that reason demeth,  
It is nat al sothe thyng that semeth ;  
And it is synné to controve  
Thyng that is to reprove ;  
This wote ye wele ; and, sir, therefore  
Ye arne to blamé [wel] the more.  
And nathelesse he recketh lyte  
He yeveth nat nowe thero of a myte, 7550  
For if he thoughte harme, parfaye,  
He woldé comé and gone al daye ;  
He coudé himselfe nat abstene.  
Nowe cometh he nat, and that is sene,  
For he ne taketh of it no cure,  
But if it be through aventure,  
And lasse than other folke, algate.  
And thou her watchest at the gate,  
With speare in thyne arest alwaye ;

7531. Th. she nat her selfe.

There musé, musarde, al the daye. 7561  
Thou wakest night and day for thought ;  
I-wis thy travayle is for nought.  
And Ielousye, withouten fayle,  
Shal never quyte the thy travayle.  
And skathe is that Fayre-Welcomyng  
Withouten any trespassyng,  
Shal wrongfully in prison be,  
There wepeth and languyssheth he.  
And though thou never yet, y-wis,  
Agyltest manne no more but this,— 7570  
Take nat a grefe,—it were worthy  
To putte the out of this bayly,  
And afterwards in prison lye,  
And fette the, tyl that thou dye.  
For thou shalt for this synné dwelle  
Ryght in the devels ers of helle,  
But if that thou repenté thee.'

'Mafay, thou liest falsly !' quod he.  
'What? welcome with myschaunce !  
Have I therfore herberd yowe 7580  
To seye me shame, and eke reprove  
With sory happe, to youre bihove ?  
Am I to day youre herbegere ?  
Go herber yow elles-where than heere,  
That han a lyer called me !  
Two tregetours art thou and he,  
That in myn hous do me this shame,  
And for my sothe-saugh ye me blame.  
Is this the sermoun that ye make ?  
To all the develles I me take, 7590  
Or elles, God, thou me confounde !  
But er men diden this castel founde,  
It passith not ten daies or twelve  
But it was tolde right to my selve,  
And as they seide, right so tolde I :  
He kyst the Rosé pryvly !  
Thus seide I now and have seid yore ;  
I not where he dide any more.  
Why shulde men sey me such a thyng  
If it haddé bene gabbyng ? 7600  
Ryght so seide I and wol seye yit ;  
I trowe I liéd not of it.  
And with my bemés I wole blowe  
To allé neighboris a-rowe,  
How he hath bothé comen and gone.'  
Tho spake Falssemblant right anone :  
'All is not gospel, oute of doute,  
That men seyn in the towne aboute ;

7603. bemés, 'besuines,' trumpets.

Ley no deaf ere to my spekyng :  
 I swere yow, sir, it is gabbyng ; 7610  
 I trowe ye wote wel certeynly,  
 That no man loveth hym tenderly  
 That seith hym harme, if he wote it,  
 All be he never so pore of wit.  
 And soth is also sikerly  
 (This knowe ye, sir, as wel as I)  
 That lovers gladly wole visiten  
 The places there her loves habiten.  
 This man yow loveth and eke honoureth,  
 This man to servè you laboureth, 7620  
 And clepith you "his freend so deere,"  
 And this man makith you good chere,  
 And every-where that [he] you meteth  
 He yow saloweth and he you greteth.  
 He preseth not so ofte that ye  
 Ought of his come encombred be ;  
 Ther presen other folk on yow  
 Full oftter than he doth now.  
 And if his herte hym streyned so,  
 Unto the Rosè forto go, 7630  
 Ye shuldè hym sene so oftè nede,  
 That ye shulde take hym with the dede.  
 He cowde his comyng not forbere  
 Though he hym thrilled with a spere ;  
 It nere not thanne as it is now.  
 But trustith wel, I swere it yow,  
 That it is clene out of his thought ;  
 Sir, certis he ne thenkith it nought,  
 No more ne doth Faire-Welcomyng,  
 That sore abieth al this thing. 7640  
 And if they were of oon assent,  
 Full soonè were the Rosè hent,  
 The maugre youres woldè be.  
 And, sir, of o thing herkeneth me :  
 Sith ye this man that loveth yow  
 Han seid such harme and shamè now,  
 Witeth wel if he gessèd it,  
 Ye may wel demen in youre wit  
 He nolde no thyng love you so,  
 Ne callen you his freende also ; 7650  
 But nyght and day he wolde wake  
 The castell to destroie and take,  
 If it were soth as ye devise ;  
 Or some man in some maner wise,  
 Might it warne hym everydele,

7652a. *hym*, etc., indefinite pronouns.

Or by hymself perceyven wele.  
 For sith he myght not come and 'gone'  
 As he was whilom wont to done,  
 He myght it nonè witè and sec.  
 But now all other wise doth he. 7  
 Thanne have, [ye] sir, al outerly  
 Deserved helle, and Iolyly  
 The ðeth of hellè doutèles,  
 That thrallen folk so giltèles.  
 Fals Semblant proveth so this thing  
 That he can noon answeyng,  
 And seth alwey such apparaunce,  
 That nygh he fel in repentaunce  
 And seidel hym :—"Sir, it may wel be  
 Semblant, a good man semen ye ;  
 And, Abstinence, full wise ye seme ;  
 Of o talent you bothe I deme.  
 What counceil wole ye to me yeven ?'  
 'Ryght heere anon thou shalt be shryv  
 And sey thy synne withoutè more ;  
 Of this shalt thou repentè sore.  
 For I am prest, and have pouste  
 To shryve folk of most dignyte  
 That ben, as wide as world may dure  
 Of all this world I have the cure,  
 And that hadde never yit persoun,  
 Ne vicarie of no maner toun.  
 And, God wote, I have of thee  
 A thousand tyme more pitee  
 Than hath thi preest parochial,  
 Though he thy freend be special.  
 I have avauntage in o wise  
 That youre prelati ben not so wise,  
 Ne half so lettred as am I.  
 I am licenced boldely  
 To reie in Divinite  
 And to confessen, out of drede.  
 If ye wol you now confesse,  
 And leve your sinnès more and lesse  
 Withoutè abood, knele down anon,  
 And you shal have absolucion.'

7660. MSS. *wote* for *doth*.

7662a. *Iolyly* is generally interpreted as strengthening adverb equivalent to 'bien' of  
 but that is translated by *doutèles*. Such  
 of 'Jollyty' is difficult to explain. *fully*.

7691. G ends here with

To reden in Divinite  
 And longe have reui.

The French original goes on 9488 verses fur

# GLOSSARY

Words still in use, with substantially the same meaning, are not included in this Glossary, which is intended for working purposes and not as a concordance. In most cases, to help identification, one reference is given to each word, for each of its obsolete meanings; but in a few words of common occurrence, transferred to this Glossary from that in the Eversley Edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, these references are omitted. In the references the letters A-I denote the various sections of the *Canterbury Tales*, An. *Anelida and Arcite*, As. the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, Bl. the *De the Blanche*, Bo. the *Boece*, HF the *Hours of Fame*, L the *Legende of Good Women*, PF the *Parlement of Foules*, R the *Romannt of the Rose*, T *Troilus and Criseyde*. In the case of the *Hours of Fame* and *Troilus*, the index figures give the number of the book in which the line quoted occurs, thus T<sup>2</sup> 357 denotes *Troilus*, Bk. ii. l. 357. The letters *i* and *y* being often used interchangeably in manuscripts, most *y*-forms are arranged in the order of *i*.

A. card. num. one. T<sup>4</sup> 1407  
 A. interj. ah. A 1078, R 2627  
 A. prep. on, in. A 3516, A 854  
 A. v. have. R 4322  
 Abayed, Abaysched, Abayat, *p.p.* abashed  
 T<sup>2</sup> 1233, Bo. 36, E 317  
 Abaved, Abawed, *p.p.* abashed, confounded.  
 Bl. 613, R 3646  
 Abegge, *v.* atone for. A 3938  
 Abet, *sb.* instigation. T<sup>2</sup> 357  
 Abit, abideth. G 1175  
 Abite, *sb.* habit, dress. R 4914  
 Able, *adj.* fit, apt. A 167  
 Ablyng, *p. pres.* giving power to. Bo. 220  
 Ablucions, *sb.* washings. G 846  
 Aboud, *sb.* abiding, delay, A 965; Abodes, *p.*  
 T<sup>2</sup> 854  
 Aboughte, *pres.* of Abye. A 2101  
 Aboven, *adv.* uppermost in luck. R 4352  
 Abrayde. *See* Abreyde  
 Abregge, *v.* abridge. A 2999  
 Abreyde, *v.* awake, start. T<sup>2</sup> 1113, A 2999 (*p.p.*)  
 Abroche, *v.* broach. D 177  
 Abusoun, *sb.* an abuse, scandal. T<sup>4</sup> 990, 1060  
 Abye, *v.* pay for. C 765, Bo. 1350  
 Accesse, *sb.* fever-fit. T<sup>2</sup> 1543  
 Accident, *sb.* occurrence, T<sup>2</sup> 918; changing  
 attribute, E 607  
 Accidie, *sb.* moral sloth. I 677  
 Accordant, *adj.* agreeable to. A 37  
 Accordon. *See* Accord  
 Accusement, *sb.* accusation. T<sup>4</sup> 556  
 Achaat, *sb.* buying. A 571  
 Achatours, *sb.* buyers. A 563  
 Achekked, *p.p.* checked. III<sup>2</sup> 1003  
 Achoken, *v.* suffocate, Bo. 441; Achoked, *p.p.*  
 choked, L 8008  
 Acholoth, *pres.* lames, hinders. PF 517  
 Acontyng, *sb.* reckoning. Bo. 41  
 Accord, *pres.* agree. L 3

Accorded, *pres.* suited. A 243  
 Accorse, *v.* accuse. T<sup>2</sup> 1072  
 Acoore, *v.* caress, appease. T<sup>2</sup> 782, R 3564  
 Adamant, Adamaund, *sb.* ironstone, A 1990;  
 magnet, R 1182  
 Adawe, *v.* awake, T<sup>2</sup> 1120; Adawed, *p.p.* E  
 2400  
 Adrad, *p.p.* afraid. A 605  
 Advertance, *sb.* attention. G 467  
 Advocacyes, *sb.* pl. pleas. T<sup>2</sup> 1469  
 Aferd, *p.p.* afraid. A 628  
 Affecoun, *sb.* desire. A 1158, I. 1522  
 Affectes, *sb.* pl. desires. T<sup>2</sup> 1391  
 Afye, *v.* trust. R 3155  
 Afle, *v.* polish. A 712  
 Afraye, *v.* fright. E 455  
 Afyne, *adv.* finally. R 3690  
 Aforne, *adv.* before. R 3614  
 Afor-yein, *prep.* opposite. T<sup>2</sup> 1188  
 Afounde, *v.* perish. Rosmounde 21  
 After-tales, *adv.* afterwards. T<sup>2</sup> 224  
 Agayn, Agayns, *prep.* toward, against, in the  
 presence of. B 391, A 1509, C 743  
 Agaynard, *adv.* back. B 441  
 A-game, *adv.* in sport. T<sup>2</sup> 568  
 Agaste, *v.* terrify. T<sup>2</sup> 901  
 Aggregated, *p.p.* aggravated. B 2205  
 Aggregeth, *v. pres.* aggravates. B 2475  
 Agliten, *v.* offend. L 435  
 Ago, Agon, *p.p.* departed, E 1764; past, C 246  
 Agree, *v.* please. T<sup>2</sup> 409  
 Agrief, *adv.* sorrowfully. B 4083  
 Agryse, *v.* be horrified, shudder at. B 614,  
 D 1649  
 Agroos, Agrose, *pres.* of Agryse. L 830, 2314  
 Agrotayd, *p.p.* surfeited. L 2454  
 Aguler, *sb.* needle-case. R 98  
 Alal, *sb.* grandfather. A 2477  
 Ajourne, *v.* adjourn. ABC 158  
 Aketoun, *sb.* quilted tunic. B 2050

# GLOSSARY

- Aknowe**, *v.* acknowledge. Bo. 140  
**Al**, *adj.* all, A 2959; **Al** and **som**, the whole, everybody, A 2761, 3136  
**Al**, *adv.* wholly, A 2968; **Al**, *conj.* although, I. 1392  
**Al**, *sb.* awl. *Truth* 11  
**Alambio**, *sb.* alembic. T<sup>4</sup> 520  
**Alaunts**, *sb.* boarhounds. A 2148  
**Alayes**, *sb.* alloys. E 1167  
**Al-day**, *adv.* continually. B 1702  
**Alder**, *prefix*, of all; **Oure alder**, of us all, R 6948  
**Alenge**, *adj.* wretched. B 1412  
**Alestake**, *sb.* pole bearing alehouse sign. A 667  
**Aloye**, *sb.* alley. R 1758  
**Aloys**, *sb.* *pl.* fruit of the wild service tree. R 1377  
**Algate**, *adv.* always, A 571; any way, A 3762  
**Algates**, *adv.* any way. T<sup>2</sup> 24  
**Aliene**, *v.* alienate. Bo. 237  
**Alienat**, *p.p.* placed in lines. HF<sup>2</sup> 34 (*emend.*)  
**Alkamystre**, *sb.* alchemist. G 1204  
**Alis**, *dat. sing.* (Bl. 1284) and *nom. plur.* (Bl. 1051) of **Al**  
**Allege**, *v.* (1) allege, E 1658; quote (*pres.*) HF<sup>1</sup> 314; (2) alleviate (allegith), R 2588  
**Aller**, *gen. plur.* of **Al**. A 823  
**All-oute**, *adv.* entirely. R 4326  
**Allowe**, *v. pres.* approve. F 676  
**Almaderes**, *sb.* *pl.* almond-trees. R 1363  
**Almosse**, *sb.* alms. B 163  
**Almycauteris**, *sb.* *pl.* circles or parallels of altitude. As. i. § 13  
**Almury**, *sb.* the pointer of an astrolabe. As. i. § 22  
**Along on**, *prep.* owing to. T<sup>2</sup> 1211  
**Alose**, *v.* praise, T<sup>4</sup> 1473; **Alosed**, *p.p.* R 2354  
**Alpes**, *sb.* *pl.* bullfinches. R 658  
**Als**, *adv.* as. A 170  
**Alwa**, *adv.* also. A 4085  
**Alther**, *prefix*, of all  
**Altitude**, *sb.* the elevation of a star, etc., above the horizon. As. i. § 1, 13  
**Al to**, *intensive prefix*, e.g. **Alto-share**, *pret.* cut in pieces. R 1258  
**Always**, *adv.* at all events. T<sup>2</sup> 293  
**Amadriades**, *sb.* *pl.* hamadryads. A 2728  
**Amalgamyng**, *sb.* the compounding of quicksilver with some other metal. G 771  
**Amannued**, *p.p.* diminished. Bo. 118  
**Amayed**, *p.p.* dismayed. T<sup>4</sup> 641  
**Ambages**, *sb.* *pl.* duplicities. T<sup>2</sup> 897  
**Ambes as**, both aces, double ace. B 124  
**Ambere**, *sb.* easy-paced horse. A 469  
**Amaled**, *p.p.* enamelled. R 1280  
**Amenuse**, *v.* diminish, I 358; depreciate, I 496  
**Amenusyng**, *sb.* diminution. Bo. 428  
**Amercements**, *sb.* *pl.* fines. A 1752  
**Amoved**, *pret.* changed; **Amoved**, *p.p.* disturbed. Bo. 25  
**Amyddes**, *prep.* in the midst of. A 2009  
**Amynistreth**, *pres.* administers. Bo. 1467  
**Amoved**. See **Amoved**  
**Amonesten**, *v.* warn, admonish. I 76  
**Amorettes**, *sb.* *pl.* amorous girls. R 692, 4755  
**Amphibologies**, *sb.* *pl.* equivocations. T<sup>4</sup> 1406  
**An**, *prep.* in, on. Bo. 1668  
**Anelle**, *sb.* handmaid. ABC 109  
**Ankle**, *sb.* ankle. A 1600  
**Anore**, *sb.* anchor. *Fortune* 38  
**And**, *conj.* if. L 1790  
**Angry**, *adv.* grievously. R 3511  
**Angres**, *sb.* *pl.* griefs. R 2554  
**Angry**, *adj.* grievous. R 2628  
**Angryssous**, **angryssous**, *adj.* anxious. Bo. 482, 603  
**Anientissed**, *p.p.* annihilated. B 2435  
**Anker**, *sb.* (1) anchor, R 3780; (2) anchore. R 6348  
**Anlaas**, *sb.* dagger. A 357  
**Annulester**, *sb.* priest singing anniversary mass. G 1012  
**Anon-right**, *adv.* forthwith. I. 115  
**Anoyouse**, *adj.* *p.p.* troublesome. I 728  
**Antiphoner**, *sb.* book of anthems. B 1709  
**Anvelt**, *sb.* anvil. Bl. 1164  
**Aornement**, *sb.* adornment. I 432  
**Apayed**, *p.p.* pleased, contented. L 766, 649  
**Apalsen**, *pres.* *pl.* appease. T<sup>2</sup> 22  
**Appaled**. See **Appalled**  
**Aparaunce**, *sb.* appearance. I. 1372  
**Assayed**, *p.p.* passed away. Bo. 429  
**Aspyren**, *v.* impair, depreciate. I 1078, A 31  
**Apert**, *adj.* open, frank. I. 1114  
**Apertenant**, *adj.* belonging to. *Pite* 70  
**Apertenen**, *v.* belong to. I 410  
**Apertly**, *adv.* openly, clearly. I 294  
**Apiked**, *p.p.* trimmed. A 365  
**A-poynt**, *adv.* exactly. T<sup>2</sup> 1620  
**Apoinde**, *reflex v.* make up one's mind. T<sup>2</sup> 6  
**Appalled**, *p.p.* made pale or feeble. F 365, 1292  
**Apparaille**, *sb.* apparel. ABC 153  
**Apparalliments**, *sb.* *pl.* garments. Bo. 465  
**Apparailien**, *v.* prepare. B 2530  
**Appetite**, *sb.* desire, lust. A 1680, I. 1586  
**Appetiteth**, *pres.* *s.* seeks. I. 1582  
**Apposed**, *pret.* examined. G 363  
**Approved**, *p.p.* approved, confirmed. E 13, 1, 21  
**Approped**, *p.p.* appropriated, peculiar to. *Gi llesse* 18  
**Approwours**, *sb.* *pl.* informers. D 1343  
**Aqueyntaunce**, *sb.* acquaintance. A 245  
**Aqueynto**, *v.* acquaint. Bl. 531  
**Araos**, *v.* tear away, F 1393; **Araed**, *to* Bo. 80  
**Arbitre**, *sb.* choice. Bo. 1674  
**Arblasters**, *sb.* *pl.* crossbowmen. R 4196  
**Archaungell**, *sb.* titmouse. R 915  
**Ardaunt**, *adj.* ardent, burning. Bo. 1394  
**Arede**, *v.* interpret. Bl. 289  
**Aresoneth**, *pres.* controverts. R 6220  
**Arest**, *sb.* See **Arrest**  
**Arette**, *v.* account, attribute, A 726, R 335  
**Aretted**, A 729  
**Arewa**, *adv.* in a row. D 1254  
**Argolle**, *sb.* crude tartar made from crum wine. G 813  
**Arguments**, *sb.* *pl.* angles on which tabular quantities depend in astronomy. F 1277  
**Aryght**, *adv.* exactly. A 867  
**Arist**, *pres.* arithmet. B 265  
**Arist**, *sb.* arising. As. ii. § 12 [200]  
**Aryve**, *sb.* disembarkation. A 60 (*var.*)  
**Aryved**, *p.p.* sent to land. Bo. 1312  
**Armeo**, *sb.* expedition. A 60 (*Elleamere*)  
**Armypotente**, *adj.* mighty in arms. A 2441  
**Armonyak**, *adj.* Armenian; ammoniac. G 1  
**Armonyse**, *sb.* harmony. PF 63  
**Ara**, *pres. pl.* are. T<sup>4</sup> 972

**Arroume**, *adv.* at large. HF<sup>2</sup> 33  
**A-rowe**, *adv.* in a row. L 534  
**Arrete**, *sb.* socket of a spear. A 2602  
**Arreste**, *sb.* restraint, delay. I. 307, 806  
**Arrygage**, *sb.* disembarking. HF<sup>1</sup> 223  
**Armetrik**, *sb.* arithmetic. A 1898  
**Arten**, *v.* constrain. T<sup>1</sup> 388  
**Artyk**, *adj.* arctic. As. i. § 14  
**Artow**, *art* thou. A 1141  
**Arwes**, *sb. pl.* arrows. A 107  
**Ascapen**, *pres. pl.* escape. Bo. 1361  
**Ascaunoe**, *adv.* as though, forsooth. G 838  
**Ascendent**, *sb.* planetary influence. A 477; *see* As. ii. § 4 [154-165]  
**Asory**, *sb.* shout. T<sup>2</sup> 611  
**Ashen**, *sb. pl.* ashes. A 1364  
**Aslake**, *v.* abate. A 353; **Aslaked**, A 1760  
**Aslope**, *adv.* aside, crossly. R 4454  
**Aspe**, *sb.* aspen tree. A 2021, PF 180  
**Aspetes**, *sb. pl.* planetary relations. T<sup>2</sup> 682  
**Aspyen**, *v.* espy. T<sup>2</sup> 649  
**Aspre**, *adj.* rough, bitter. An. 23, Bo. 590  
**Aspreness**, *sb.* bitterness. Bo. 1370  
**Assantes**, *sb. pl.* assaults. I 729  
**Assay**, *sb.* experiment. I 9  
**Assaye**, *v.* assay, try. Bl. 346  
**Assaged**, *p.p.* besieged. A 881  
**Assent**, *sb.* agreement, plot. C 758, I. 1547  
**Assente**, *v.* agree to. A 374  
**Asseth**, *adv.* enough; **Make asseth**, satisfy, R 5600  
**Asby**, *adj.* sprinkled with ashes. A 2883  
**Assize**, *sb.* assize. A 314  
**Assolien**, *v.* absolve. C 939; discharge, Bo. 1621; resolve, Bo. 1677  
**Assollying**, *sb.* absolution. A 661  
**Assure**, *sb.* assurance. An. 331  
**Astate**, *sb.* estate. R 6356  
**Asterte**, *v.* start away, escape. A 1595; **A-start**, **Asterted**, *p.p.* A 1592, B 437  
**Astonyed**, *p.p.* astonished. HF<sup>2</sup> 411, A 2361  
**Astonyng**, *sb.* astonishment. Bo. 55  
**A-stored**, *p.p.* stored, provided. A 609  
**Astromye**, *sb.* astronomy. A 3451  
**Asure**, *sb.* blue. An. 330  
**Aswaved**, *p.p.* dazed. HF<sup>2</sup> 41  
**It-after**, *prep.* after. F 1921, F 302  
**Itake**, *v.* overtake. G 566  
**Itanes**, *adv.* at once. A 4074  
**Itasir**, *sb.* adverse planetary influence. B 305  
**Iteyne**, *v.* attain, *Mars* 161; **Iteynt**, *p.p.* attained, comprehended, Bo. 275  
**Itempraunoe**, *sb.* temperament. Bo. 1496  
**Itempre**, *adj.* temperate. I. 128, 1483, B 2177  
**Ithinken**, *v.* vex. T<sup>2</sup> 878  
**Ityr**, *sb.* attire. I 430, T<sup>1</sup> 181  
**Itou**, *adv.* together. F 437  
**Itones**, **Ittonnes**, *adv.* at once. I. 102  
**Itrede**, *v.* outwit, surpass in advice. A 2449  
**Itrenne**, *v.* outrun. A 2449  
**Itamed**, *p.p.* broached. H 4008  
**Itte**, *at the*. A 125, R 4192  
**Itempre**. *See* **Atempre**  
**Ithamant**, *sb.* adamant. A 1305  
**Itour**, *sb.* attire. R 3718  
**Itricioun**, *sb.* contrition. T<sup>1</sup> 557  
**Itry**, *adj.* venomous. I 583  
**Itwix**, **Atwixen**, *adv.* between. As. ii. § 5 [173], T<sup>2</sup> 886  
**Iwynne**, *adv.* apart. A 3589

**Autoritee**, *sb.* authority, especially of an esteemed writer. R 2394  
**Autour**, *sb.* author. L 470  
**Angrym**, *sb.* arithmetical notation, As. i. § 8; **Angrym stones**, arithmetical counters, A 3210  
**Augment**, *v.* augment. R 5597  
**Augelyke**, *adv.* angel-like. I. 236  
**Auntred**, *pres.* adventured. A 1205  
**Auntrous**, *adj.* adventurous. A 2009  
**Autentyke**, *adj.* authentic. Bl. 1085  
**Auter**, *sb.* altar. A 1905  
**Avale**, *v.* fall, T<sup>2</sup> 626; doff, A 3122; descend, Bo. 1558  
**Avaunoe**, *v.* profit. A 246  
**Avaunt**, *adv.* forward. R 4790  
**Avaunt**, *sb.* boast, bold statement. T<sup>2</sup> 289, A 227  
**Avauntour**, *sb.* boaster. B 4107  
**Avenaunt**, *adj.* comely, suitable. R 1263, 3679  
**Aventaille**, *sb.* helmet's front. E 1204  
**Aventourous**, *adj.* accidental. Bo. 248  
**Aventure**, *sb.* adventure, chance. A 1160, 844  
**Avys**, *sb.* deliberation. A 786, T<sup>2</sup> 453  
**Avyse**, *pres.* observe, look to. E 1988  
**Avysement**, *sb.* deliberation. T<sup>4</sup> 936  
**Avisloun**, *sb.* vision. Bl. 285  
**Avowtrie**, *sb.* adultery. B 2220  
**Await**, *sb.* watch, H 149; delay, T<sup>2</sup> 580;  
**Awaytes**, ambushes, strategies, Bo. 778  
**Awaytour**, *sb.* one who lies in wait. Bo. 1306  
**Awen**, *adj.* own. A 4239  
**Awmenere**, **Awmere**, *sb.* nlms-bag. R 2087, 2271  
**Awroke**, *v.* avenge, *Pite* 11; **Awroken**, *p.p.* A 3752  
**Axe**, *pres.* ask. A 1739  
**Axyng**, *sb.* asking, question. A 1826, Bl. 33  
**Ay**, *adv.* always. A 63  
**Ayeins**, *prep.* against. I. 330  
**Aysynward**, *adv.* on the other hand. T<sup>4</sup> 1027  
**Aimutes**, *sb. pl.* divisions of an astrolabe. As. i. § 19  
**Ba**, *imperat.* kiss. A 3709  
**Baar**, *pres.* bare. A 1180  
**Babewynnes**, *sb. pl.* (baboons) grotesques. HF<sup>2</sup> 99  
**Bachelrys**, *sb.* the bachelors. E 270  
**Baggeth**, *pres.* squints. Bl. 622  
**Baggyngly**, *adv.* squintingly. R. 292  
**Bailie**, *sb.* jurisdiction, R. 4217; **Bailly**, bailiff, R 6331  
**Baiten**, *v.* feed. B 466, T<sup>1</sup> 193  
**Bak**, *sb.* backcloth. G 881 (*var.*)  
**Balaunoe**, *sb.*; **In balaunoe**, at hazard, in uncertainty. G 611, R 4667  
**Bale**, *sb.* harm. Bl. 534  
**Balkes**, *sb. pl.* beams. A 3626  
**Balled**, *adj.* bald. A 108  
**Banes**, *sb. pl.* bones. A 4073  
**Bar**, *pres.* bare; **Bar on honde**, accused, T<sup>2</sup> 1154, An. 158  
**Barbe**, *sb.* a kind of veil. T<sup>2</sup> 110  
**Barbour**, *sb.* barber-surgeon. A 2025  
**Barbre**, *adj.* barbarous. A 281  
**Bareyne**, *adj.* barren. A 1244  
**Barrel**, *sb.* harrel. B 3083  
**Bargayn**, *sb.* strife. R 2551  
**Barm**, *sb.* bosom. F 631  
**Barm-clooth**, *sb.* apron. A 3936



**Barres**, *sb. pl.* cross-stripes. A 329, R 1103  
**Barryage**, *sb.* cross-striping. I 417  
**Basilisk**, *sb.* basilisk. I 853  
**Battailed**, *p.p.* battlemented, indented. B 4090  
**Battalies**, *sb. pl.* battle. A 01  
**Bate**, *sb.* strife. R 4235  
**Bathe**, *adj.* both. A 4087  
**Bauderie**, *sb.* gaiety. A 1926  
**Baudy**, *adj.* dirty. G 635  
**Baundon**, *sb.* control. R 1163  
**Bawdryk**, *sb.* baldrick, belt. A 116  
**Bawme**, *sb.* balm. T<sup>2</sup> 53, HF<sup>2</sup> 596  
**Bayard**, *sb.* proverbial name for a horse. G 1413  
**Be-**. See also **Bi**  
**Be**, *prep.* by. Bl. 1330  
**Beautee**, *sb.* beauty. A 1926  
**Bechen**, *adj.* made of beech. G 1160  
**Beche**, *Beche*, *v.* offer. T<sup>2</sup> 185, G 1065  
**Bechee**, *sb. pl.* beads. A 159  
**Bedrede**, *adj.* bedridden. E 1292  
**Beche**, *adj.* good, fine. B 1599  
**Been**, *v.* to be. A 140; *pres. pl.* B 122  
**Bees**, *sb. pl.* bees. F 205  
**Beere**, *sb.* beer. B 1515  
**Beet**, *pres.* touched. R 129  
**Beete**, *v.* kindle. A 2253  
**Beete**, *v.* mend. A 3927  
**Beggere**, *s.* (beggar woman) beggar. A 242  
**Behoth**, *pres.* promises. Bl. 620  
**Bekked**, *pres.* nodded. T<sup>2</sup> 1265  
**Beknew**, *pres.* confessed. L 1058  
**Bela**, *adj.* fair. T<sup>2</sup> 288  
**Belweeth**, *pres.* bellows. HF<sup>2</sup> 703  
**Bely**, *sb.* bellows. I 351  
**Bely-naked**, *adj.* stark naked. E 1326  
**Beme**, *sb.* trumpet. B 4588  
**Bemd**, *sb.* strap. R 1079  
**Bemdyng**, *sb.* slant-striping. I 417  
**Benedicite**, *Benedicite*, blest ye. B 1170, T<sup>1</sup> 780  
**Bente**, *sb. dat.* grassy slope. A 1781  
**Be-nymen**, *v.* take away. Bo. 1282  
**Berd**, *sb.* beard. A 332; **Make a berd**, outwit, A 4066; so **Berdes**, deceive, HF<sup>2</sup> 181  
**Bere**, *sb.* (1) bear. A 1640; (2) beer, *Pite* 105; (3) pillow-case, Bl. 254; pillow, T<sup>2</sup> 1638  
**Bere**, *v.* bear, carry. B 3564  
**Bere on hond**, accuse falsely, D 393; cheat into believing, D 232  
**Bere thurgh**, pierce. A 2256  
**Berynge**, *sb.* behaviour. B 2022  
**Berne**, *sb.* yeast. G 513  
**Berne**, *sb. dat.* barn. A 3258  
**Besaunt-wright**, weighing a bezant. R 1106  
**Beseve**, *p.p.* beseech. Bl. 828  
**Best**, *sb.* best. A 1076  
**Best**, *adj. comp.* better, B 311; *adv.* A 242; **Go best**, go quickly, L 1213  
**Bete**. See **Beete**  
**Beth**, *pres.* be, are. A 178  
**Betten**, *p.p.* kindled. G 518  
**Boye**, *v.* buy. G 637  
**Bibbed**, *p.p.* drunk. A 4162  
**Bi-blodde**, *p.p.* bloodied. A 9002  
**Bloched**, *p.p.* cursed. C 656  
**Bi-clappe**, *v.* clap down, trap. G 9  
**Bi-dashed**, *p.p.* fooled. E 1191  
**Biddyng**, *sb.* praying. G 140  
**Bien**, *pres. pl.* buy. R 2452  
**Bier**, *sb.* buyer. R 5928

**Bygyns**, *sb. pl.* béguines. R 6861  
**Bygoon**, *p.p.* begone, clothed. R 943  
**Bihete**, *sb.* promise. B 41  
**Bihete**, *Bihete*, *v.* promise. A 1854  
**Bihight**, *p.p.* promised  
**Byhove**, *sb.* profit. R 1092  
**Bihove**, *adj.* advantageous. T<sup>2</sup> 261  
**Bi-japed**, *p.p.* tricked. A 1585  
**Biknowe**, *v.* confess. A 1556  
**Bildere**, *sb.* for *adj.* builder. PF 176  
**Biles**, *sb. pl.* beaks. HF<sup>2</sup> 360  
**Bileve**, *sb.* belief, creed. A 3456  
**Bille**, *sb.* petition. C 166  
**Bimene**, *v.* bemoan. R 2667  
**Bynymeth**, *pres.* takes away from. I 335  
**Biseken**, *pres. pl.* beseech. A 918  
**Bisemare**, *sb.* abusiveness. A 3965  
**Bisette**, *pres.* employed. A 279  
**Biseye**, *p.p.* beseen; **Yvele** (richely) bisey of an ill (rich) appearance. E 965, 984  
**Bi-shot**, *p.p.* shut up. T<sup>2</sup> 602  
**Blamoterod**, *p.p.* soiled. A 76  
**Blatad**, *p.p.* beheaded. B 649  
**Bit**, *biddeth*. A 187  
**Bitake**, *pres.* commend to. A 3750  
**Biteche**, *pres.* commit to. B 2114  
**Bitymes**, *adv.* betimes, speedily. G 1006  
**Bitit**, *biddeth*. T<sup>2</sup> 48  
**Bitore**, *sb.* bittern. I 972  
**Bitrayed**, **Bitreshed**, *p.p.* betrayed. B 35 R 1648  
**Bitrent**, *pres.* clasps, encircles. T<sup>2</sup> 1231, T<sup>4</sup> 8  
**Blwre**, *v.* betray. A 2229  
**Blakeberrid**, *goon* a, go blackberrying, where they will. C 406  
**Blaked**, *p.p.* blackened. B 3321  
**Blanche**, *adj.* white. T<sup>1</sup> 916  
**Blankmanger**, *sb.* blanc-mange. A 357  
**Blasen**, *v.* blare. HF<sup>2</sup> 712  
**Bleyno**, *sb.* blain. R 553  
**Bleynye**, *pres.* bleached. A 1078  
**Blemessched**, *p.p.* injured. Bo. 170  
**Blendith**, *pres.* blinds. Bo. 1381  
**Blere**, *v.* blind. A 4049  
**Bleve**, *v.* remain. T<sup>2</sup> 621  
**Blynne**, *v.* cease. G 1171, R 6611  
**Blyve**, *adv.* quickly. A 2697  
**Blo**, *adj.* blue. HF<sup>2</sup> 557  
**Bloomas**, *sb. pl.* blossoms. L 143  
**Blowyng**, *p.p.* panting. Bo. 1267  
**Bohaunce**, *sb.* boast. D 569  
**Boch**, *sb.* swelling. Bo. 693  
**Bocher**, *sb.* butcher. A 9025  
**Bode**, *sb.* delay. An. 119  
**Boden**, *p.p.* hidden. L 366  
**Boes**, *pres.* it behoves. A 4027  
**Boydakin**, *sb.* bodkin, dagger. B 3892  
**Boyste**, *sb.* box. C 307  
**Boystous**, *adj.* rough. H 211  
**Bokeler**, *sb.* buckler. A 112, 3266  
**Boket**, *sb.* bucket. A 1533  
**Bolas**, *sb.* bullace. R 1387  
**Boles**, *sb. pl.* bulla. A 2139  
**Bon**, *adj.* good. HF<sup>2</sup> 514  
**Bone**, *sb.* prayer. Bl. 824  
**Boole**, *sb.* astringent earth. G 790  
**Boon**, *sb.* bone. A 1177  
**Boor**, *sb.* boar. A 9070  
**Boos**, *sb.* bone. A 3266  
**Boost**, **Booste**, *sb.* talk, outcry. A 4001, I.

# GLOSSARY

**Boat**, *pret.* bit. B 3791  
**Boat**, *sb.* boat. E 1424  
**Boote**, *sb.* remedy. A 424  
**Borax**, *sb.* borax. A 630  
**Bord**, *sb.* (1) a table, A 52; (2) ship's side, A 358  
**Bordels**, *sb. pl.* brothels. I 885  
**Bordillers**, *sb. pl.* keepers of brothels. R 7034  
**Borel**, *Burel*, *adj.* coarse, common. B 3145, D 1872, F 716  
**Borken**, *pret.* barked. Ho. 106  
**Borneth**, *pres.* burnishes. T 327  
**Borwe**, *sb.* pledge, surety. A 1622, B 2995  
**Bosarde**, *sb.* bazzard. R 4033  
**Boste**. See **Boost**  
**Bote**, (1) remedy; (2) boat. See **Boot**  
**Botel**, *sb.* bottle. H 141  
**Boteler**, *sb.* butler. HF 84  
**Bother**, *gen.* of both. T 168  
**Bothom**, *sb.* bud. R 2960  
**Botme**, *sb.* bottom. G 1321  
**Botorun**, *sb.* bud. R 1721  
**Bouk**, *sb.* body. A 2746  
**Boun**. See **Bown**  
**Bountee**, *sb.* goodness. B 1656  
**Bourde**, *pres.* jest, C 778; **Bourded**, *p.p.* jested, PF 589  
**Bourde**, *sb. dat.* jest. H 81  
**Boures**, *sb. gen.* bedchamber. A 3677  
**Bourgerons**, *sb. pl.* sodomites. R 7022  
**Bowes**, *sb. pl.* boughs. A 1642  
**Bown**, *adj.* ready. F 1503  
**Bracer**, *sb.* arm-guard. A 1111  
**Brads**, *adj.* broad. R 4200  
**Bragot**, *sb.* ale and mead. A 3261  
**Brayd**, *p.p.* started. An. 124  
**Brayde**, *sb.* restless turn, I. 1166; **At a braid**, immediately, R 1366  
**Brak**, *pret.* broke  
**Brast**, *pret.* burst  
**Brat**, *sb.* cloak. G 811  
**Bratful**, *adj.* See **Bretful**  
**Brawn**, *sb.* muscle, A 546; *pl.* A 2135  
**Brede**, *sb.* roast meat. HF 132  
**Brede**, *sb.* breadth. A 3811  
**Breyde**, *v.* start, awake. A 4283  
**Broke**, *v.* break. A 551  
**Broke**, *sb.* flaw. H 919  
**Brome**, *adj.* fierce, T 184; *adv.* A 1699  
**Bren**, *sb.* bran. A 4053  
**Brennon**, *v.* burn, B 111; *p.p.* brent, brend, R 1109  
**Brennyngs**, *sb.* burning. A 906  
**Breves**, *sb. pl.* briars. R 3006  
**Bresten**, *v.* burst. A 1080  
**Bretful**, **Bratful**, *adj.* full to the brim. A 687, 2164  
**Breve**, *adj.* brief. R 2350  
**Brybe**, *v.* steal, cheat. A 4417, D 1378  
**Briberyes**, *sb. pl.* rascalities. A 1307  
**Bryd**, *sb.* bird. A 3805  
**Brygo**, *sb.* quarrel. B 2870  
**Bryhte**, *adj.* bright. ABC 181  
**Brike**, *sb.* trap. B 3580  
**Brocage**, *sb.* brokery, jnbberry. A 3375  
**Broche**, *sb.* brooch. Mars 245  
**Brode**, *adj.* broad. A 739  
**Broyded**, *p.p.* braided. A 1049  
**Brokkyngs**, *p. pres.* warbling. A 3377  
**Bromes**, *sb. pl.* broom bushes. HF 136

**Brondes**, *sb. pl.* brands, torches. A 2338  
**Brood**, *adj.* broad. A 549  
**Brotel**, **Brutel**, *adj.* brittle, unstable. I. 1885, 2556, Bo. 421  
**Brouke**, *v.* enjoy, usc. B 4490, L 194  
**Browdyng**, *sb.* embroidery. A 2498  
**Browken**. See **Brouke**  
**Brustles**, *sb. pl.* bristles. A 556  
**Brutel**. See **Brotel**  
**Bukke**, *sb.* buck; **Blow the bukkes horn**, have trouble for nothing. A 3387  
**Bulte**, *v.* sift. B 4430  
**Bulte**, *pret.* built. A 1548  
**Burdons**, *sb. pl.* burdens. R 6908  
**Burdoun**, *sb.* (1) bass, A 673; (2) cudgel, R 3401  
**Burel**. See **Borel**  
**Burned**, *p.p.* burnished. A 1983  
**Burnet**, *adj.* of brown material, R 226; **Burnettes**, *pl.* dresses of brown, R 4756  
**Busk**, *sb.* bush. A 2013, R 54  
**But-if**, *conj.* unless. A 351  
**Buxom**, *adj.* obedient. B 1432  
**By**, *prep.* concerning. I. 271  
**By and by**, *adv.* side by side, in order. A 1011, I. 304  
**Byle**, *sb.* beak. B 4051  
**Bynt**, hindeth. Mars 47  
**Bytrashed**, *p.p.* betrayed. R 3910  
**Caas**. See **Oas**  
**Caytyves**, *sb. pl.* wretches. A 924  
**Calcoeing**, *sb.* calculation. G 771  
**Calculinge**, *sb.* reckoning. T 71  
**Calewels**, *sb. pl.* pears. R 7043  
**Calculer**, *sb.* the pointer of an astrolabe  
**Callo**, *sb.* head-dress. D 1018, T 775; *cp.* Howve  
**Cam**, *pret.* came. A 547  
**Camaille**, *sb.* camel. E 1196  
**Camuse**, *adj.* flat. A 3934  
**Canell-boon**, *sb.* collar-bone. Bl. 942  
**Canell**, *sb.* cinnamon. I. 1370  
**Canevas**, *sb.* canvas  
**Canker-dort**, *sb.* state of suffering. T 1752  
**Cantel**, *sb.* portion. A 3008  
**Cape**, *pres. pl.* gape. T 1133  
**Capitayn**, *sb.* captain. B 3741  
**Capul**, *sb.* palfrey. A 4088  
**Cardynale**, *sb.* heart-disease. C 313  
**Carayne**, *sb.* carcass, B 3814; corpse, A 2013  
**Carf**, *pret.* carved. A 700  
**Carriage**, *sb.* toll, tax. R 21, I 752, Bo. 118  
**Carl**, *sb.* churl. A 545  
**Carmes**, *sb. pl.* Carmelites. R 7460  
**Carpe**, *v.* chatter. A 194  
**Carryk**, *sb.* ship of burden. D 1688  
**Cas**, *sb.* case, quiver. A 2080  
**Cas**, *sb.* case, fortune, A 1411; chance, A 844;  
**Oas**, *pl.* law-cases, A 323  
**Caste**, *pret.* devised, B 406; reckoned, A 2172  
**Castes**, *sb. pl.* contrivances. A 2468  
**Catel**, *sb.* chattels. A 373  
**Celebrable**, *adj.* famous. Bo. 820  
**Celle**, *sb.* (1) cellar, A 3822; (2) religious house, A 172; (3) brain, B 3162  
**Cenith**, *sb.* zenith. As. I. 18  
**Ceptra**, *sb.* sceptre. B 3563  
**Cered**, *p.p.* sealed. G 608  
**Cerial ook**, *sb.* holm oak. A 2290

# GLOSSARY

**Certeysn**, (1) *adv.* certainly; (2) *sb.* a certain quantity, G 776; (3) *In certeysn*, certainly, T<sup>4</sup> 908  
**Ceruce**, *sb.* white leal. A 360  
**Cetowale**, *sb.* valerian. A 3207  
**Ceynt**, *sb.* girdle. A 3235  
**Chaar**, *sb.* car. A 2138  
**Chaffare**, *sb.* merchandise, B 1475; business, E 2438  
**Chalaundre, Ohelaundre**, *sb.* sort of lark. R 914, 81  
**Chalons**, *sb.* coverlets from Chalons. A 4140  
**Chamberere**, *sb.* maid-servant. E 819  
**Champartie**, *sb.* partnership. A 1949  
**Chanoun**, *sb.* canon. G 720  
**Chaped**, *sb.* capped. A 366  
**Chapeleyne**, *sb.* nun who said minor offices. A 164  
**Chapmanhode**, *sb.* business. B 143  
**Chapmen**, *sb.* *pl.* merchants. B 136  
**Charboole**, *sb.* carbuncle. B 2061  
**Charge**, *sb.* harm, A 2287; load, An. 32  
**Chargeant**, *adj.* burdensome. B 2438  
**Charges**, *sb.* *pl.* agreements. T<sup>2</sup> 340  
**Chasted**, *sb.* chastised. F 491  
**Chasteleyne**, *sb.* chateleine. R 3740  
**Chasteyne**, *sb.* chestnut. A 1921  
**Chauterle**, *sb.* endowment for singing masses for the dead. A 519  
**Chere**, *sb.* manner, A 139; countenance, A 913  
**Chesse**, *imperat.* choose. A 1595  
**Cheste**, *sb.* strife. I 555  
**Chesse**, *v.* succeed. G 1225  
**Chak**, *interj.* check. B1 653  
**Chakkere**, *sb.* chess-board. B1 659  
**Chalaundre**. See **Chalaundre**  
**Chape**, *sb.* purchase, bargain, cheapness. HF<sup>2</sup> 884  
**Cherete**, *sb.* dearth. R 3516  
**Cheste**, *sb.* coffin. E 29  
**Chivered**, *sb.* shivered. R 1732  
**Chivesalle**, *sb.* collar. R 1042  
**Chvide**, *v.* procure. *Mars* 297, R 6425  
**Chvyssaunce**, *sb.* borrowing. B 1519, A 281  
**Chiche**, *adj.* parsimonious. R 3588  
**Chidrease**, **Chidesters**, *sb.* scold. R 4266, E 1535  
**Chierlee**, *sb.* affection, F 881; dearth, B 1526  
**Chike**, *sb.* chick. R 541  
**Chiknes**, *sb.* *pl.* chickens. A 380  
**Chilyndre**, *sb.* pocket sundial. B 1396  
**Chymbe**, *v.* chime. A 3866  
**Chyngerie**, *sb.* parsimony. B 2790  
**Chinyng**, *sb.* *pres.* splitting. Bo. 231  
**Chirohe**, *sb.* church. A 460  
**Chirohe-hawes**, *sb.* *pl.* churchyards. I 201  
**Chirketh**, *pres.* twitters. D 1804  
**Chirkyng**, *sb.* murmuring. A 2004  
**Chit**, *chideth*. G 921  
**Chitoren**, *pres.* chatter. G 1397  
**Chivachie**, *sb.* expedition. A 86  
**Choye**, *sb.* choice. B 2273  
**Chorga**, *sb.* *pl.* tapers. R 6248  
**Cleat**, *sb.* cider. B 3245  
**Cleole**, *sb.* stringed instrument of music. A 1959  
**Clestinoloun**, *sb.* turning citron colour. G 816  
**Cleppers**, *sb.* *pl.* hurrows. R 1405  
**Cleppe**, *pres.* babble. G 965  
**Cleppyn**, *v.* (1) beat, HF<sup>2</sup> 734; (2) clatter, babble, G 965, E 1200

**Clappynng**, *sb.* chatter. E 909  
**Clare**, *sb.* spiced wine. A 1471  
**Clawe**, *v.* rub, scratch. A 4326, D 940  
**Cleped**, *sb.* called. A 121  
**Cleorgoun**, *sb.* chorister. R 1693  
**Clergial**, *adj.* clerical. G 752  
**Clerk**, *sb.* scholar. A 285  
**Clew**, *pres.* clawed, rubbed. HF<sup>2</sup> 612  
**Clifte**, *sb.* cranny. Bo. 1466  
**Clykete**, *sb.* latch-key. E 2046  
**Clyppeth**, *pres.* hugs. E 2413  
**Clypal**, *adj.* eclipsed, obscure. R 5349  
**Clyven**, *pres.* *pl.* cleaves. Bo. 376  
**Clyves**, *sb.* *pl.* cliffs. I. 1470  
**Clyvynng**, *sb.* *pres.* cleaving. Bo. 1460  
**Cloysterer**, *sb.* monk. A 759  
**Clom**, *int.* hush. A 3638  
**Clos**, **Cloos**, *adj.* secret. T<sup>2</sup> 1534, R 6104  
**Clos**, *sb.* a pen, enclosure. R 4550, Bo. 201  
**Closer**, *sb.* enclosure. R 4069  
**Clostelef**, *sb.* burdock-leaf. 571  
**Clothred**, *sb.* clothed. 2745  
**Clowes**, *sb.* *pl.* claws. HF<sup>2</sup> 696  
**Cod**, *sb.* bag. C 534  
**Cofedred**, *sb.* confederated. *Pite* 52  
**Cogge**, *sb.* small boat. L 1481  
**Collons**, *sb.* *pl.* testicles. C 952  
**Cokenay**, *sb.* milksop. A 4208  
**Cokewold**, *sb.* cuckold. A 3152  
**Cokkow**, *sb.* cuckoo. A 1930  
**Col-blak**, *adj.* coal-black. A 2142  
**Colds**, *v.* throw cold. B 879, L 240  
**Colared**, *sb.* collared. A 2152  
**Col-fox**, *sb.* brant-fox. B 4405  
**Collacioun**, *sb.* conference, E 325; comps Bo. 1862  
**Collect**, *sb.* table of planetary motions. F  
**Colours**, *sb.* *pl.* ornaments of style. F 39  
**Colpons**, *sb.* *pl.* shreds. A 679  
**Columbyn**, *adj.* dove-like. E 2141  
**Colver**, *sb.* dove. I. 2319  
**Combre-world**, *sb.* useless creature. T<sup>4</sup> 2  
**Combust**, *sb.* burnt up. T<sup>2</sup> 717, As. ii. 8  
**Coms**, *sb.* coming. R 7626  
**Commoeveden**, *pres.* *pl.* influenced. T<sup>2</sup> 1  
**Commune**, *sb.* the commons. E 70  
**Compassement**, *sb.* contrivance. I. 1416  
**Composicioun**, *sb.* agreement. A 2651  
**Compotent**, *adj.* almighty. Bo. 1871  
**Compownd**, *sb.* composed. As. ii. 85  
**Comprehended**, *sb.* summed up. An. 83  
**Comunte**, *sb.* community. R 5209  
**Comyn**, *sb.* cummin. B 2045  
**Concours**, *sb.* course. R 4360  
**Conclouun**, *sb.* temperament. L 40  
**Constabylerye**, *sb.* constable's jurisdiction 4218  
**Confedred**, *sb.* confederated. *Pite* 42  
**Confus**, *adj.* confused. A 2830  
**Congeyyn**, *v.* dismiss. T<sup>2</sup> 479  
**Conyex**, *sb.* *pl.* rabbits. P<sup>2</sup> 193  
**Conynges**, *sb.* *pl.* conies. R 7044  
**Consaunce**, *sb.* acquaintance, R 4668; ledge, R 4465, 5559  
**Conjecte**, **Conjecte**, *v.* conjecture. Bo. R 6928  
**Conne**, *v.* can be able, know  
**Connes**, *sb.* *pl.* conies, rabbits. R 1404  
**Conpote**, *v.* bear. T<sup>2</sup> 1397  
**Constarle**, *sb.* judgment-seat. C 162

# GLOSSARY

**Contak**, *sb.* strife, A 2003; **Contakes**, *pl.* dissen-  
sions, B 4122  
**Contrive**, *v.* contrive. R 7545  
**Contubernyal**, *sb.* fellow-soldier. I 760  
**Continue**, *v.* continue. R 5205  
**Convenably**, *adv.* suitably. B 2420  
**Convoien**, *v.* convey. E 55  
**Cope**, *sb.* dat. top. A 554  
**Cope**, *sb.* cape. A 260  
**Coppe**, *sb.* dat. cup. A 134  
**Corageous**, *adj.* ardent. I 585  
**Corages**, *sb.* *pl.* hearts. A 11  
**Corbets**, *sb.* *pl.* architectural ornaments. HF<sup>3</sup> 214  
**Corneuse**, *sb.* bagpipe. HF<sup>3</sup> 128  
**Corneular**, *sb.* adjutant. G 369  
**Corruptable**, *adj.* corruptible. A 3010  
**Corrumpen**, *v.* rot, B 987; **Corrupted**, *p.p.*  
corrupted, I 819  
**Corps**, *sb.* body, corpse. B 2098, A 3429  
**Corseint**, *sb.* holy body, relic. HF<sup>1</sup> 117  
**Cosynage**, *sb.* kinship. B 1226  
**Cosse**, *sb.* kiss. R 3663  
**Coast**, *s.* coast, place. R 3931  
**Costage**, *sb.* expense. B 1235  
**Costryng**, *p. pres.* coasting, skirting. R 134  
**Cotrel**, *sb.* bottle. L 2666  
**Cote**, *sb.* dat. dungeon. A 2457  
**Couched**, *p.p.* laid, A 2933; *inlaid*, A 2161  
**Conchen**, *v.* lny. G 1152, R 0903  
**Conde**, *pres.* knew. A 327  
**Counter-taille**, *sb.* counter-tally. E 1190  
**Countour**, *sb.* auditor. A 359  
**Countrepeise**, *v.* balance. HF<sup>3</sup> 660  
**Countre-ploted**, *p.p.* contrived. I. 476  
**Countrewayte**, *v.* watch against. B 2505,  
I 100  
**Coupable**, *adj.* guilty. Bo. 70  
**Coured**, *pres.* covered. R 465  
**Courtesy**, *sb.* cape. A 290  
**Couth**, *p.p.* plain, evident. R 4213  
**Gouthe**, *adv.* patently. HF<sup>2</sup> 249  
**Covenable**, *adj.* suitable. I 80  
**Covent**, *sb.* convent of monks. B 1827  
**Coverchiefs**, *sb.* *pl.* kerchiefs. A 453  
**Coverole**, *sb.* lid of a cup. HF<sup>2</sup> 284  
**Covered**, *p.p.* recovered. L 762  
**Covyno**, *sb.* craft, intriguing. R 3799, A 604  
**Coye**, *v.* quiet. T<sup>3</sup> 801  
**Coynea**, *sb.* *pl.* quinces. R 1374  
**Cracohynge**, *sb.* scratching. A 2834  
**Craketh**, *pres.* sings hoarsely. E 1850  
**Crampiseth**, *pres.* cramps. An. 171  
**Creanuce**, *sb.* belief, B 340; debt, ABC 61  
**Creanuce**, *v.* get credit. B 1479; *creanuced*, *p.p.*  
raised on credit, B 1556  
**Croce**, *sb.* increase. R 4875  
**Crokes**, *sb.* *pl.* devices. A 4051  
**Crepil**, *sb.* cripple. T<sup>4</sup> 1458  
**Cryke**, *sb.* creek. A 409  
**Crys**, *adj.* crisp, curly. HF<sup>3</sup> 206  
**Cristophere**, *sb.* image of St. Christopher worn  
as an amulet. A 115  
**Croos**, *sb.* cross, crosser. R 6470  
**Crois**, *sb.* cross. ABC 60, A 699  
**Crop**, *sb.* top, summit. T<sup>3</sup> 25, A 1533  
**Cropen**, *p.p.* crept. A 4259  
**Crosselet**, *sb.* crucible, G 1117; **Crosselets**, *pl.*  
G 793  
**Crouche**, *pres.* sign with the cross. A 3479  
**Crowke**, *sb.* crock. A 4158

**Crownst**, *sb.* coronet. R 3203  
**Crulle**, *adj.* *pl.* curly. A 81  
**Cucurbitess**, *sb.* *pl.* flasks for distilling. G 794  
**Culpe**, *sb.* guilt. I 336  
**Cure**, *sb.* care, keeping. Bo. 227  
**Curlisites**, *sb.* fastidiousness. I 829  
**Currours**, *sb.* *pl.* runners. HF<sup>3</sup> 2038  
**Custumare**, *adj.* accustomed. R 4936  
**Cut**, *sb.* lot. A 835  
**Daf**, *sb.* fool. A 4208  
**Daggynge**, *sb.* slitting. I 418  
**Dagoun**, *sb.* fragment. D 1751  
**Dayerye**, *sb.* dairy. A 597  
**Dayeale**, *sb.* daisy. L 182  
**Dallaunce**, *sb.* pleasantries. A 211  
**Dampned**, *p.p.* condemned. A 1175  
**Dan**, *sb.* See **Daun**  
**Dare**, *v.* dare. D 1294  
**Darketh**, *pres.* hides. L 816  
**Darreyne**, *v.* contest. A 1609  
**Dawwed**, *p.p.* dazed. HF<sup>2</sup> 151  
**Daun**, *sb.* lord, sir. A 1379, B 3982  
**Daunce**, *sb.* dance, game. A 476  
**Daunger**, *sb.* influence, dominion. A 663,  
R 1470  
**Daungerous**, *adj.* difficult, hard to please. A  
517, B 2129  
**Daunten**, *v.* subdue. Bo. 743  
**Dawes**, *sb.* *pl.* days. F 1180, R 2838  
**Daweth**, *pres.* dawns. A 1676  
**Dawing**, *sb.* dawn. T<sup>3</sup> 1466  
**Debate**, *v.* do battle, oppose. B 2058, T<sup>4</sup> 166  
**Debonairte**, *sb.* meekness. Bl. 985  
**Debonerly**, *adv.* gently. T<sup>2</sup> 1259  
**Decoped**, *p.p.* slit. R 843  
**Deed**, *p.p.* dead. A 942  
**Deedyt**, *sb.* delight. A 2177  
**Deed**, *p.p.* dead. See **Deed**  
**Deef**, *adj.* deaf. A 446  
**Deel**, *sb.* part, whit. A 415  
**Deemen**, *v.* judge. B 3045  
**Deer**, *sb.* wild animals  
**Deere**, *adv.* dearly. A 3100  
**Deerelyng**, *sb.* darling. A 3793  
**Deerne**, *adj.* secret. A 3200  
**Dees**, *sb.* *pl.* dice. T<sup>3</sup> 1347  
**Defaute**, *sb.* default, defect. Bl. 5, I 182  
**Defande**, *v.* (1) *imper.* defend, ABC 95; (2)  
Defendeth, forbids, B 2945; *p.p.* forbidden,  
B 475  
**Defet**, *p.p.* enfeebled. T<sup>3</sup> 618  
**Defetted**, *p.p.* defeated. Bo. 261  
**Defuonoun**, *sb.* diffuseness. T<sup>3</sup> 296  
**Degise**, *adj.* fashionable. I 417  
**Degree**, *sb.* rank, A 1168; *pl.* steps, A 1890  
**Deydett**, *pres.* didst die. T<sup>3</sup> 263  
**Deys**, *sb.* dairy-woman. B 4036  
**Deyned**, *pres.* deigned  
**Deynous**, *adj.* bumptious. A 3941  
**Deys**, *sb.* dais. A 370  
**Del**, *sb.* part, whit  
**Dejoyes**, *sb.* *pl.* delights. C 547  
**Delit**, *sb.* pleasure. A 335  
**Delyvere**, *adj.* active. A 84  
**Delyverly**, *adv.* adroitly. B 4606  
**Deliverous**, *sb.* agility. I 452  
**Deme**, *v.* judge, B 2219; **Demeth**, *imper.* A 1353  
**Demeyne**, (1) *sb.* dominion, B 3855; (2) *v.*  
govern, HF<sup>2</sup> 451

# GLOSSARY

**Demene**, *v.* endure. R 5238  
**Departe**, *v.* distinguish. T<sup>2</sup> 404; *pres. subj.* separate, A 1134; **Departed**, *p.p.* A 1621  
**Depeynted**, *p.p.* depicted. A 2031  
**Depper**, *adv. comp.* more deeply. B 630  
**Dere**, *v.* harm. F 240, A 1822  
**Dereworth**, **Derworth**, *adj.* precious. Bo. 281, 491  
**Derke**, *sb. dat.* darkness. Bl. 608  
**Derre**, *adv. comp.* more dearly. A 1448  
**Descensories**, *sb. pl.* vessels for extracting oil. G 792  
**Desclaundre**, *v.* slander. G 903  
**Descryve**, *v.* describe. See **Disoryve**  
**Desesse**, *v.* dispossess. R 2076  
**Desespaiied**, *p.p.* despaired. *Comp. to his Lady* 7  
**Deslaves**, *adj.* unbridled. I 629  
**Desordeynes**, *adj.* inordinate. I 818  
**Desordinat**, *adj.* disorderly. I 415  
**Despense**, *sb.* expenditure. A 1928  
**Despitous**, *adj.* scornful. A 516  
**Desray**, *sb.* disarray, confusion. I 927  
**Destynal**, *adj.* fated. Bo. 1465  
**Destreynne**, **Distreynne**, *v.* vex, constrain, grasp. F 820, A 1455, 1816, Bo. 513, PF 337  
**Determine**, *v.* come to an end. T<sup>2</sup> 379  
**Devyaunt**, *adj.* divergent. R 4789  
**Devoided**, *p.p.* banished. R 2929  
**Devoir**, *sb.* duty. I 764  
**Dextre**, *sb.* steed. B 2103  
**Dyapred**, *p.p.* diapered. A 2158  
**Dych**, *sb.* ditch. I 718  
**Difense**, *sb.* prohibition. R 1142  
**Dight**, *p.p.* dressed. A 1041  
**Digne**, *adj.* worthy. A 141; haughty, repellent, A 517, 3964; **Dignelich**, *adv.* haughtily, T<sup>2</sup> 1024  
**Dilatacioun**, *sb.* enlargement. B 232  
**Disavaunce**, *v.* hinder. T<sup>2</sup> 511  
**Disaventure**, *sb.* mischance. T<sup>2</sup> 741  
**Discheveles**, *adj.* with hair loose. A 683  
**Disclaundred**, *p.p.* slandered. L 1011  
**Discoorden**, *pres. pl.* disagree. Bo. 1495  
**Discreven**, **Disoryven**, **Discryve**, *v.* describe. R 4803, I 533; Bl. 915  
**Discre**, *v.* reveal. Bl. 548  
**Disgrat**, *adj.* deformed. PF 221  
**Disjynt**, *sb.* dilemma, disadvantage, danger. F 1601, A 2962, L 1611  
**Dismal**, *sb.* evil day. Bl. 1205  
**Dispance**, *sb.* expenditure. R 1144  
**Dispitouse**, *adj.* spiteful. Bl. 623  
**Dispone**, *imper.* disprove. T<sup>2</sup> 300  
**Disponyth**, *pres.* disposes. Bo. 1457  
**Disrewillye**, *adv.* irregularly. R 4900  
**Disserit**, *sb.* deserving. Bo. 1302  
**Disserved**, *p.p.* deserved. A 1716  
**Distreynne**, *v.* stain, obscure. L 255  
**Distynote**, *v.* distinguish. R 6199  
**Distynghwed**, *p.p.* distinguished. Bo. 479  
**Distoned**, *p.p.* put out of tune. R 4248  
**Distreynne**. See **Destreynne**  
**Disturne**, *v.* turn aside. T<sup>2</sup> 718  
**Dite**, *sb.* song, poem, story. Bo. 1453, 602, 315  
**Divinistre**, *sb.* diviner. A 2811  
**Divynacles**, *sb. pl.* divinations. I 605  
**Diviloun**, *sb.* difference. A 1721  
**Doande**, *p. pres.* doing. R 2708  
**Doke**, *sb.* duck, A 3576; *pl.* B 4580

**Doked**, *p.p.* cropped. A 590  
**Dolven**, *p.p.* buried. Bl. 222  
**Dom**, *sb.* judgment. PF 480  
**Domme**, *adj.* dumb. R 2220  
**Donne**, *adv. dug*. T<sup>2</sup> 908, PF 334  
**Doole**, *sb.* portion. R 2264  
**Doole**, *sb.* dolefulness. R 2956  
**Doom**, *sb.* judgment. C 257  
**Dormant**, *adj.* (of a table) fixed. A 353  
**Doucat**, *sb.* a kind of flute. HF<sup>2</sup> 132  
**Doutles**, *adv.* doubtless  
**Doutes**, *adj. pl.* dubious. Bo. 591  
**Doutous**, *adj.* deceitful. Bo. 275  
**Dowe**, *pres. s.* bestow. T<sup>2</sup> 230  
**Dradde**, *pres.* feared  
**Draf**, *sb.* dreg, refuse. I 36, A 4207  
**Drasty**, *adj.* worthless. H<sup>2</sup> 113  
**Drat**, *dradeth*. T<sup>2</sup> 328  
**Draughte**, *sb.* move at chess. Bl. 681  
**Drawe**, *v.* move at chess. Bl. 681  
**Dreched**, *p.p.* harassed. B 4077  
**Drechyng**, *sb.* delaying. I 1000, T<sup>2</sup> 853  
**Dreddeles**, *adv.* undoubtedly. Bl. 763  
**Dredful**, **Dredful**, *adj.* (i) timorous, PF 19 A 1479; (2) terrible, B 3558  
**Dreinte**, *pres.* drowned. Bl. 72; was drowned B 923  
**Dreynit**, *p.p.* drowned. A 3520  
**Drenohen**, *v.* drown. B 455  
**Drenohyng**, *sb.* drowning. A 2456  
**Drethled**, *sb.* dreariness. R 4728  
**Dresse**, *v.* make ready. B 1100  
**Drye**, *v.* endure, suffer. *Mars* 251, T<sup>2</sup> 42, 3105  
**Dryve**, *p.p.* driven. F 1230  
**Drogges**, *sb. pl.* drugs. A 496  
**Dronkelawe**, *adj.* tipsy. C 495  
**Droppynge**, *p. pres.* dripping. I 631  
**Drough**, *pres.* drew. B 1710, F 965, T<sup>2</sup> 978  
**Drovy**, *adj.* turbid. I 816  
**Drusy**, *sb.* love, affection. R 844, 5063  
**Drugge**, *v.* drudge. A 1416  
**Duo**, *sb.* duke. A 860  
**Dulcarnon**, *sb.* perplexity. See note, T<sup>2</sup> 931  
**Dulle**, *pres.* grow dull. R 792  
**Dulve**, *pres.* dug. Bo. 1649  
**Dure**, *v.* endure, abide, live. E 166, A 12  
*Comp. to his Lady* 31  
**Durre-don**, dare do. T<sup>2</sup> 840  
**Durring-don**, *sb.* daring. T<sup>2</sup> 817  
**Duweliche**, *adv.* duly. Bo. 190  
**Dwale**, *sb.* sleeping draught. A 4161  
**Dwynd**, *p.p.* dwindled. R 360  
**Ech**, *adj.* each. A 39  
**Eche**, *v.* eke, increase. T<sup>2</sup> 705, T<sup>2</sup> 110  
**Eched**, **Echid**, *p.p.* increased. T<sup>2</sup> 1329, Ho.  
**Echynnye**, *sb. pl.* sea-urchins. Bo. 798  
**Echon**, each one  
**Eek**, *adv.* also. A 41  
**Em**, **Em**, *sb.* uncle. T<sup>2</sup> 1022, T<sup>2</sup> 162  
**Eft**, *adv.* again. A 1669  
**Eft-sones**, *adv.* soon again. T<sup>2</sup> 1468  
**Egal**, *adj.* equal. T<sup>2</sup> 137, Bo. 575  
**Egalites**, **Egalyte**, *sb.* equality, equanimity. 949, Bo. 795  
**Egaly**, *adv.* equably. Bo. 798  
**Egge**, *sb.* edge. T<sup>2</sup> 927, *Former Age* 19  
**Egremment**, *sb.* incitement. H 842  
**Egre**, *adj.* sharp, bitter. Bo. 213, I 117, R

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- Agremoyde**, *sb.* agrimony. G 800  
**Egret**, *v.* excite. Ho. 1530  
**Eyleth**, *pres. s.* nil. A 1081  
**Elr**, *sb.* air. A 1246  
**Eyre**, *sb.* heir. I 2549  
**Eyrish**, *adj.* aerial. T<sup>1</sup> 424  
**Eisel**, *sb.* vinegar. R 217  
**Eythe**, *adj.* easy. R 3955  
**Ek**, *adv.* also. T<sup>2</sup> 1510  
**Eldfather**, *sb.* grandfather. Ho. 372  
**Elden**, *v.* grow old. Ho. 528  
**Elenganesse**, *sb.* wretchedness. R 7494  
**Ell**, *adv.* else. R 1231, 2064  
**Ellebor**, *sb.* hellebore. B 4154  
**Elles**, *adv.* else. C 315  
**Elvysake**, *adj.* elf-like, abstracted. G 842  
**Em**, *sb.* uncle. T<sup>2</sup> 182  
**Embawme**, *v.* embalm. I 676  
**Embellif**, *adj.* oblique. As. i. § 20  
**Embelysed**, *p.p.* embellished. Ho. 439  
**Embosed**, *p.p.* sheltered in the woods. Bl. 353  
**Embroured**, *p.p.* embroidered. A 89  
**Emeraude**, *sb.* emerald. PF 175  
**Emforth**, *prep.* to the extent of, according to. T<sup>2</sup> 243, 997. A 2235  
**Emysperies**, *sb.* pl. hemispheres. As. i. § 18  
**Empyre**, *pres.* impair. E 2108  
**Empireden**, *pres. pl.* made worse. B 2205  
**Emplastre**, *pres. pl.* plaster over, 'whitewash.' E 2297  
**Emplieth**, *pres. pl.* unfold. Ho. 1618  
**Emprise**, *sb.* enterprise. G 605, Ill. 1092  
**Empte**, *adj.* empty. G 741  
**Enceas**, *sb.* incense. A 2938  
**Enchesoun**, *sb.* occasion. B 2780  
**Encombrous**, *adj.* burdensome. HF<sup>2</sup> 354  
**Encrease**, *sb.* increase. A 2184  
**Encreesoden**, *pres.* enlarged on. B 2466  
**Encreesen**, *pres. pl.* increase. A 1338  
**Endelong**, *adv.* lengthways. A 1091  
**Endentyng**, *sb.* scalloping. I 417  
**Endyte**, *v.* write, compose. A 95, I. 2356  
**Enforcest thee**, *pres.* endeavourst. Ho. 775  
**Engyn**, *sb.* (1) wit, contrivance, G 339, T<sup>2</sup> 271;  
 (2) military machine, R 4194  
**Engyned**, *p.p.* racked. B 4250  
**Engreggen**, *pres. pl.* weigh upon. I 978  
**Engreveth**, *pres.* grieves. R 3444  
**Enhabite**, *pres.* dwell. R 6355  
**Enhanced**, *p.p.* elevated. As. ii. § 26  
**Enlaced**, *pres.* entangles. Ho. 97; **Enlaced**,  
*p.p.* Ho. 774  
**Enlumined**, *p.p.* illuminated. A 973  
**Enlutyng**, *sb.* plastering with clay. G 766  
**Enoyat**, *p.p.* anointed. A 109  
**Enseled**, *p.p.* sealed up, confined. T<sup>2</sup> 151, T<sup>4</sup>  
 559  
**Entalle**, *v.* carve, R 619, 3711; **Entailed**, *p.p.*  
 R 140  
**Entayle**, *sb.* shape, R 162; cutting, jaggings,  
 R 1081  
**Entame**, *v.* begin. ABC 79  
**Enteched**, *p.p.* endowed with (good) qualities,  
 T<sup>2</sup> 832; infected, Ho. 1292  
**Entenda**, *pres. s.* perceive. T<sup>4</sup> 1649  
**Entermete**, *v.* interpose. R 2966  
**Entre**, *sb.* entry. Ho. 266, 316  
**Entrechaungynges**, *sb.* pl. interchanges. Ho.  
 357  
**Entrecomunes**, *v.* communicate. T<sup>4</sup> 1354  
**Entredited**, *p.p.* under an interdict. I 905  
**Entremedled**, *p.p.* intermingled. Ho. 512  
**Entremes**, *sb.* entremet, a between-course. PF  
 665  
**Entremete**, *v.* interpose, interfere. D 834, B  
 2730, Ho. 1094, R 2966  
**Entriketh**, *pres.* entangles. PF 403  
**Entunes**, *sb.* pl. intonings. Bl. 309  
**Envenyme**, *v.* poison. Ill. 640  
**Enviroun**, *adv.* round about. R 4203  
**Envyned**, *p.p.* supplied with wine. A 342  
**Envoluped**, *p.p.* enveloped. C 942  
**Equipolences**, *sb.* pl. equivalents. R 7076  
**Er**, *adv. conj. prep.* before  
**Ercedekan**, *sb.* archdeacon. A 655  
**Ere**, *sb.* ear; **Erys**, *pl.* A 556  
**Ere**, *v.* plough, A 886; **Ered**, *p.p.* HF<sup>1</sup> 485  
**Erke**, *adj.* irked, weary. R 4807  
**Erme**, *v.* grieve. Ill. 80, C 312  
**Ernes**, *sb.* earnestness. R 4838  
**Ernestful**, *adj.* serious. E 1175  
**Ertraunt**, *adj.* wandering. Bl. 660  
**Ers**, *sb.* arse. A 3734  
**Eschaufede**, *pres.* chafed. Ho. 211  
**Eschaufeth**, *pres.* grows warm. Ho. 216  
**Eschaunges**, *sb.* pl. exchanges. HF<sup>2</sup> 189  
**Eschew**, **Eschu**, *adj.* unwilling. I 971, E 1812  
**Esed**, *p.p.* entertained. A 29  
**Esayne**, *sb.* excuse for absence. I 164  
**Espletten**, *v.* perform. R 6174  
**Estat**, *sb.* state. A 926  
**Estatlich**, *adj.* stately. A 140  
**Estatutes**, *sb.* pl. statutes. Ho. 269  
**Estres**, *sb.* pl. inner parts of a house. A 1971,  
 4295, I. 1715  
**Ethe**, *adj.* easy. T<sup>2</sup> 850  
**Evene**, *adj.* average. A 82  
**Everich**, *pron.* each. A 371  
**Everychon**, *each* one. A 31  
**Everydel**, *every* whit. A 368  
**Ew**, *sb.* yew-tree. A 2923, PF 180  
**Exces**, *sb.* excess, extravagance. T<sup>1</sup> 626  
**Expans**, *adj.* separate. F 1275  
**Extre**, *sb.* axle. As. i. § 14  
**Ey**, *sb.* egg. B 4035  
**Facound**, *sb.* eloquence. C 50, Bl. 925  
**Facound**, *adj.* eloquent. PF 520  
**Fader**, *sb.* (*gen.*) father's. R 781  
**Fadme**, *sb.* fathom. A 2916, Bl. 422  
**Fayle**, *v.* make mistakes. R 4249  
**Fair**, *adj.*; **A fair**, a good one, A 165, T<sup>2</sup> 850  
**Faire**, *adv.* fairly. A 94  
**Fairyre**, *sb.* fairyland. E 95  
**Faldyng**, *sb.* coarse cloth. A 391  
**Fallaces**, *sb.* pl. fallacies. R 7077  
**Falle**, *v.* happen  
**Falsen**, *v.* falsify. A 3175  
**Falwe**, *adj.* brown, yellow. HF<sup>2</sup> 846  
**Falwes**, *sb.* pl. fallows. D 656  
**Famulier**, *adj.* familiar. A 215  
**Fan**, *sb.* quintain. H 42  
**Fantastik**, *adj.* imaginative. A 1376  
**Fantome**, *sb.* fantasy. B 1037  
**Faroe**, *imperf.* paint. R 2285  
**Fardeles**, *sb.* pl. burdens. R 5683  
**Fare**, *sb.* fuss, disturbance. A 3999, T<sup>2</sup> 860  
**Fare**, *v.* go, speed, behave  
**Fare**, *p.p.* gone. F 1546  
**Fare-carte**, *sb.* cart. T<sup>2</sup> 1162

# GLOSSARY

**Farsed**, *p.p.* stuffed. A 233  
**Fasoun**, *sb.* fashion. R 708  
**Faucon**, *sb.* falcon. F 411  
**Fauconers**, *sb. pl.* falconers. F 1196  
**Fawe**, *adj.* faint. R 6477; *adv.* T<sup>4</sup> 887  
**Fay**, *sb.* faith. L 778, R 2887  
**Feches**, *sb. pl.* vetches. T<sup>2</sup> 936  
**Feld**, *sb.* field. A 1522  
**Fendly**, *adj.* fiendish. H<sup>1</sup> 593  
**Fene**, *v.* fee, present. T<sup>3</sup> 901  
**Fefed in**, *p.p.* invested with. E 1698  
**Feira**, *adj.* herce. R 1482  
**Feyne**, *v.* feign. A 735  
**Feyntise**, *sb.* feigning. R 2947, 2998  
**Fel**, *adj.* herce. B 2019  
**Fel**, *sb.* skin. T<sup>1</sup> 91  
**Felawe**, *sb.* fellow. A 1525  
**Feldefare**, *sb.* field-fare. PF 364, T<sup>3</sup> 861  
**Fels**, *adj.* many. E 917, H<sup>1</sup> 262, R 189  
**Felle**, *adj. pl.* cruel. T<sup>1</sup> 470  
**Felliche**, *Felly*, *adv.* cruelly. Bo. 355, R 3251  
**Felness**, *sb.* herceness. Bo. 217  
**Femenye**, *sb.* womankind. A 866  
**Feminities**, *sb.* womanhood, feminine appearance. B 360  
**Fend**, *sb.* fiend. I 584  
**Fenix**, *sb.* phoenix. BL 981  
**Fer**, *adj.* and *adv.* far  
**Ferde**, *sb. dat.* fear. BL 981, T<sup>1</sup> 557, L 2332  
**Ferde**, *pres. fared*, behaved. A 1272, 3606  
**Fere**, *sb.* fellow, companion, L 969; *in fere*, I-fere, together  
**Ferforth**, *adv.* far forward; *So ferforth*, *So ferforthly*, to such an extent. B 372, A 970  
**Ferfullaste**, *adj. sup.* most timorous. T<sup>2</sup> 450  
**Ferly**, *adj.* wonderful. A 1713  
**Fermacles**, *sb. pl.* pharmacies, medicines. A 2713  
**Fermerer**, *sb.* keeper of the infirmity. D 1859  
**Fermour**, *sb.* farmer, contractor. L 378  
**Fern**, *adv.* of long time. F 255  
**Ferne**, *adj. pl.* ancient, A 14; *Ferne yere*, past years, T<sup>5</sup> 1176  
**Ferre**, *adv. comp.* farther. A 47  
**Ferrete**, *adj. super.* farthest. A 494  
**Fers**, *sb.* piece at chess. BL 651  
**Ferthe**, *card. num.* fourth. B 823  
**Ferther**, *adv.* further. A 36  
**Ferthyng**, *sb.* morsel. A 134  
**Fesant**, *sb.* pheasant. PF 357  
**Fest**, *sb. fist.* C 802  
**Feste**, *sb.* feast, festival. A 906  
**Festelynge**, *p. pres.* feasting. F 345  
**Festyvally**, *adv.* joyously. Bo. 569  
**Festas**, *v.* fasten. A 195  
**Fet**, *pres. fetched*. A 819  
**Fetya**, *adj.* neat, graceful. A 157, C 478  
**Fetuly**, *adv.* neatly, skillfully. A 273, A 124  
**Fiaunce**, *sb.* confidence. R 5481  
**Fyochon**, *v. fix.* Bo. 419  
**Fl**, *pres. fell*. A 1034, BL 275  
**Fille**, *v.* fell, cut down. A 1702  
**Fyn**, *sb. end.* B 424, Mars 218  
**Finaliche**, *adv.* finally. T<sup>2</sup> 546  
**Fine**, *v.* finish, cease, stop. T<sup>4</sup> 86, T<sup>5</sup> 776, T<sup>3</sup> 1400  
**Fynt**, *andeth*  
**Fir**, *sb. fire.* A 1502, 1246  
**Fyryson**, *sb.* physician. Bo. 66  
**Fit**, *sb.* stave, canto. B 2078

**Fithole**, *sb.* fiddle. A 206  
**Flayne**, *p.p.* flayed? I 425  
**Flaumes**, *sb. pl.* flames. ABC 89  
**Fleometh**, *pres.* chases away. H 182  
**Fleen**, *sb. pl.* fliers. H 17  
**Fleen**, *v. flee.* ABC 148  
**Fleete**, *pres. z.* float. A 2397  
**Fleight**, *pres. flew.* T<sup>2</sup> 194  
**Fliemed**, *pres. f.* exiled, R 3052; *p.p.* exil fugitive, G 58  
**Fliemen**, *v.* put to flight. T<sup>2</sup> 852  
**Fliemere**, *sb.* banisher. B 460  
**Flieteth**, *pres. z.* floateth. H 901  
**Flietynge**, *p. pres.* floating. A 1956  
**Flex**, *sb.* flax. A 676  
**Flo**, *sb.* dart. H 264  
**Flokmeels**, *adv.* in a crowd. E 86  
**Floteren**, *pres. pl.* flutter, are tossed about. 1037  
**Flotery**, *adj.* dishevelled. A 2883  
**Flourouns**, *sb. pl.* flower-ornaments. L 217  
**Floute**, *sb.* flute. HF<sup>3</sup> 133  
**Floytynge**, *p. pres.* fluting. A 91  
**Fneseth**, *pres. z.* snorts. H 62  
**Foynen**, *pres. pl.* thrust. A 1654  
**Foyson**, *sb.* increase. A 3167  
**Foleyn**, *v.* act foolishly. H<sup>1</sup> 644  
**Foly**, *adv.* foolishly. BL 873  
**Folye**, *adj.* foolish. L 164  
**Folly**, *adv.* foolishly. H<sup>1</sup> 158, R 2603  
**Fonde**, *v.* try, prove. B 347, T<sup>3</sup> 1155  
**Fonge**, *v.* take. B 377  
**Fonne**, *sb.* fool. A 4089  
**Fonned**, *p.p.* fooled. R 5367  
**Foorre**, *sb.* course. D 1935  
**Foot-hoot**, *adv.* in haste. B 418  
**For**, *as an intensive prefix.* For-blak, A 21  
**For-drunk**, **For-dry**, **For-old**, A 2142; **I pampored**, **Former** lge 5, etc.; **very blr** very drunk, very dry, very old, very pampored etc.  
**For**, *conj.* because. T<sup>1</sup> 802  
**For**, *prep.* in fear of, T<sup>1</sup> 748, T<sup>2</sup> 194, 868; again T<sup>1</sup> 928  
**For al**, notwithstanding. T<sup>4</sup> 55 note  
**Forbode**, **Forbode**, *pres. subj.* forbid. L 10  
**Forblise**, *v.* exemplify. T<sup>2</sup> 1390  
**For-brak**, *pres.* interrupted. H<sup>1</sup> 1143  
**Forby**, *adv.* by, past. A 175  
**For-oraochen**, *v.* scratch. R 323  
**For-do**, *v.* destroy. T<sup>1</sup> 238  
**For-do**, **For-done**, *p.p.* destroyed, ruined. T<sup>1</sup> R 4319  
**For-drede**, *sb.* fear. B 2383  
**For-dryve**, *p.p.* driven astray. A 3782  
**For-dwyned**, *p.p.* wanted. R 366  
**Foreyn**, *sb.* outer room. L 1962  
**Foreyne**, *adj.* foreign, external, public. I 680, 755  
**For-fare**, *v.* fare ill. R 5778  
**Forehead**, **Forehed**, *sb.* forehead. G 580, H<sup>1</sup>  
**Forlete**, *v.* resign, forgo, forsake. B 1848, 864, I 750; **Forleten**, *p.p.* forsaken, HF<sup>2</sup> 18  
**Forloyn**, *sb.* note on horn recalling hounds w<sup>1</sup> at fault. BL 386  
**Forlyved**, *p.p.* decrepit. Bo. 763  
**Forlyven**, *v.* degenerate. Bo. 758  
**Forme**, *adj.* first. B 2900  
**Formal**, *sb.* any hen-bird of prey. PF 371  
**Formest**, *adj.* foremost. BL 889

# GLOSSARY

**Ferncast**, *p.p.* planned. I 448  
**Fort-ayn**, *sb.* furnace. A 589  
**For-pyned**, *p.p.* tormented. A 205  
**Fora**, *sb.* force; No *fora*, no matter. B 285  
**For-shapen**, *p.p.* mishapen. B 366  
**For-shright**, *p.p.* tired with shrieking. T 4 1147  
**For-sleweth**, *pres.* is over-slothful. I 685  
**For-slewthen**, *v.* over-tarry. B 4286  
**For-sluggeth**, *pres.* is over-sluggish. I 685  
**For-songen**, *p.p.* exhausted with singing. R 664  
**Forster**, *sb.* forester. A 120  
**For-straight**, *p.p.* exhausted. B 1295  
**For-thenke**, *p.p.* thinks, *v.* repent. R 3957, T 3 1414  
**For-thy**, *adv.* therefore. Bo. 375  
**Forthron**, *v.* further, help. A 1137  
**Forth-right**, *adv.* directly. E 1503  
**Fortunen**, *v.* presage. A 417  
**Fortunous**, *adj.* fortuitous. Bo. 224  
**For-waked**, *p.p.* tired with watching. D 596, Hl. 126  
**Forwanded**, *p.p.* tired with wandering. R 3336  
**Forward**, *sb.* agreement. A 33  
**Forwelked**, *p.p.* withered. R 361  
**For-woped**, *p.p.* exhausted with weeping. Bl. 126  
**For-wored**, *p.p.* worn out. R 235  
**Forwes**, *sb. pl.* furrows. *Former* Age 12  
**For-why**, *conj.* because. T 2 12  
**Forwityng**, *sb.* foreknowledge. B 4433  
**Forwot**, *pret.* foreknew. HF 1 45  
**Foryaf**, *pret.* forgave, respited. T 3 1577  
**Foryede**, *pret.* forwent, desisted from. T 3 1330  
**Foryelde**, *v.* repay. F. 831  
**Foryete**, *v.* forget. Bl. 1124  
**Foryive**, *pres.* forgive. B 1615  
**Fother**, *sb.* cartload. A 530  
**Poudre**, *sb.* lightning. HF 1 315  
**Foules**, *sb. pl.* fowls, birds. PF 203  
**Founds**. See **Fonds**.  
**Foundred**, *pret.* fell. A 2687  
**Founes**, *sb. pl.* lawns. Bl. 429  
**Frayneth**, *pres.* s. asks. B 1790  
**Frakenes**, *sb. pl.* freckles. A 2169  
**Frape**, *sb.* company. T 3 410  
**Frael**, *adj.* frail. Bo. 889  
**Freeten**, *pres. pl.* eat. A 2068  
**Frayned**, *pret.* prayed. B 3020  
**Froletes**, *sb.* frailty. I 449  
**Fromde**, *adj.* foreign. F 429  
**Fret**, *sb.* ornament. I. 215  
**Frete**, *v.* eat. B 3294; *p.p.* eaten, B 475  
**Froeth**, *pres.* s. rubs. A 3747  
**Frounce**, *sb.* wrinkle. Bo. 61  
**Frounced**, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 365, 3137  
**Frounceles**, *adj.* unwrinkled. R 850  
**Fruiteres**, *sb. pl.* fruit-women. C 478  
**Fumetere**, *sb.* the herb fumitory. B 4253  
**Fumoteze**, *sb.* headiness, vapouriness. C 567, F 358  
**Fural**, *adj.* raging. F 448  
**Furlong-way**, short space. I. 841  
**Further-over**, *adv.* furthermore. T 4 1027  
**Gabbe**, *v.* talk idly, gossip. A 3510, Bl. 1074, T 3 301  
**Gadelyng**, *sb.* vagabond. R 938  
**Gadrede**, *pret.* gathered. A 824  
**Gayl**, *sb.* gaol. R 4745  
**Gayler**, *sb.* gaoler. A 1064

**Gallard**, *Gaylard*, *adj.* gay, merry. A 4367, 3336  
**Gayneth**, *pres.* s. availeth. A 1787  
**Galtrye berys**, *sb. pl.* berries of the dog-wood tree. B 4155  
**Galauntynne**, *Galentyne*, *sb.* a kind of sauce. *Rosam.* 17, *Former* Age 16  
**Galaxye**, *sb.* the Milky Way. PF 56  
**Gale**, *v.* cry out. D 832  
**Galyngale**, *sb.* sweet cypress root. A 381  
**Galoohe**, *sb.* patten, high shoe. F 555  
**Galpyng**, *adj.* gaping. F 350  
**Galwes**, *sb. pl.* gallows. B 3941  
**Gan**, *pret.* began, did, used to. A 301  
**Ganeth**, *pres.* s. yawns  
**Gargat**, *sb.* throat. B 4525  
**Garnisoun**, *v.* cure. R 3249  
**Garnisoun**, *sb.* garrison. B 2215  
**Gas**, goes. A 4037  
**Gastnes**, *sb.* terror. Bo. 728  
**Gat-tothed**, *adj.* goat-toothed, lascivious. A 468  
**Gauded**, *p.p.* dyed. A 159  
**Gauren**, *v.* gaze. A 3827  
**Gaueth**, *pres.* s. stares. B 3559  
**Gawdes**, *sb. pl.* toys, sineries. I 651  
**Gaunt**, *sb.* giant. B 1097  
**Geere**, *Geere*, *sb.* (1) clothing, accoutrement, A 365, 1016; (2) behaviour, manners, A 1372, 1531  
**Geery**, *adj.* changeable. A 1536  
**Geestes**, *sb. pl.* stories. F 211  
**Geyn**, *sb.* gain. An. 206  
**Goldshalle**, *sb.* guild-hall. A 370  
**Gent**, *adj.* gentle, courteous. B 1905, PF 558  
**Gentrie**, *sb.* gentle birth, nobility. I 452  
**Geomancie**, *sb.* divination by figures made on the earth. I 605  
**Gerdon**, *Gerdoun*, *sb.* reward; *For alle gerdons*, at all costs. B 2240  
**Gerdoned**, *p.p.* rewarded. B 2460  
**Gere**, *sb.* See **Geere**  
**Gere**, *sb.* changeableness. Bl. 1256  
**Gereful**, *Gertful*, *adj.* changeable. A 1538, T 4 286  
**Gesse**, *pres.* s. guess. A 82  
**Geste**, *sb.* guest, stranger. L 1158  
**Geste**, *sb.* romance, story. B 2123, T 3 450  
**Gestlours**, *sb. pl.* reciters. HF 3 108  
**Get**, *sb.* contrivance. G 1277  
**Gye**, *v.* guide. A 1950, E 75, An. 6  
**Gif**, *conj.* if. Bl. 224  
**Gigges**, *sb. pl.* fiddles. HF 3 852  
**Giggyng**, *p. pres.* strapping. A 2504  
**Giltelless**, *adj.* guiltless. B 1062  
**Gyn**, *Gynne*, *sb.* engine, contrivance. F 128, R 4176  
**Gynne**, *v.* begin  
**Gypon**, *sb.* short vest. A 75  
**Gipsar**, *sb.* pouch. A 357  
**Girden**, *v.* strike. B 3736  
**Girles**, *sb. pl.* youths. A 664  
**Gysarme**, *sb.* halberd. R 5978  
**Gise**, *sb.* fashion. A 663  
**Gysar**, *sb.* gizzard. Bo. 1132  
**Gyte**, *sb.* some part of a woman's dress, A 3954; *pl.* D 559  
**Gladere**, *sb.* one who makes glad. A 2223  
**Glaroth**, *pres.* s. shines. HF 1 272  
**Glaze**, *v.* glaze. T 4 469. See **Howwe**



# GLOSSARY

**Gleady**, *adj.* fiery. I 105  
**Gleaze**, *sb.* white of egg. G 806  
**Gleaze**, *pret.* glanced. T<sup>4</sup> 1221  
**Glewe**, *v.* glue, fasten. HF<sup>2</sup> 671  
**Glymayng**, *sb.* glimmering. E 2383  
**Glood**, *pret.* glided. F 393  
**Gloss**, *sb.* gloss, comment. I 328, Bl. 333  
**Gloss**, *v.* flatter, B 3330; expound, B 1180  
**Glowmbe**, *v.* frown. R 4356  
**Gnodge**, *pret.* rubbed, crushed. *Former Age* 11  
**Gnof**, *sb.* churl. A 3188  
**Gobet**, *sb.* shred. A 696  
**Godsibbes**, *sb. pl.* godparents. I 908  
**Goldless**, *adj.* without gold. B 1430  
**Golee**, *sb.* mouthful. PF 556  
**Gollardeys**, *sb.* ribald. A 560  
**Gonfounoun**, *Gounfanoun*, *sb.* pennon, banner. R 2013, 1201  
**Gonge**, *sb.* privy. I 885  
**Gonne**, *pret.* began. A 1658; **Gonnen**, *pl.* L 148  
**Good**, *sb.* goods, property. A 581  
**Goodes**, *sb. pl.* marigolds. A 1929  
**Goore**, *sb.* gusset, A 3237; **Under my goore**, at my side, B 1970  
**Goodish**, *adj.* foolish. T<sup>2</sup> 584  
**Goost**, *Goost*, *sb.* spirit. A 2753, T<sup>4</sup> 157  
**Gotar**, *sb.* gutter. Bo. 633, T<sup>2</sup> 787, L 2705  
**Governess**, *sb. fem.* governess. *Pite* 80  
**Grayn**, *sb.* dye. B 1917  
**Grame**, *sb.* harm, anger. G 1403, An. 276, T<sup>2</sup> 1028  
**Grange**, *sb.* farm, granary, A 3668; **Granges**, *pl.* B 1256, HF<sup>2</sup> 190  
**Graspe**, *v.* grope. T<sup>2</sup> 223  
**Graunt**, *sb.* decree. A 1306  
**Graven**, *p. p.* buried. L 785  
**Gro**, **Groe**, (1) pleasure, favour, F 1151; (2) superiority, pre-eminence, A 2733  
**Greyhounds**, *sb. pl.* greyhounds. A 191  
**Greithen**, *v.* prepare, make ready, A 4372; *pres.* *pl.* B 3724  
**Greythed**, *p. p.* prepared. Bo. 161  
**Grenehede**, *sb.* immaturity. B 163  
**Gres**, *sb.* grass, T<sup>2</sup> 515; **Grees**, *pl.* grasses, HF<sup>2</sup> 263  
**Grote**, *sb.*; **The grote**, the sum, Bl. 1241  
**Grote See**, *sb.* the Mediterranean. A 59, R 2748  
**Grove**, *sb.* grove, B 4013; *pl.* A 1495  
**Graven**, *p. p.* graven, engraved. R 4799  
**Griffon**, *sb.* griffin. A 2133  
**Gryl**, *adj.* rough. R 73  
**Grynt**, grindeth. HF<sup>2</sup> 703  
**Grynte**, *pret.* gnashed. D 2161  
**Grye**, *adj.* grey. G 559  
**Grye**, *sb.* grey fur. A 194  
**Grishon**, *adj.* grisly. T<sup>2</sup> 1700  
**Groff**, *adv.* prone, face downwards. R 2561  
**Groynyng**, *sb.* groaning. A 2460  
**Gromes**, *sb. pl.* men. R 200  
**Grope**, *v.* probe, try. A 644, D 1817  
**Groachen**, *pres. pl.* grumble. A 3058  
**Graf**, *adv.* prone, face downwards. A 949, B 1865  
**Grunne**, *pret. pl.* began. PF 257  
**Ha**, *v.* have. R 4557  
**Haaf**, *pret.* heaved. A 3470  
**Habergeon**, *sb.* coat of mail. A 76  
**Habitacle**, *sb.* habitation. Bo. 540  
**Hatches**, *sb. pl.* hatches. L 648  
**Haaf**, **Haaf**, *pret.* heaved. A 2428, 3470

**Hay**, *sb.* hedge, R 2087; **Hayis**, *pl.* T<sup>2</sup> 351  
**Haynaselyns**, *sb. pl.* smocks. I 422  
**Haire**, *sb.* hair-shirt. G 133, R 438  
**Haleth**, *pres. s.* draws. *ABC* 68  
**Halfe**, *sb.*; **On my halfe**, on my part, Bl. 139  
**Halke**, *sb.* corner. L 1786  
**Hals**, *sb.* neck. B 73  
**Halpe**, *pres. s.* conjure. B 1835  
**Halt**, *pres. s.* (1) holdeth, performs, B 741, Bl. 620; (2) halteth, limps, Bl. 621  
**Halten**, *v.* limp. T<sup>4</sup> 1457  
**Halvandel**, *adv.* half. T<sup>2</sup> 707  
**Halwed**, *p. p.* accounted holy. T<sup>2</sup> 268  
**Halwes**, *sb. pl.* saints, shrines. Bl. 830, A 1. D 657  
**Halydayes**, *sb. pl.* holidays, festivals. L 422  
**Hameled**, *p. p.* mutilated, cut off. T<sup>2</sup> 964  
**Hande-brede**, *sb.* hand-breadth. A 3811  
**Hard**, *adj.*; **Of hard**, with difficulty, T<sup>2</sup> 1236  
**Hardement**, *sb.* hardihood. R 3392  
**Hardly**, *adv.* surely. A 146  
**Harlot**, *sb.* rascal. A 647, D 1754  
**Harneys**, *sb.* armour. A 1006  
**Harnesed**, *p. p.* equipped. A 114  
**Harre**, *sb.* hinge. A 550  
**Harwed**, *p. p.* harrowed, devastated. A 351. D 2107  
**Hasardrye**, *sb.* gambling. C 590  
**Hasel** - **wodes**, *sb. pl.* hazel-woods (haselwood-shaken), 'Queen Anne is dead.' T<sup>2</sup> 890, 1174  
**Hatte**, *v.* be called. R 38, T<sup>2</sup> 798  
**Hatter**, *adv.* more hotly. R 2475  
**Haubergeon**, *sb.* hauberk. A 2119  
**Haunt**, *sb.* practice. A 447  
**Haunten**, *pres. pl.* practise. I 780  
**Hauteyn**, *adj.* haughty. C 330  
**Havoire**, *v.* to have. R 4720  
**Hawe**, *sb.* hedge. C 855  
**Hawebake**, *sb.* baked haws, *i.e.* poor stu B 95  
**Hawteyn**, *adj.* haughty, high-flying. R 37. L 1120  
**Hed**, *p. p.* hidden. I 208  
**Hede**, *v.* put a head on. T<sup>2</sup> 1042  
**Heale**, *sb.* health. B 1540  
**Heeng**, *pret.* hung. A 676  
**Heer**, *sb.* hair. A 589  
**Heerde**, *sb.* herdman. R 6453  
**Heer-male**, *sb.* hair's-breadth. A. ii. 838  
**Heete**, *pres. subj.* promise. A 3598  
**Heete**, *pret.* was named. Bl. 200  
**Hey**, *sb.* hedge. H 14  
**Heye**, *v.* rise. Bo. 875  
**Heyly**, *adv.* highly, urgently. T<sup>2</sup> 1733  
**Heyne**, *sb.* villain. G 1319  
**Heyre**, *sb.* heir. Bl. 168  
**Heyres**, *sb. pl.* hair-shirts. I 205  
**Heyrugge**, *sb.* hedge-sparrow. PF 612  
**Heythen**, *adv.* hence. A 4033  
**Hels**, *sb.* See Heale  
**Hels**, *v.* hide, conceal. B 2775, D 930  
**Heled**, *p. p.* hidden. B 4245  
**Heleles**, *adj.* without health. T<sup>2</sup> 1593  
**Helply**, *adj.* helpful. T<sup>2</sup> 128  
**Hende**, *adj.* prompt, polite, gracious. D 1. 628, A 3199  
**Heng**, *pret.* hung. Bl. 122  
**Henne**, *adv.* hence. A 2396  
**Hennesforth**, *adv.* henceforth. T<sup>2</sup> 167

**Seize, pret.** seized. B 4525  
**Seizure, sb. pl.** seizures. P. 91  
**Sepe, sb. hip.** B 1937  
**Seraudes, sb. pl.** heralds. A 2672  
**Serbedours, sb. pl.** receivers of guests. R 5000  
**Serber, sb. labourer.** 0. 203  
**Serbergage, sb. lodging.** A 4329, B 147  
**Serbergours, sb. pl.** harbingers. B 997  
**Ser-blorn, adv.** heretofore. L 73  
**Serd, p.p.** haired. A 2518  
**Serde, sb. herdsman.** T<sup>3</sup> 1235  
**Serde-gromes, sb. pl.** herdsman. HF<sup>3</sup> 136  
**Serdse, sb. fem.** herdsman. T<sup>4</sup> 653  
**Serdse, sb. refuse of flax.** R 1233  
**Sere and hounse, one and all (?)** T<sup>4</sup> 210  
**Serleth, pres. s.** praise. B 1808; **Serlyest, praise, B 3479** **Seryed, p.p.** praised, B 672; **Serlyng, p. pres.** praising, B 1649  
**Serye, sb. pl.** hairs. A 555  
**Serne, sb. corner.** F 1121  
**Seroner, sb.** heron-killer. T<sup>4</sup> 413, L 1120  
**Seronswes, sb. pl.** young herons. F 68  
**Sert, sb. hart.** A 1689  
**Serte, pret.** hurt. Bl. 882  
**Serte, sb. heart.** A 954  
**Sertely, adj.** heartfelt. Bl. 85  
**Serte-spon, sb.** breast-bone. A 2606  
**Sete, pret.** was called. Bl. 947  
**Seterly, adv.** fiercely. L 638  
**Sethyng, sb.** mockery. A 4110  
**Seve, v.** heave. A 550  
**Sevedes, sb. pl.** heads. B 2032  
**Sevenyssh, adj.** heavenly. Mars 30  
**Sevenysshly, adv.** celestially. A 1055  
**Seve, sb. colour.** An. 147  
**Seve, sb. domestic servant.** E 1785  
**Sye, v. hasten.** F 291; **Sy, imperat.** Bl. 152  
**Syene, sb. hyena.** Fortune 35  
**Serde, sb. herdsman.** A 603; **Sierdes, pl.** T<sup>3</sup> 619  
**Sight, p.p.** promised. A 2472  
**Sight, sb.; On sight, aloud.** A 1784  
**Sighteth, pres. s.** adorns. Bo. 45  
**Syne, sb. servant.** A 613, C 688  
**Sir, (1) her, pers. pron.** B 621; (2) her, poss. pron. B 625; (3) their, poss. pron. A 365; (4) of them, gen. pers. pron. A 586  
**Sit, pron. it.** Bl. 18  
**Sit, hideth.** F 512  
**Soker, sb. mockery.** A 3965  
**Sokerly, adv.** scornfully. L 584  
**Solour, sb. lecher.** D 524  
**Solsom, adj.** wholesome. PF 206  
**Sonerous, adj.** onerous, burdensome. R 5633  
**Sonestee, sb.** purity. G 89  
**Soodles, adj.** without hood. Bl. 1027  
**Sool, adj.** whole. G 111, Bl. 552  
**Sool, sb. a stronghold.** B 597  
**Sooly, adv.** wholly. A 599, Bl. 15  
**Sours, adj.** hoarse. T<sup>4</sup> 1147  
**Soot, adj.** hot. A 490  
**Soppestares, sb. pl.** dancers. A 2017  
**Sord, sb. hoard, plenty.** Truth 3  
**Sora, Sours, adj.** hoarse. Bl. 347, T<sup>4</sup> 1147  
**Sorve, adj.** filthy. Mars 206  
**Hostler, sb.** innkeeper. A 241  
**Note, v. promise.** R 3385; **Noten, be called,** D 144  
**Noten, sb. pl.** baskets. HF<sup>3</sup> 850  
**Roundyssh, sb.** shark. E 1825

**Houres, sb. pl.** (astrological) hours. A 416  
**Housel, sb.** the Eucharist. R 6386  
**Housed, p.p.** having received the Eucharist. I 1027  
**Hoved, pret.** waited, T<sup>3</sup> 33; **Hoveth, pres.** *Balance that C. made 15 (emend.)*  
**How, adv.** however. R 6489  
**Howe, sb. cap.** 'sette his howe,' A 3911; 'make him an howe above a calle,' T<sup>3</sup> 775; 'glase his howe,' T<sup>3</sup> 459, all phrases for 'to befool.' See also **Cappe**  
**Hulstred, p.p.** concealed. R 6146  
**Humblese, sb.** humility. B 1660  
**Hunte, sb. hunter.** A 1678; **Huntes, pl.** Bl. 540  
**Hurtlen, v.** attack. Bo. 266  
**Hust, p.p.** hushed. A 2981, T<sup>3</sup> 1094  
**Hwed, p.p.** hued, coloured. R 3014  
**I, Y, prefix of past participles**  
**Ich, pron. I.** T<sup>3</sup> 282  
**Ich, adj.** each. Bl. 1812  
**I-tychid, p.p.** fixed. Bo. 1473  
**Ik, pron. I.** A 3867  
**I-hayl, ill-luck to you.** A 4089  
**Ikke, adj.** same  
**Imperie, sb.** imperium, official dignity. Bo. 487  
**Impetron, pres. pl.** obtain. Bo. 1725  
**Importable, importable, adj.** unbearable. F 3792, E 1144  
**In, sb. inn.** B 1632  
**Infance, sb.** infancy. R 5006  
**Infect, p.p.** invalidated. A 320  
**Infortunat, adj.** unfortunate. B 302  
**In-hiele, pres. pl.** infuse. T<sup>3</sup> 44  
**Injure, sb.** injury. T<sup>3</sup> 1018  
**In-knette, pret.** confined. T<sup>3</sup> 1082  
**Inned, p.p.** housed. A 2192  
**In-sett, p.p.** implanted. Bo. 330  
**In-thringe, v.** press in. T<sup>4</sup> 66  
**Intrasse, sb.** interest. Truth 71  
**In-with, prep.** within  
**Irous, adj.** passionate. D 2086  
**I-shad, p.p.** shed. Bo. 481  
**Isse, v.** issue. R 1992  
**I-thrungen, p.p.** pressed. Bo. 538  
**Jagounce, sb. pl.** jacinths. R 1117  
**Jakke of Dover.** See note, A 4347  
**Jambeux, sb. pl.** leggings. B 2065  
**Jane, sb.** small Genoese coin. B 1925, E 999  
**Janglere, sb.** prater. A 560  
**Janglyng, sb.** chattering, talking idly. 1 649  
**Jape, sb. trick, jest.** B 1629  
**Japeres, sb. pl.** jesters. I 651  
**Jape-worth, adj.** burlesque. Bo. 1707  
**Jaunyes, sb.** jaundice. R 305  
**Jet, sb.** fashion. A 682  
**Jenpardyes, sb. pl.** problems. Bl. 665  
**Jewerye, sb.** Jews' quarter. B 1679  
**Jo, v.** come about. T<sup>3</sup> 33  
**Jogelours, sb. pl.** jugglers. HF<sup>3</sup> 169  
**Joynant, adj.** adjoining. A 1060  
**Joyne, v.** enjoin. R 2355  
**Jollite, sb.** jolliness. A 680  
**Jompre, imp. s.** jumble. T<sup>3</sup> 1037  
**Jouken, v.** repose. T<sup>3</sup> 409 (note)  
**Journe, sb.** day's work. R 579  
**Jowes, sb. pl.** jaws. HF<sup>3</sup> 696  
**Jubbe, sb.** jug. A 3628  
**Juge, sb.** judge. A 1712

# GLOSSARY

**Jupartie**, *sb.* jeopardy. F 1495, R 2666  
**Jurdones**, *sb. pl.* chamber-pots. C 305  
**Justice**, *sb.* punishment. R 2077  
**Jurise**, *sb.* judgment. A 1739, B 795

**Kaynard**, *sb.* coward. D 235  
**Kalenderas**, *sb. pl.* calendars in illuminated prayer-books. ABC 70  
**Kalendes**, *sb. pl.* calends, the first or beginning. T<sup>2</sup> 1634  
**Kamelyne**, *sb.* camel's hair. R 7365  
**Kamuse**, *adj.* flat-nosed. A 3974  
**Kan**, *v.* know, be able. A 371  
**Karole**, *sb.* singing dance. R 744  
**Keeche**, *v.* catch. T<sup>2</sup> 1375  
**Keechyl**, *sb.* cake. D 1747  
**Kean**, *sb.* kine. B 4021  
**Keepe**, *sb.* heed. A 503  
**Kempe**, *adj.* shaggy. A 2134  
**Kenned**, *p. p.* known. Bl. 786  
**Kepe**, *v.* care, reck. A 2238, 1593  
**Kepte**, *pres.* observed. A 415  
**Kernels**, *sb. pl.* R 4197  
**Kers**, *sb.* curse. A 3756  
**Kervare**, *sb.* carver. A 1899  
**Kesse**, *v.* kiss. E 1057  
**Kevers**, *v.* recover. T<sup>1</sup> 917  
**Kovered**, *p. p.* covered. PF 271, HF<sup>2</sup> 275  
**Kid**, *p. p.* known. L 1023, E 1943  
**Kidde**, *pres.* showed. T<sup>1</sup> 208  
**Kiked**, *pres.* peeped. A 3445  
**Kymelyn**, *sb.* brewing-tub. A 3518  
**Kynode**, *sb.* nature. A 2451  
**Kirked**, *p. p.* See note, R 3167  
**Kithe**, *v.* show. B 636; **Kytheth**, *pres.* L 504  
**Kitte**, *pres.* cut. B 600  
**Knarre**, *sb.* knot. A 549  
**Knarry**, *adj.* gnarled. A 1977  
**Knave**, *sb.* boy, servant. A 3431  
**Knopped**, *p. p.* knobbed. R 7253  
**Knoppes**, *sb. pl.* buds. R 1675  
**Knottelae**, *adj.* like an unknotted string. T<sup>2</sup> 769  
**Knowe**, *sb.* knee. T<sup>2</sup> 1202; **Knowes**, *pl.* B 1719  
**Konnyng**, *sb.* ability. B 1099  
**Koude**, *pres.* knew. A 110  
**Kowthe**, *p. p.* renowned. A 14

**Laas**, *sb.* cord, snare. A 392, 1817  
**Labbe**, *sb.* tell-tale, blabber. A 3509, T<sup>2</sup> 300  
**Label**, *sb.* a kind of ruler. As. I. § 22  
**Laache**, *sb.* snare. R 1624  
**Laos**, *sb.* net. R 2792  
**Laerte**, *sb.* muscle. A 2713  
**Laech**, *adj.* lazy. Bo. 1309  
**Laechewe**, *sb.* negligence. E 790  
**Lad**, *p. p.* led. A 2620  
**Ladde**, *pres.* took. B 1524  
**Lafte**, *pres.* left, ceased. A 492  
**Laghyng**, *p. pres.* laughing. Bl. 632  
**Lay**, *sb.* creed. F 18  
**Laynare**, *sb. pl.* straps. A 2504  
**Lake**, *sb.* linen cloth. B 2048  
**Lakken**, *v.* depreciate. T<sup>1</sup> 189  
**Lamblike**, *adj.* lamblike. *Former Age* 50  
**Lambren**, *sb. pl.* lambs. R 7013  
**Lampe**, *sb.* a thin plate. G 764  
**Lapdaire**, *sb.* treatise on precious stones. HF<sup>2</sup> 262  
**Lappe**, *sb.* lap, border. G 12

**Large**, *adj.* liberal, extravagant. B 3489, 1692  
**Las**, *adv. comp.* less. Bl. 674  
**Las**, **Laas**, *sb.* snare. A 1951, 1817  
**Last**, *pres.* lasteth, reaches. E 566  
**Last**, *sb.* load. B 1628  
**Late**, *adv.* lately. A 6904  
**Latun**, *v.* let. L 3007  
**Laterede**, *adj.* slow. I 718  
**Lathe**, *sb.* stable, barn. A 4088, HF<sup>2</sup> 1056  
**Latte**, *sb.* lattice. T<sup>2</sup> 615  
**Latoun**, *sb.* brass. A 699, B 2067  
**Laudes**, *sb. pl.* (1) the service said between mid night and 6 A.M.; (2) praises. HF<sup>2</sup> 232  
**Launcegay**, *sb.* kind of lance. R 1942  
**Launde**, *sb.* clearing in the wood. A 1691, PF 302  
**Laurer**, *sb.* laurel. A 1027C  
**Laus**, *adj.* loose; **Lauss**, *pl.* Bo. 417  
**Laven**, *v.* exhaust. Bo. 1446  
**Lavendere**, *sb.* washerwoman. L 358  
**Lavyd**, *p. p.* poured out, drawn. Bo. 1127  
**Lawe**, *adj.* low. R 5046  
**Lazar**, *sb.* leper. A 242  
**Leche**, *sb.* physician. R 2944  
**Leden**, *sb.* language. F 435  
**Leed**, *sb.* leaden vessel. A 202  
**Leef**, *adj.* dear. Bl. 8  
**Leaf**, *sb.* leaf. E 1211  
**Leaful**, *adj.* lawful. I 41  
**Leafsel**, *sb.* bower. I 411  
**Leope**, *pres.* leapt. A 2687  
**Leore**, **Lore**, *v.* learn, teach. B 181, 630  
**Leore**, *sb.* skin. B 2047  
**Leos**, *sb.* net, leash. G 19, I 387  
**Leos**, *pres.* lost. L 945  
**Leos**, *adj.* false. R 8  
**Leot**, *pres.* (1) let, A 175; (2) caused, B 181  
     (3) left, A 508  
**Leove**, *pres.* s. believe. G 213  
**Leove**, *adj.* dear. G 257  
**Leif**, *imper.* leave. T<sup>2</sup> 866  
**Leifte**, *pres.* delayed. R 4093  
**Legge**, *v.* (1) lay, A 3937; (2) relieve, R 5016  
**Leye**, *v.* wager, assert. T<sup>2</sup> 1658  
**Leygheth**, *pres.* laughs. Bo. 894  
**Leigh**, *pres.* lied. T<sup>2</sup> 1077  
**Leyser**, *sb.* leisure. Bl. 172  
**Leyt**, *sb.* flame, lightning. I 839, Bo. 94  
**Leke**, *sb.* leek. R 4830  
**Lemalle**, *sb.* filing, thin plate. G 1162  
**Lemas**, *sb. pl.* (1) gleams, flashes, B 4120, 5346; (2) limbs, A 3886  
**Lemman**, *sb.* sweetheart. A 3278  
**Lendes**, *sb. pl.* loins. A 3237  
**Lene**, *v.* lend. A 611  
**Longer**, *adv. comp.* longer  
**Looun**, *sb.* lion. B 3106  
**Lopande**, *p. pres.* leaping. R 1928  
**Lore**, **Leore**, *v.* teach, learn. B 630, 181  
**Los**, *sb.* lie. L 1022  
**Loss**, *v.* lose; **Leseth**, B 19  
**Loeyng**, *sb.* lie. G 479  
**Lost**, *sb.* pleasure. A 132, Bl. 907  
**Lotie**, *pres.* it pleased. A 750  
**Lotie**, *sb.* hindrance, delay. T<sup>2</sup> 235  
**Letten**, *v.* (1) hinder, A 869, B 2116; (2) for A 1317, B 4274  
**Letie-game**, *sb.* apoli-sport. T<sup>2</sup> 527  
**Letturure**, **Leturure**, *sb.* literature. G 1  
     B 3486

**lectuaries**, *sb.* electuary, remedy, C 307, T<sup>6</sup> 741;  
**Lectures**, *pl.* A 426  
**Leve**, *vb.* permission. T<sup>3</sup> 622  
**Lewful**, *adj.* lawful. A 302  
**Levan**, *v.* believe. B 1181  
**Levere**, *adj. comp.* pleasant. A 293  
**Lewesal**, *sb.* leafy bower. A 4061  
**Lewed**, *adj.* ignorant. A 502  
**Lewedness**, *sb.* stupidity. A 502  
**Lyard**, *adj.* grey. D 1563  
**Lybardes**, *sb. pl.* leopards. R 874  
**Libel**, *sb.* bill of complaint. D 1595  
**Lyche-wake**, *sb.* corpse-watch. A 2958  
**Lief**, *sb.* darling. B 3084  
**Lifode**, *sb.* livelihood. I 685, R 5602  
**Lify**, *adv.* lively, life-like. A 2087  
**Liggen**, *pres. pl.* lie. A 2205  
**Lyghter**, *adv.* more lightly. I 410  
**Ligne-aloes**, *sb.* aloes-wood. T<sup>4</sup> 1137  
**Liken**, *v.* please. T<sup>1</sup> 431  
**Likerous**, *adj.* lustful. C 540  
**Lilting**, *p. pres.* playing a lilt. HF<sup>3</sup> 133  
**Lymaillo**, *sb.* filings. G 853  
**Lymeres**, *sb. pl.* hounds in leash. Bl. 362  
**Lymerod**, *sb.* lime-twigs. B 3754  
**Lymytour**, *sb.* licensed beggar. A 209  
**Lynde**, *sb.* lime-tree. A 2922, E 1211  
**Lissed**, *pres. p.* lisped. A 264  
**Lisse**, *sb.* relief, comfort. Bl. 1039, F 1238  
**Lisse**, *v.* relieve, Bl. 210; **Lissed**, *p. p.* F 1170  
**Lyst**, *sb.* edge. D 634  
**Lytow**, *liet* thou. I 276  
**Lytargo**, *sb.* white lead. A 629, G 775  
**Lytargy**, *sb.* lethargy. Bo. 57, T<sup>1</sup> 730  
**Lyte**, *adj.* little. B 2153; A **lite**, a little, B 713  
**Litsters**, *sb.* dyer. *Former Age* 17  
**Lith**, *pres. lies*. A 1705  
**Lith**, *sb.* limb. B 4065, Bl. 952  
**Lythe**, *adj.* smooth, cavy. HF<sup>1</sup> 118, R 3762  
**Lithe**, *v.* soften. T<sup>4</sup> 740  
**Litherly**, *adv.* badly. A 3299  
**Lyves**, *adj.* living. A 2395  
**Lixt**, *liet*. D 1618  
**Lodemenage**, *sb.* pilotage. A 403  
**Lodemen**, *sb. pl.* pilots. I. 1488  
**Loigne**, *sb.* tether. R 3882  
**Longes**, *sb. pl.* lungs. A 2752  
**Longeth**, *pres.* belongs to. G 716  
**Loodesterre**, *sb.* load-star. A 2059  
**Loone**, *sb.* loan. D 1661  
**Loos**, *sb.* report, fame, praise. HF<sup>3</sup> 530, B 3035  
**Looth**, *adj.* hateful to. A 486  
**Loppa**, *sb.* spider. A. i. § 19  
**Lopwebbe**, *sb.* spider's web. A. i. § 21  
**Lore**, *p. p.* lost. Bl. 1134  
**Lorel**, *sb.* rascal. D 273, Bo. 178  
**Los**, *sb.* praise, fame. I. 1474, 1514  
**Loosengour**, *sb.* flatterer. B 4516, L 352  
**Loosengrie**, *sb.* flattery, false praise. I 613  
**Loosenges**, *sb. pl.* lozenges. HF<sup>3</sup> 227  
**Lotoby**, *sb.* paramour. R 6339  
**Lotynge**, *p. pres.* lurking. G 186  
**Lough**, *adj.* low. A 817  
**Lovedayes**, *sb. pl.* days for settling disputes. A 258  
**Love-drury**, *sb.* courtship. R 2085  
**Lous**, *adj.* at large. HF<sup>3</sup> 195  
**Loute**, *v.* bow. T<sup>3</sup> 683; **Loutedo**, *pres.* R 1554  
**Loweke**, *sb.* fellow-rascal. A 4415

**Lowteth**, *pres. s.* bows. B 2375  
**Lufsom**, *adj.* lovable. T<sup>3</sup> 465  
**Lunarie**, *sb.* moonwort. G 800  
**Lust**, *sb.* pleasure. A 192, T<sup>1</sup> 326  
**M**, before a verb beginning with a vowel, *pres. from. me.*  
**Maad**, *p. p.* made. A 394  
**Maat**, *adj.* dejected, discomfited. A 955, B 935  
**Madde**, *v.* go mad. *Mars* 253  
**May**, *sb.* maiden. B 851  
**Maydenhede**, *sb.* virginity. B 30  
**Mayme**, *sb.* maiming. I 625  
**Maysondewe**, *sb.* hospital. R 5619  
**Maystow**, *mayst* thou. A 1918  
**Maistre**, *sb.* master; *adj.* chief. L 1016  
**Maystre**, chief; **Maystre-strate**, **Maister-toun**. L 1065, 1591  
**Maistrye**, *sb.* mastery. L 400  
**Make**, *sb.* husband, mate, match. D 85, B 1982, A 2556  
**Maked**, *pres. made*. A 1907  
**Makeles**, *adj.* matchless. T<sup>1</sup> 172  
**Makynghe**, *sb.* poetry. I 74  
**Malapert**, *adj.* impudent. T<sup>3</sup> 87  
**Male**, *sb.* wallet. C 920  
**Malefice**, *sb.* evil-doing. Bo. 169  
**Malgre**, *pres. in spite of*. *Maistr* 220  
**Malt**, *pres.* melted. HF<sup>3</sup> 414  
**Mal-talent**, *sb.* ill-will. R 330  
**Manace**, *sb.* menace. A 2003  
**Manasynghe**, *p. pres.* menacing. Bo. 416  
**Maner**, *sb.* manor. Bl. 1003  
**Maner**, **Manere**, *sb.* manner. *Pite* 24, L 251  
**Manye**, *sb.* mania. A 1374  
**Manuete**, *adj.* gentle. T<sup>3</sup> 194  
**Mappemounds**, *sb.* *mappe mundi*, map of the world. *Rosemonde* 2  
**Maro**, *sb.* thirteen-shillings and fourpence. G 1026  
**Martial**, *adj.* martial. T<sup>4</sup> 1669  
**Mare**, *adv. comp.* more. R 2709  
**Mareys**, *sb.* marsh. D 970, Bo. 536  
**Mary**, *sb.* marrow. C 542, Bo. 1008  
**Marybones**, *sb. pl.* marrow-bones. A 380  
**Market-betere**, *sb.* hully at fairs. A 3936  
**Markys**, *sb.* marquis. E 786  
**Markynesse**, *sb.* marchioness. E 283  
**Martire**, *sb.* torment. T<sup>4</sup> 818  
**Mased**, *p. p.* dazed. Bl. 12  
**Maat**, *sb.* acorns. *Former Age* 6  
**Masty**, *adj.* acorn-eating. HF<sup>3</sup> 687  
**Mate**, *adj.* depressed, discomfited. L 126, R 3167  
**Maters**, *sb.* matter, subject. Bl. 43  
**Mangree**, *pres. p.* despise. A 1169  
**Mangree**, *sb.* ill-will, R 3144; **Oan mangree**, owe a grudge, R 4399, 4559  
**Maumetrie**, *sb.* Mohammedism, idolatry. B 236  
**Maunciple**, *sb.* purveyor. A 510  
**Mawmet**, *sb.* idol. I 749  
**Mazelyn**, *sb.* maple-bowl. B 2042  
**Mede**, **Meede**, (1) reward, bribe, A 3380; (2) mead, a drink, B 2042; (3) meadow, A 89  
**Medlee**, *adj.* of mixed stuff. A 328  
**Medleth**, *pres.* mingles, mixes. L 874, Bo. 1313  
**Medlyng**, *sb.* mixture. Bo. 1356  
**Mede**, *sb.* See **Mede**  
**Meene**, *pres.* bemoan. R 2506  
**Meeth**, *sb.* mead, a drink. A 2279

# GLOSSARY

**Meignee**, *sb.* household. I 894  
**Meyned**, *p.p.* maimed. R 3356  
**Meynes**, *sb.* retinue, household. A 1258  
**Meynt**, *p.p.* mingled. R 1920  
**Meyntennance**, *sb.* demeanour. Bl. 813  
**Mekede**, *pres.* meekened. R 3584  
**Mel-tid**, *sb.* meal-time. T<sup>2</sup> 1556  
**Melle**, *sb.* mill. A 3923  
**Memotre**, **Memorie**, *sb.* memory, commemoration. Bl. 944, A 1906  
**Mencioun**, *sb.* mention. B 54  
**Mendience**, *sb.* mendicancy. R 6457  
**Mendynants**, *sb. pl.* begging friars. D 1906  
**Mene**, *pres.* mean, intend. A 2063, 2216  
**Mene**, *adj.* middle, of middle size. T<sup>2</sup> 806  
**Meneliche**, *adj.* moderate. Bo. 251  
**Mentes**, *sb. pl.* mint. R 711  
**Merciable**, *adj.* merciful. L 343  
**Mere**, *sb.* mare. A 541  
**Merke**, *adj.* dark. R 5139  
**Merlion**, *sb.* merlin hawk. PF 339  
**Mervaille**, *sb.* marvel. L 1185  
**Mes**, **Messe**, *sb.*; At good mes, at advantage, R 1462, 1453  
**Meschief**, *sb.* mischief; At meschief, in danger, A 2551  
**Mesel**, *sb.* leper. I 624  
**Message**, *sb.* messenger. B 144  
**Messagers**, *s.* messenger. Bl. 133  
**Messe**, *sb.* mass. B 1413  
**Meste**, *adj. pl.* most; **The meste**, the most important. T<sup>2</sup> 440  
**Mester**, *sb.* occupation. A 1320  
**Measurable**, *adj.* moderate. F 362  
**Meure**, *sb.* moderation. E 627  
**Met**, *pres.* dreams. PF 104  
**Met**, *sb.* measure. I 799  
**Mete**, *pres.* sub. dream. Bl. 1233  
**Mette**, *pres.* dreamt. B 4984, L 710  
**Meye**, *v.* move  
**Moverous**, *sb. fem.* agitator. R 149  
**Mowe**, *sb.* cage, coop. F 643, T<sup>2</sup> 622  
**Mychoes**, *sb. pl.* small loaves. R 5555  
**Mych**, *adj.* much. R 2704  
**Mycher**, *sb.* thief. R 6541  
**Mihti**, *adj.* mighty. *ABC* 6  
**Mile-way**, **Milewey**, *sb.* 5 degrees of angular measurement, the third part of an hour. As. I. § 16  
**Millne-stones**, *sb. pl.* mill-stone. T<sup>2</sup> 1384  
**Mynour**, *sb.* miner. A 2463  
**Myntyng**, *p.p.* meaning. Bo. 38  
**Mirre**, *sb.* myrrh. A 2938  
**Mys**, *sb. pl.* mice. Bo. 492  
**Misaccounted**, *p.p.* misreckoned. T<sup>2</sup> 1185  
**Misbelived**, *p.p.* as *sb.* unbelievers. *ABC* 146  
**Mysboden**, *p.p.* abused, harmed. A 909  
**Mysdepartoth**, *pres.* s. divides unfairly. B 107  
**Misericorde**, *sb.* mercy. *ABC* 35  
**Mysse**, *sb.* discomfort. I 177  
**Mis-foray**, *pres.* sorely misgave. T<sup>2</sup> 1426  
**Myslay**, *pres.* lay away. A 3647  
**Mislived**, *p.p.* ill-behaved. T<sup>2</sup> 370  
**Mismetre**, *pres.* sub. scan wrongly. T<sup>2</sup> 1796  
**Mismetts**, *pres.* suited ill. R 1194  
**Myssest**, *pres.* s. speaketh ill of. L 323  
**Myster**, *sb.* (1) craft, A 613; (2) need, R 1456, 6078; What mysters men, what manner of men. A 1710  
**Mystikede**, *sb.* mystery. *Mars* 224

**Mystorned**, *p.p.* turned aside. Bo. 1236  
**Misway**, *adv.* astray. R 4766  
**Mysweyes**, *sb. pl.* by-paths, wrong roads. Bo. 1623  
**Miswont**, *pres.* erred. T<sup>2</sup> 633  
**Myxnes**, *sb. pl.* middens, dunghills. R 6496  
**Mo**, **Moo**, *adj.* more, others. A 1715, E 1039  
**Moche**, **Mochel**, *sb.* More Mueche, Muechel  
**Moder**, *sb.* mother. *ABC* 49; the large plate i an astrolabe, As. i. § 2  
**Moebie**, *adj.* moveable. As. i. § 21  
**Moebie**, *sb.* furniture, T<sup>2</sup> 1380; **Moebies**, *sb. pl.* moveables, chattels, E 1314  
**Moysoun**, *sb.* crop. R 1677  
**Mokeren**, *pres. pl.* heap up. Bo. 425  
**Mokereres**, *sb. pl.* heapers up, hoarders. B 425  
**Mokre**, *v.* heap up. T<sup>2</sup> 1375  
**Molte**, *pres.* melted. T<sup>2</sup> 10  
**Mone**, *sb.* moon  
**Moneste**, *pres.* s. admonish. R 3579  
**Montaunce**, *sb.* value, amount. A 1570, C 86  
**Monyours**, *sb. pl.* money-changers. R 6811  
**Mood**, *sb.* anger. R 5162  
**Moote**, *pres.* must, may. A 735  
**Mordre**, *sb.* murder. B 4211  
**More**, *sb.* root. T<sup>2</sup> 25  
**Mormal**, *sb.* gangrene. A 326  
**Morter**, *sb.* night-light. T<sup>2</sup> 1245  
**Mortifye**, *v.* transmute. G 1126  
**Mortrer**, *sb.* murderer. PF 353  
**Mortreux**, *sb.* a kind of stew. A 384  
**Morwe**, *sb.* morrow, morning. A 131  
**Morwenyng**, *sb.* morning. A 1062  
**Musel**, *sb.* muzzle. A 2151  
**Moote**, *pres.* must  
**Mote**, *pres.* must, may  
**Mote**, *sb.* speck. T<sup>2</sup> 1603  
**Motteleye**, *sb.* motley. A 271  
**Mountaunce**, *sb.* amount. R 1562  
**Mourdaunt**, *sb.* pendant of a girdle. R 1094  
**Moustre**, *sb.* show-piece. Bl. 911  
**Mowes**, *sb. pl.* grimaces. R 5990, 11F<sup>2</sup> 716  
**Mowyng**, *sb.* ability. Bo. 1372  
**Mowied**, *p.p.* grown mouldy. A 3870  
**Mowien**, *v.* moulder. B 42  
**Muable**, *adj.* fleeting. T<sup>2</sup> 822, Bo. 1455  
**Muche** and **lite**, great and small. A 494  
**Muchel**, *adj.* much. A 132  
**Mullok**, *sb.* refuse. A 3873  
**Murlierly**, *adv. comp.* more merrily. A 714  
**Musarde**, *sb.* dreamer. R 3256, 4034, 756  
**Muttre**, *v.* mutter. T<sup>2</sup> 541  
**Muwe**, *sb.* mew, cage. A 149, T<sup>2</sup> 1784  
**Muwe**, *v.* change. T<sup>2</sup> 1258  
**Muwet**, *adj.* mute. T<sup>2</sup> 104

**N**, before a vowel, = **Ne**, not  
**Na**, *adj.* no. A 4026  
**Nadde**, **No hadde**, had not. L 278  
**Naddre**, *sb.* adder. E 1786  
**Nadir**, *sb.* the point of the heavens diametric opposite to the zenith. As. ii. § 5  
**Nadstow**, *hadst thou not*. A 4088  
**Na foru**, no matter. A 2476  
**Nayles**, *sb. pl.* nails. A 1411  
**Nayte**, *v.* say no to, deny. I 1013  
**Nake**, *pres.* *pl.* bare. Bo. 1616  
**Nakera**, *sb. pl.* drums. A 2511  
**Nale**, **Atte nale**, at the ale-house. D 1349

# GLOSSARY

**Nam, No am, am not.** A 1222  
**Nam, pret. took.** G 1297  
**Namely, adv. especially.** B 1233  
**Na mo, no more.** A 1589  
**Nart, No art, art not.** ABC 26, G 497  
**Narwe, adj. narrow, close.** E 1988  
**Nas, No was, was not.** A 1649, 2105  
**Nat, adv. not.** A 1145, 4087  
**Nath, No hath, hath not**  
**Nathalees, adv. nevertheless.** E 377  
**Natureel, Naturel, adj. natural, by birth** A 415, L 375  
**Na, adv. not, nor.** A 923, 1649  
**Neddes, sh. N. adders.** L 699  
**Nede, sh. need.** H 4643  
**Nedalees, adv. needlessly.** E 621  
**Nedely, adv. of necessity.** B 4435  
**Nedecost, adv. of necessity.** A 1477  
**Neen, adj. none, no.** A 4185  
**Neet, sh. cattle.** A 597  
**Negardye, sh. niggardly.** Truth 53  
**Neghen, v. draw near.** L 118  
**Neigh, adv. nigh, near.** Bl. 104  
**Nel, No will, will not.** R 4344  
**Nempnen, name, B 507; Nempned, pret. E 609**  
**Ner, adj. nearer.** Bl. 887  
**Nere, No were, were not.** B 547  
**Nevene, v. name.** G 821  
**Neveradeel, not a whit.** C 670  
**Newe, adv. newly.** A 4239  
**Newed, pret. renewed itself.** Bl. 905  
**Nexte, adj. sup. nearest.** B 807  
**Nyes, adj. foolish.** H 1088  
**Nydes, sh. pl. trifles.** D 1760  
**Nyghtertale, sh. night-time.** A 97  
**Nigromandians, sh. pl. magicians.** I 603  
**Nil, No will, will not.** T 1020  
**Millynge, sh. refusing.** Ho. 1656  
**Nyn, No in, nor in.** E 2088  
**Nys, No is, is not.** A 1677  
**Nyste, No wiste, knew not.** R 384  
**Noble, sh. coin worth 6s. 8d.** A 3256  
**Nobleye, sh. nobility.** E 828  
**No fors, no matter.** R 285  
**Noye, v. harm.** R 3772  
**Noious, adj. harmful.** R 3231  
**Nolds, No wolds, would not.** A 1024  
**Nome, p.p. taken.** I. 822  
**Non, adj. none**  
**Nones, For the nones, for the occasion.** A 545  
**Noone, sh. nun.** A 118  
**Noon, adj. none.** A 773  
**Not, pres. No woot, know not.** A 1340, Bl. 29  
**Noote, sh. note, music.** B 1711  
**Norice, sh. nurse.** E 561  
**Nortelrie, sh. good manners.** A 3967  
**Nory, sh. foster-child.** Ho. 850  
**Noosthires, sh. pl. nostrils.** A 557  
**Nookinne, adj. no kind of.** HF 704  
**Noet, No woot, knowest not**  
**Note, sh. need, business.** A 4068  
**Noteful, adj. useful.** Bo. 33  
**Notemygge, sh. pl. nutmegs.** R 1362  
**Not-head, sh. close-cropped head.** A 109  
**Nother, No other, nor other**  
**Nouncerteyn, sh. uncertainty.** Venus 46  
**Noun-power, sh. impotence.** Ho. 726  
**Noutner, adj. neither.** Bl. 531  
**Novalrie, sh. novelty.** F 619  
**Nowches, sh. pl. jewels.** E 382

**Nowthe, adv. now.** A 462

**O, num. one.** A 2725, G 335, R 6198  
**Obeissauce, sh. obedience.** A 2974  
**Observaunce, sh. respect, ceremony.** A 1045  
**Observe, v. respect, countenance.** B 1821  
**Ootogamy, marrying eight times.** D 33  
**Of, adv. off.** A 782  
**Of-caste, imper. cast off.** PF 132  
**Offended, p.p. hurt.** A 909  
**Offensioun, sh. opposition.** A 2416  
**Ofici, sh. secular employment.** A 292  
**Of-thowed, p.p. thawed.** HF 53  
**Oynement, sh. ointment.** A 631  
**Oynons, sh. pl. onions.** A 634  
**Oystre, sh. oyster.** A 182  
**Olifauntes, sh. pl. elephants.** Bo. 782  
**Olmeris, sh. pl. elms.** R 1314  
**O-loft, adv. aloft.** T 1951  
**Omager, sh. one who does homage, vassal.** R 3288  
**On, p.p. on, in, at**  
**Onde, sh. malice.** R 148  
**Ones, adv. once.** A 1836  
**Onloft, adv. aloft.** E 229  
**Oo, num. one**  
**Ook, sh. oak.** A 1702, 2921  
**Oon, num. one.** A 2969  
**Ooned, p.p. united.** Bo. 1463  
**Oones, adv. once**  
**Ooning, sh. unifying.** Bo. 1464  
**Oonly, adv. only.** H 143  
**Oore, sh. compassion.** A 3726  
**Oost, sh. host, army.** I. 626, Bo. 88  
**Openers, sh. pl. mediars.** A 3871  
**Open-heveded, p.p. bareheaded.** D 645  
**Opie, sh. opium.** A 1472  
**O-point, at point, ready.** T 1638  
**Ordal, sh. ordeal.** T 1046  
**Orde, sh. dat. point.** L 645  
**Ordeyne, adj. ordered.** T 892  
**Ordeynly, adv. in order.** Bo. 1524  
**Ordred, p.p. ordained.** I 782  
**Orfrays, sh. gold embroidery.** R 1076  
**Orisonte, sh. horizon.** T 276  
**Orloge, sh. sundial, clock.** PF 530, B 4044  
**Orphelyn, sh. orphan.** Bo. 334  
**Ost, sh. host, army.** Former Age 40  
**Ostelementes, sh. pl. utensils, furniture.** Bo. 455  
**Other, conj. either, or**  
**Ouche, sh. jewel.** D 743  
**Oules, sh. pl. awls.** D 1730  
**Oultrage, sh. excess.** Bo. 455  
**Ounces, sh. pl. small pieces.** A 677  
**Ounded, adj. wavy.** T 743  
**Outen, v. publicly display.** E 2438, G 834  
**Out-hees, sh. hue and cry.** A 2012  
**Outther, conj. either, or.** A 1485, 1593  
**Outlandish, adj. foreign.** Former Age 22  
**Outrage, sh. excess.** Former Age 5  
**Outroye, v. pass beyond control.** E 643  
**Outrely, adv. utterly.** C 849  
**Out-taken, prep. except.** B 277  
**Over-al, prep. above, besides**  
**Over-al, adv. everywhere, generally.** A 547, 1664  
**Overeste, adj. sup. uppermost.** A 270  
**Overkervith, pres. intersects.** As. i. § 21  
**Overlad, p.p. overborne.** B 3101  
**Overlope, sh. upper garment.** G 633

# GLOSSARY

**Overprint**, *pres.* overspreadeth. T<sup>3</sup> 767  
**Overto**, *adj.* open. HF<sup>2</sup> 210  
**Overthrowyngs**, *adj.* hasty, biased. llo. 1530  
**Overthwart**, *adv.* across. A 1901, T<sup>3</sup> 685  
**Overwhelveth**, *pres.* agitates. llo. 356  
**Owen**, *v.* ought  
**Owgh**, *interj.* alas. Bo. 228  
**O-wher**, *adv.* anywhere. A 653  
**Owndwyng**, *sb.* waving. I 417  
**Owtrayen**, **Owtraye**, *v.* act outrageously, pass beyond control. Bo. 758, E 643  
**Pace**, *sb.* pace, especially walking-pace. A 2897, G 575  
**Pace**, *v.* pass. A 175  
**Paye**, *v.* content. R 3599  
**Payde**, *p.p.* pleased  
**Payen**, *adj.* pagan. A 2390  
**Payens**, *sb. pl.* pagans. L 786  
**Pallet**, *sb.* pallet. T<sup>3</sup> 229  
**Palsie**, *sb.* palsy. R 1008  
**Palseyn**, *sb.* palace. A 2199  
**Palestral**, *adj.* athletic. T<sup>3</sup> 304  
**Palyngs**, *sb.* the making a perpendicular stripe. I 417  
**Palya**, *sb. pl.* pales, paliade. Bo. 231  
**Pan**, *sb.* brain-pan, skull. A 1165  
**Panade**, *sb.* knife. A 3920  
**Pandemayne**, *sb.* fine bread. B 1915  
**Panyers**, *sb. pl.* panniers. HF<sup>2</sup> 849  
**Panter**, *sb.* snare. L 131  
**Papeer**, *sb.* pepper. G 762  
**Papejay**, *sb.* parrot, popinjay. B 1957, B 1559  
**Papalard**, *sb.* deceiver. R 7281  
**Papalardie**, *sb.* deceit. R 6766  
**Paper**, *sb.* indenture. A 4194  
**Parage**, *sb.* dignity, high-priest. D 250, 1120, R 4759  
**Paraments**, **Paraments**, *sb. pl.* rich array. A 2901, F 269  
**Paramour**, *sb.* sweet-heart. D 454  
**Paramours**, *adv.* passionately. T<sup>3</sup> 158  
**Paraventure**, **Parantur**, *adv.* peradventure. B 190, L 362  
**Parcel**, *sb.* part. Pite 16  
**Pardoe**, *par. Dicm.* B 1977  
**Paragal**, *adj.* equal. T<sup>3</sup> 940  
**Paraments**. See **Paraments**  
**Parentels**, *sb.* relationship. I 908  
**Parlay**, *par. foi.* B 110  
**Parat**, *adj.* perfect. A 72  
**Parfourned**, *p.p.* consummated. B 1646  
**Parfournest**, *pres.* accomplisheth. B 1797  
**Parishens**, *sb. pl.* parishioners. A 482  
**Paritory**, *sb.* pellitory. G 581  
**Parlement**, *sb.* parliament, deliberation. A 1306  
**Paroch prest**, *sb.* parish priest. R 6384  
**Parodie**, *sb.* period. T<sup>3</sup> 1548  
**Paroners**, *sb. pl.* partners. R 6952  
**Partem**, *v.* take part, share. L 465  
**Partie**, *sb.* partisan. A 2657  
**Partying-felawes**, *sb. pl.* partners. I 637  
**Parvys**, *sb.* church-porch. A 310  
**Pas**, *sb.* See **Pas**  
**Pasant**, *adj.* surpassing. A 2107  
**Passen**, *v.* surpass. I 162  
**Patre**, **Patran**, *v.* patter, chatter. R 6794, 7241  
**Pawmes**, *sb. pl.* palms. T<sup>3</sup> 1114

**Pax**, *sb.* a painted tablet kissed during the celebration of mass. E 1407  
**Pecunyal**, *adj.* pecuniary. D 1314  
**Pece**, *sb.* peace. A 1671  
**Peyned**, *pres.* pained, troubled. A 139  
**Peytrel**, *sb.* breast-piece. \* G 564  
**Pol**, *sb.* castle. HF<sup>2</sup> 220  
**Polet**, *sb.* shot. HF<sup>2</sup> 553  
**Penant**, *sb.* penitent. B 3184  
**Pencel**, **Pensel**, *sb.* small banner. T<sup>3</sup> 1043, R 628  
**Ponyble**, *adj.* painstaking. B 3490  
**Penner**, *sb.* pen-case. F 1879  
**Penoun**, *sb.* pennant, banner. A 978  
**Pens**, *sb. pl.* pence. C 408  
**Peple**, *sb.* people. A 995  
**Peroas**, *adv.* perchance. R 6647  
**Peroely**, *sb.* parsley. A 4350  
**Perohemyns**, *sb.* parchment. R 6584  
**Perdurable**, *adj.* lasting. I 75  
**Perdurablete**, *sb.* immortality. Bo. 552  
**Perogryn**, *adj.* pilgrim. F 423  
**Perdonette**, *sb.* pear-tree. A 3248  
**Perit**, *adj.* perfect. A 1271  
**Perissed**, *p.p.* destroyed. I 579  
**Perres**, *sb.* precious stones, jewellery. A 293, B 3495, T<sup>3</sup> 344  
**Pers**, *adj.* blue. A 439  
**Persaunt**, *adj.* piercing. R 2809  
**Persone**, **Persoun**, (1) person, A 2725; (2) parse A 478  
**Perturben**, *pres. pl.* disturb. A 906  
**Pervynke**, *sb.* periwinkle. R 903  
**Pesse**, *v.* appease. R 3307  
**Pesene**, *sb. pl.* peas. L 648  
**Pesible**, *adj.* peaceful. Bo. 169  
**Philosophre**, *sb.* philosopher, esp. an alchemist. A 297  
**Phitonesses**, *sb. pl.* diviners, witches. HF<sup>2</sup>  
**Pye**, *sb.* magpie, chatterer. T<sup>3</sup> 527  
**Pigeonye**, *sb.* pig's eye, a term of endearment. A 3268  
**Pighte**, *pres.* pitched. A 2689  
**Pike**, *v.* (1) peep, T<sup>3</sup> 60; (2) pick; **Pyketh**, *p.* picks over, smartens, E 2011; (3) **Pike** prick against, T<sup>3</sup> 1274  
**Piked**, *pres.* stole. I 2467  
**Pykepura**, *sb.* pick-pocket. A 1998  
**Pykerel**, *sb.* young pike. F 1419  
**Plohe**, *sb.* fur coat. *Parvys* 4  
**Piled**, *adj.* plucked, scanty, bald. A 67, 14706  
**Pilere**, *sb.* pillow. B 738  
**Pilled**, *p.p.* plundered. L 1262  
**Pilours**, *sb. pl.* plunderers. A 1007  
**Pilwe**, *sb.* pillow. B 284  
**Pilwe-beer**, *sb.* pillow-case. A 694  
**Pymment**, *sb.* spiced wine. A 3378, Bo. 476027  
**Pynchen**, *v.* cavil at, A 325; **Pynchest**, *For* 57  
**Pyne**, *sb.* pain, torture. T<sup>3</sup> 676, A 1746  
**Pyn-trees**, *sb. pl.* pine-trees. llo. 477  
**Piper**, *adj.* used for pipes or horns. PF 171  
**Pyrie**, *sb.* pear-tree. E 2217  
**Plasemyre**, *sb.* ant. D 1825  
**Pistel**, *sb.* epistle, story. D 1021  
**Pitagnos**, *sb.* portion of food. A 224  
**Place**, *sb.* chief house. B 1910  
**Plages**, *sb. pl.* coasts, quarters. B 543, A 5  
**Playes**, *sb. pl.* devices. B 569

# GLOSSARY

**Flat**, *adv.* flat. B 3947  
**Flatly**, *adv.* flatly. T<sup>3</sup> 786  
**Playe**, *v.* play, jest. A 1127  
**Playn**, *adj.* (1) full, A 315; (2) plain, frank, L 328, An. 278  
**Playn**, *Playn*, *adv.* (2) fully, A 327; (2) plainly, B 219  
**Playne**, *v.* complain. D 1313  
**Playng**, *p. pres.* arguing. PF 495  
**Playnlich**, *adv.* plainly. T<sup>3</sup> 272  
**Pleasure**, *sb.* pleasure. L 1446  
**Plete**, *Pleten*, *v.* plead. T<sup>3</sup> 1468, Bo. 296  
**Plve**, *v.* bend. E 1169, R 4389  
**Playght**, *p. p.* plucked, D 790; *Playght*, *pret.* pulled, B 15  
**Plit**, *sb.* plight. T<sup>3</sup> 712  
**Plite**, *v.* fold. T<sup>3</sup> 134  
**Plowngy**, *adj.* moist, Bo. 64, 616  
**Poeplish**, *adj.* vulgar. T<sup>3</sup> 1677  
**Poileys**, *adj.* Apulian. F 195  
**Poynaunt**, *adj.* pungent. A 352  
**Poynt**, *sb.*; **In good poynt**, in good condition, A 200; **At poynt devys**, carefully, A 3689  
**pyntel**, *sb.* pencil, stylus. D 1742, Bo. 1810  
**poke**, *sb.* pocket, bag. A 3780  
**okettes**, *sb. pl.* bags. G 808  
**olyve**, *sb.* pulley. F 184  
**ome-garnetty**, *sb. pl.* pomegranates. R 1356  
**omel**, *sb.* crown, top. A 2689  
**omely**, *adj.* dappled. A 616  
**ool**, *sb.* pole. Bo. 1435, As. i. § 14  
**opelote**, *sb.* puppet. A 3254  
**opet**, *sb.* poppet, doll. B 1891  
**opped**, *pret.* bedizened. R 1019  
**oppere**, *sb.* dagger. A 3931  
**oraille**, *sb.* poor folk. A 247  
**orismes**, *sb. pl.* corollaries. Bo. 924  
**ortatif**, *adj.* portable. As. [17]  
**ortocoolys**, *sb.* portcullis. R 4168  
**orthora**, *sb.* breviary. B 1321  
**ortretour**, *sb.* artist. A 1899  
**ose**, *sb.* a cold. A 4152  
**ose**, *pres. s.* put the case, suppose. A 1162, T<sup>3</sup> 310  
**possessioners**, *sb. pl.* members of endowed orders. I 1772  
**posseth**, *pres. s.* pushes, L 2240; **Possed**, **Posshed**, *p. p.* pushed, driven, T<sup>3</sup> 415, R 4625  
**Postum**, *sb.* abscess. Bo. 694  
**potant**, *sb.* staff. I 1776, T<sup>3</sup> 1222, R 368  
**potentat**, *sb.* potentate. I 2007  
**Poudremarohant**, *sb.* flavouring powder. A 381  
**Pounage**, *sb.* food for pigs. *former Age 7*  
**Pouna**, *sb.* pawn in chess. Bl. 660  
**Pouped**, *pret.* blown. H 90  
**Poutely**, *adv.* poorly. A 1412  
**Poua**, *sb.* pulse. T<sup>3</sup> 1114  
**Pouate**, *sb.* power. Bo. 1423, R 6484  
**Powsonyng**, *sb.* puncturing. I 418  
**Prece**, *v.* press. R 4198  
**Prodication**, *sb.* preaching. B 1176  
**Proes**, *sb.* press, crowd. B 393, 805  
**Proest**, *sb.* priest. B 4010  
**Proeve**, *v.* stand testing. G 645  
**Proferre**, *pres. subj.* surpasses. D 96  
**Proye**, *pres. s.* pray. B 3995  
**Proyneth**, *pres. s.* greens. E 2011  
**Proyse**, *v.* praise. L 67  
**Prozostik**, *adj.* prophetic. *Fortune 54*  
**Prenten**, *v.* imprint. T<sup>3</sup> 900

**Pres**, *sb.* crowd. T<sup>3</sup> 1718  
**Presse**, **Pressen**, *v.* press, R 2899, *Pite 19*; **Pres- yng**, *p. pres.* R 6437  
**Presst**, *adj.* ready. T<sup>3</sup> 785, T<sup>3</sup> 485  
**Pretende**, *v.* intend. T<sup>3</sup> 922  
**Preterit**, *adj.* past. R 5011  
**Prove**, *sb.* proof. T<sup>3</sup> 470, 690  
**Prove**, *v.* prove. L 9  
**Prydeless**, *adj.* without pride. *Complaynte to his Lady 25*  
**Prighte**, *pret.* pricked. F 418  
**Printo**, *pret.* pierced. *ABC 163*  
**Prikasour**, *sb.* hard rider. A 189  
**Priketh**, *pres. s.* spurs. A 1043  
**Prikyng**, *sb.* spurring. A 191  
**Prikke**, *sb.* point, centre. Bo. 1030  
**Prille**. See note, R 1058  
**Prime**, *sb.* the time between 6 and 9 A.M. B 1278, 4387  
**Prime**, **At prime face**, *primit facie*, at first glance  
**Primerole**, *sb.* primrose. A 3268  
**Prye**, *sb.* value, estimation. A 67, B 2285  
**Pryves**, *adj.* secret. D 1136  
**Pryvely**, *adv.* secretly. A 1443  
**Proclacions**, *sb. pl.* preludes. Bo. 270  
**Prollis**, *pres. pl.* prowl. G 1412  
**Propre**, *adj.* proper, own. T<sup>3</sup> 1487  
**Proprete**, *sb.* property. T<sup>3</sup> 392  
**Prow**, *sb.* profit. B 1598, T<sup>3</sup> 1664  
**Proesse**, *sb.* prowess. Bo. 1291  
**Pulle**, *v.* pluck, A 652; **Pulled**, *p. p.* A 177  
**Purchace**, *v.* obtain. T<sup>3</sup> 557  
**Purchas**, *sb.* earnings. A 256  
**Purchasyng**, *sb.* prosecuting. A 320  
**Purchasour**, *sb.* prosecutor. A 319  
**Pure**, *adj.* mere, very. A 1279  
**Pured**, *p. p.* refined. F 1560  
**Purple**, *adj.* purple. L 654  
**Purseyng**, *adj.* following, in accordance with. Bl. 958  
**Purtreys**, *v.* draw. A 96  
**Purveable**, *adj.* providential. Bo. 655  
**Purvelaunce**, *sb.* providence. A 2352  
**Purveys**, *v.* provide. E 191  
**Put**, *pres.* putteth. L 652  
**Put**, *sb.* pit. I 170  
**Puteurs**, *sb. pl.* whoremongers. I 886  
**Quaad**, *adj.* evil. A 4357  
**Quakke**, *sb.* hoarseness. A 4152  
**Qualm**, *sb.* disease, A 2014; death-note, T<sup>3</sup> 382  
**Quappe**, *v.* flutter. T<sup>3</sup> 57  
**Queerne**, *sb.* mill. B 3264  
**Queynite**, *pl. adj.* quaint. A 1531  
**Queynite**, *sb.* pudendum muliebre. A 3276  
**Queynite**, *pret.* was quenched. A 2334  
**Queyntise**, *sb.* elegance, I 932; contrivance, I 733  
**Qualle**, *v.* kill. B 4580  
**Quamen**, *v.* please. T<sup>3</sup> 695; *pres. pl.* T<sup>3</sup> 803  
**Querne**, *sb.* mill. HF<sup>3</sup> 708  
**Querrour**, *sb.* quarryman. R 4249  
**Questmongers**, *sb. pl.* holders of inquests. I 707  
**Quethe**, *pres. s.* say, cry. R 6999  
**Quyke**, *adj. pl.* alive. A 1015  
**Quyked**, *pret.* revived. A 2335  
**Quyknese**, *sb.* liveliness. Bl. 26  
**Quynble**, *sb.* a part sung a fifth above the air. A 3332



# GLOSSARY

**Quayrbolli**, *sb.* leather boiled and hardened. B 3065  
**Quisahn**, *sb.* cushion. T<sup>2</sup> 1229  
**Quystrom**, *sb.* scullion. R 886  
**Quite**, *v.* pay, redeem, satisfy. A 770, 1032, B 354  
**Quitly**, *adv.* freely. A 1792  
**Quod**, *pret.* said. B 1644  
**Quoint**, *adj.* quaint. R 3038  
**Quook**, *pret.* quaked. A 1576

**Raa**, *sb.* roe. A 4086  
**Racyno**, *sb.* root. R 4831  
**Rad**, *p.p.* read, A 2595 & **Radde**, *pret.* PF 21  
**Radevure**, *sb.* tapestry (?). L 2352  
**Rafte**, *pret.* refit. L 1835  
**Rayed**, *p.p.* striped. Hl. 252  
**Rakel**, *adj.* hasty. T<sup>2</sup> 429, H 278  
**Rakelness**, **Rakelness**, *sb.* hastiness. H 283, Scogan 16

**Rake-stole**, *sb.* rake-handle. D 949  
**Rakle**, *v.* be rash. T<sup>2</sup> 1642  
**Ramage**, *adj.* wild. R 5384  
**Rammyah**, *adj.* ram-like. G 887  
**Rape**, *sb.* haste, *Adam* 7; *adv.* hastily, R 6516  
**Rape and ronne**, rob and plunder. G 1422  
**Rather**, *adv. comp.* earlier, sooner. Ho. 260, B 2265

**Raughte**, *pret.* reached. A 136  
**Ravynne**, *sb.* rapine, Bo. 323; **Ravynnes**, *pl.* I 793  
**Ravynners**, *sb. pl.* plunderers, Bo. 91; **Ravynour**, Bo. 1204

**Ravysable**, *adj.* ravenous. R 7006  
**Real**, *adj.* royal. B 4366  
**Realtee**, *sb.* royalty. *Fortune* 60  
**Reawma**, *sb.* realm. B 797  
**Rebekke**, *sb.* abusive term for an old woman. D 1573

**Rechoe**, *pres. subj.* expound. B 4086  
**Recholeous**, *adj.* careless. A 179  
**Rechased**, *p.p.* chased back. Hl. 379  
**Reche**, *v.* reach. Hl. 47

**Reconde**, *pres. s.* confirm. A 1745  
**Reconures**, *sb. pl.* retrogressions. Ho. 41  
**Recreandise**, *sb.* cowardice. B 4038  
**Reoured**, *p.p.* recovered. R 4120  
**Reddour**, *sb.* violence. *Fortune* 13

**Rede**, *sb.* reed-pipe. HF<sup>2</sup> 111  
**Rede**, **Rede**, *sb.* counsel. Hl. 203  
**Redeless**, *adj.* deviceless. *Pite* 27  
**Redonhyng**, *sb.* glorifying. A 2050

**Redowte**, *v.* respect. Ho. 73  
**Redd**, *adj.* red. B 1301  
**Redd**, **Redd**, *sb.* counsel. A 1216  
**Reorden**, *pres. pl.* rend, destroy. Ho. 1072

**Rees**, *sb.* race; in a rees, hastily. T<sup>2</sup> 350  
**Reefet**, *p.p.* refreshed. Ho. 1550  
**Reefryden**, *v.* cool, T<sup>2</sup> 507; **Reefryded**, **Re-fryed**, *p.p.* frozen, cool, I 341, *Rosemounde* 21

**Refut**, *sb.* refuge. B 852, *ABC* 14  
**Regalye**, *sb.* majesty. *Pite* 65  
**Regale**, *sb. pl.* royal privileges. L 2128  
**Regne**, *sb.* kingdom. A 1638  
**Reyes**, *sb. pl.* round dances. HF<sup>2</sup> 146

**Reichte**, *pret.* reached. HF<sup>2</sup> 284  
**Reyand**, *p.p.* (1) raised, Hl. 1277; (2) raided, A 54  
**Rekelness**, *sb.* hastiness. Scogan 16  
**Reken**, **Rekene**, *v.* reckon, recount. B 110, A 1933

**Relese**, *sb.* release, *ABC* 3; *Out of relese*, ceaselessly, G 46

**Relente**, *v.* melt. G 1278  
**Remes**, *sb. pl.* realties. B 4386, Bo. 799  
**Remowed**, *p.p.* removed. F 181  
**Remorde**, *pres. subj.* cause remorse, T<sup>2</sup> 149

**Remordith**, *verbes*, Ho. 1519  
**Remounted**, *p.p.* caused to rise again. Bo. 6  
**Remuable**, *adj.* changeable. T<sup>2</sup> 1682  
**Ran**, *sb.* run. A 4079

**Renably**, *adv.* eloquently. D 1509  
**Renayen**, *v.* deny, B 3751; **Renayed**, *p.p.* B 1  
**Renges**, *sb. pl.* ranks. A 2594  
**Renomee**, *sb.* renown. D 1159, L 1512

**Renovelaunce**, *sb. pl.* renewals. HF<sup>2</sup> 185-  
**Renovellen**, *pres. pl.* renew. I 1027  
**Rent**, *rendeth*. L 646  
**Rente**, *sb.* income. B 4017

**Replicacioun**, *sb.* reply. L 1846, PF 536  
**Reprende**, *v.* reprehend, blame. T<sup>2</sup> 510  
**Requerable**, *adj.* desirable. Ho. 491  
**Ressalgar**, *sb.* rat's-bane. G 814

**Rescous**, **Rescous**, *sb.* rescue. T<sup>2</sup> 478, A 264  
**Rescows**, *v.* rescue. T<sup>2</sup> 857  
**Rese**, *v.* shake. A 1986

**Resons**, *sb. pl.* opinions. A 274  
**Resport**, *v.* regard. T<sup>2</sup> 850  
**Resteless**, *adj.* restless. G 728  
**Reuthor**, *sb.* rhetorician. B 4307

**Reuthorien**, *sb.* rhetorician. Ho. 341  
**Retorninge**, *part. pres.* turning over. T<sup>2</sup> 8  
**Retracacioun**, *sb. pl.* recantations. I 1085  
**Revelous**, *adj.* sportive. B 1194

**Revert**, *sb.* reverse. B 416  
**Revesten**, *pres. pl.* clothe anew. T<sup>2</sup> 353  
**Revoken**, *v.* call back, restore. T<sup>2</sup> 1118  
**Reward**, *sb.* regard. B 2445

**Rewe**, *sb.* row. A 2866  
**Rewel boon**, *sb.* smooth bone, ivory (?). B  
**Rewliche**, *adj.* pitiable. Ho. 312  
**Rewma**, *sb.* realm. R 495

**Rial**, *adj.* royal. *Pite* 59  
**Ribibe**, *sb.* old woman. I 1377  
**Ribible**, **Ribible**, *sb.* fiddle. G 4396, 3331  
**Richesse**, *sb.* riches. B 107

**Ridyng**, *sb.* a jousting or procession. A 43  
**Ridled**, *p.p.* pleated. R 1235  
**Riet**, *sb.* the net or perforated plate reviv-  
 within the 'mother' of an Astrolabe. As. 1

**Righte**, *adj.* direct. B 556  
**Rightful**, *adj.* righteous. *ABC* 31  
**Riht**, *adj.* right. *ABC* 74  
**Rympled**, *p.p.* wrinkled. R 4494

**Rys**, *sb.* twig. A 3324  
**Rishe**, **Rishe**, *sb.* rush. R 1701, T<sup>2</sup> 1161  
**Rist**, *rieth*. B 864, L 810  
**Rit**, *rideth*. A 974

**Roche**, *sb.* rock. HF<sup>2</sup> 40  
**Rochette**, *sb.* rochet, linen vest. R 4754  
**Rode**, *sb.* ruddiness. B 1017  
**Rode**, *sb.* road, cross. HF<sup>2</sup> 57

**Roggeth**, *pres. s.* shakes. L 1708  
**Roghte**, *pret.* reaked. E 685  
**Rougnous**, *adj.* rotten. R 6190  
**Royleth**, *pres. s.* rolls. Bo. 254

**Royn**, *sb.* ich. R 553  
**Roynous**, *adj.* scabby, rough. R 988  
**Rochet**, *sb.* rochet, linen vest. R 1242  
**Rombel**. See **Rumbel**  
**Rommer**, *adj. comp.* roomier. A 4145  
**Ron**, *pret.* rained. T<sup>2</sup> 640  
**Rona**. See *note*, R 1873

# GLOSSARY

*mae, pres. pl. rau.* B 4578  
*rod, pres. rode.* A 966  
*of, pres. clave.* HF 373  
*otom, sb. pl. astrological roots.* F 1276  
*pen, p. p. reaped.* L 74  
*re, sb. uproar.* T 335  
*rosa, adj. rosy.* Bo. 353  
*ros, sb. rose-tree.* R 1651, 3059  
*roze, adj. made of roses.* R 845  
*ro, sb. a small harp.* A 236  
*roghte, pres. recked.* T 496  
*raken, v. cower, huddle.* T 409; *Rouketh, pres. s.* A 1308  
*runoy, sb. hawk.* A 390  
*rundel, sb. circlet.* HF 283  
*runynges, sb. pl. whisperings.* HF 3870  
*rute, sb. assembly.* B 776  
*rute, v. assemble together.* B 540  
*ruteth, pres. s. snores.* A 3647  
*ruthe, sb. pity.* A 914  
*rutynge, sb. rumbling.* HF 3843  
*owe, sb. roof.* A 3837  
*owe, adj. pl. rough.* R 1838  
*owe, adv. roughly.* G 861, T 1206  
*owe, sb. row, line.* HF 448; *Rowes, pl. rays, beams.* *Mars 2*  
*owne, pres. pl. whisper.* D 241  
*owtyng, sb. snoring.* A 4166  
*ubible, sb. kind of fiddle.* A 3331  
*uddok, sb. robin.* PF 349  
*uggy, adj. unkempt.* A 2883  
*umbel, sb. moaning wind.* A 1973; *rumour, E* 997  
*schells, sb. pl. satchels, bags.* Bo. 90  
*ad, adj. steadfast.* E 220  
*adly, adv. firmly, seriously, steadfastly.* A 2602, B 1266, 743  
*ay, pres. anw.* B 809, Bl. 1088  
*ay, v. assay.* R 5162  
*ailouris, sb. pl. dancers.* R 770  
*ale, sb. soul.* A 4187  
*aluo, v. salute.* Bl. 1723; *Salued, pres.* R 3610;  
*Salwed, p. p.* F 1310  
*alwes, sb. pl. willows.* D 655  
*amyt, sb. samite.* T 1109  
*angwyn, adj. red.* A 439  
*arge, sb. serge.* A 2518  
*arpleris, sb. pl. sack.* Bl. 90  
*arynyal, adj. made of Sarawen cloth, soft silk.* R 1188  
*lat, pres. fitted, suited.* L 1735; *Sate, subj.* would befit, T 217  
*lauf, adj. safe.* G 950  
*lauler, sb. psalter.* R 431  
*laurie, sb. psalter, small harp.* A 296  
*lavacioun, sb. salvation.* E 1677  
*lave, adj. safe.* An. 267  
*lave, sb. sage.* A 5713  
*lave-garde, sb. safe-conduct.* T 4139  
*laverous, adj. pleasant, toothsome.* R 84, 2812  
*lavete, sb. safety.* R 6869  
*lawoodseam, adj. pimpled.* A 625  
*lawe, sb. saying.* G 691  
*lealed, adj. scabby.* A 627  
*lealle, sb. scab.* *Adam 3*  
*leantilone, sb. mason's rule.* R 7064  
*learmuch, sb. skirmish.* T 2611  
*leathe, sb. harm, misfortune.* A 446  
*lehad, p. p. scattered.* Bo. 1478

*Schrewes, sb. pl. rascals.* Bo. 1365  
*Solat, sb. slate.* *Merviles Beaute 34*  
*Solaundre, sb. slander, scandal.* E 722  
*Solendre, adj. slender.* A 587  
*Scoothouns, sb. pl. escutcheons.* R 893  
*Scoole, sb. school.* B 1685  
*Scooleys, v. attend school.* A 302  
*Soomes, sb. pl. foamings.* Bo. 1612  
*Scorklith, pres. s. scorches.* Bo. 525  
*Scripture, sb. inscription.* T 1369  
*Scrit, sb. writing.* T 1130  
*Scrivenissly, adv. like a scribe.* T 1026  
*Seche, v. seek.* A 784  
*Secree, adj. secret.* B 4105  
*See, sb. sea.* Bl. 67  
*See, sb. seat.* T 41023  
*Seeke, adj. sick.* A 18  
*Seel, sb. happiness.* A 4239  
*Seelu, adv. seldom.* B 2340, Bo. 1442  
*Seels, sb. seal.* B 882  
*Sege, sb. seat.* Bo. 102  
*Seigh, Sey, pres. saw.* A 192, T 277  
*Seyl, sb. sail.* A 606  
*Seyn, p. p. seen.* B 624  
*Seyn, pres. pl. say.* B 622  
*Seynd, p. p. singed.* B 4035  
*Saintuarie, Seyntwarie, sb. sanctuary.* I 781, Bo. 131  
*Seistow, sayest thou.* D 292  
*Selde, adv. seldom.* A 1539, T 423  
*Sely, adj. innocent, simple, good.* A 3404, B 682, 1702; *strange.* HF 5  
*Selyly, adv. happily.* Bo. 386  
*Selnesse, sb. happiness.* T 825  
*Selve, adj. self-same.* A 2584  
*Semblable, adj. like.* I 408  
*Semblant, sb. appearance.* L 1736, R 3205  
*Semelyhede, sb. goodness.* R 1130  
*Semycoope, sb. short cloak.* A 262  
*Semyoun, sb. low noise.* A 3697  
*Sencer, sb. censor.* A 3340  
*Sendal, sb. fine silk.* A 440  
*Senith, sb. zenith.* As. il. § 26  
*Sent, pres. sendeth.* T 1123  
*Sentence, sb. meaning, purport.* A 306, C 157  
*Septemtroun, sb. the north.* B 3657  
*Serenous, adj. serene.* *l'ite 92 (emend.)*  
*Sereyns, sb. pl. sirens.* R 684  
*Servage, sb. servitude.* A 1946  
*Servauant, sb. lover.* A 1814  
*Sesons, sb. pl. seasons.* A 347  
*Sete, v. were seated.* T 281  
*Setowale, sb. valerian.* R 1370  
*Sette . . . cappe, beefool.* A 586  
*Seur, adv. surely.* T 1633  
*Seurte, sb. surety.* A 1604  
*Sowed, pursued.* B 4527  
*Sewes, sb. pl. dishes.* F 67  
*Shal, pres. s. owe.* T 3791  
*Shale, sb. shell.* HF 191  
*Shalmys, sb. pl. shawms.* HF 128  
*Shaltow, shalt thou*  
*Shapen, pres. pl. prepare.* A 772  
*Shaply, adv. likely.* T 4152  
*Shawe, sb. grove.* A 4367, T 720  
*Sheeldes, sb. pl. French crowns.* A 278  
*Sheene, adj. beautiful.* A 166  
*Shete, v. shoot.* A 3928  
*Shende, harm, A 4410; Shendeth, confounds*  
*B 28*

# GLOSSARY

**Shendakipe**, *sb.* ignominy. I 273  
**Shent**, *p.p.* scolded, discomfited, spoilt. B 1731,  
 A 2754, L 632, R 2884  
**Shepna**, *sb. pl.* sheep-folds. A 2020  
**Sherte**, *sb.* shirt. A 1566  
**Shet**, *p.p.* shut. A 2597  
**Sheter**, *sb.* as *adj.* shooter. PF 180  
**Shette**, *pret.* shut. T<sup>3</sup> 1086  
**Shilde**, *subj. pres. s.*; God *shilde*, God forbid,  
 A 3427, B 1356  
**Shynce**, *sb. pl.* shins. A 1279  
**Shipnes**, *sb. pl.* stables. D 871  
**Shiten**, *p.p.* befouled. A 504  
**Shode**, *sb.* parting of the hair. A 2007  
**Shof**, *pret.* shovled. T<sup>3</sup> 487, R 533  
**Sholds**, *sb.* shouldest. D 348  
**Shonde**, *sb.* harm. B 2098  
**Shoof**, *pret.* shovled. PF 154  
**Shoop**, *pret.* shaped, determined. *Pite* 20, B  
 1244  
**Shotwyndowe**, *sb.* window with a bolt. A 3358  
**Shour**, *sb.* onslaught, T<sup>4</sup> 47; **Shoures**, *pl.* T<sup>3</sup>  
 1064  
**Shrowednesse**, *sb.* rascality. B 2721  
**Shrowes**, *sb. pl.* rascals. C 835  
**Shryfte**, *sb.* confession. L 745  
**Shrighte**, *pret.* shrieked. A 2817  
**Shuldres**, *sb. pl.* shoulders. A 6787  
**Sy**, *pret.* saw, HF<sup>3</sup> 72; **Sye**, *pret. pl.* E 1804  
**Syd**, *adj.* related, akin. B 2165, R 1199  
**Sykarly**, *adv.* certainly. A 137  
**Sye**, *v.* sink. T<sup>3</sup> 182  
**Syen**, **Sye**, *pret. pl.* saw. G 110, E 1804  
**Sygan**, *pres. pl.* say. T<sup>4</sup> 194  
**Syghte**, *pret.* sighed. B 1033  
**Sik**, *sb.* sigh. T<sup>4</sup> 1527  
**Sike**, *v.* sigh. A 1540  
**Sike**, *adj.* sick. A 245  
**Sikernes**, *sb.* security, surety. B 425, R 7309  
**Siklich**, *adj.* sickly. T<sup>3</sup> 1528  
**Syn**, *conj.* since. A 601  
**Synaguel**, *adj.* particular. I 300  
**Synwes**, *sb. pl.* sinews. I 685  
**Syn-was**, six and ace. B 3851  
**Sisours**, *sb. pl.* scissars. HF<sup>3</sup> 182  
**Sit**, *pres. s.* sitteth, sit4, A 1599, Bl. 1107; sit4,  
 B 1353  
**Sith**, **Sithen**, *conj.* and *adv.* since. A 939,  
 1521  
**Sithe**, *sb.* scythe. L 646  
**Sithe**, *sb. pl.* times. B 731  
**Sittande**, *pres. part.* sitting. R 2263  
**Sittynge**, *adj. sup.* most fitting. PF 551  
**Skafent**, *sb.* scaffold. R 4176  
**Skale**, *sb.* scale, circle under cross-line of Astro-  
 tabe. As. l. § 12  
**Skye**, *sb.* cloud. HF<sup>3</sup> 510  
**Skylatoun**, *sb.* fine cloth. B 1924  
**Skiles**, *sb. pl.* reasons. F 205  
**Skilful**, *adj.* reasonable. Bl. 533  
**Skilfully**, *adv.* reasonably. G 380  
**Skryppe**, *sb.* scrip. R 7493  
**Slawe**, **Slawen**, *p.p.* slain. A 943, An. 59  
**Sle**, *imper.* slay thou. A 1740  
**Slawa**, *sb. pl.* sledges, carriages. Bo. 1165  
**Slew**, *v.* slay. A 561  
**Sleep**, *pret.* slept. A 98, Bl. 169  
**Sleure**, *sb.* slayer. A 2002  
**Slygh**, *adj.* sly, clever. T<sup>4</sup> 972  
**Slipper**, *adj.* slippery. A 1264

**Slye**, *adj. pl.* clever. Bl. 569  
**Slyk**, *adj.* sleek. B 351  
**Slyk**, *adj.* such. A 4130  
**Slyly**, *adv.* cleverly. A 1244  
**Silt**, *pres. s.* slideth. G 682, PF 3  
**Silvers**, *sb.* silver, part. T<sup>3</sup> 2013  
**Slomrest**, *pres. s.* slumberest. R 2576  
**Slow**, **Slough**, *pret.* slew. B 984, Bl. 738, A 980,  
 An. 56  
**Slowe**, *sb.* moth. R 4751  
**Smerte**, *adv.* smartly. A 149  
**Smete**, *p.p.* smitten. R 3735  
**Smyt**, *pres. s.* smiteth. E 122  
**Smoterlich**, *adj.* smutty. A 3965  
**Snawed**, *pret.* snowed, abounded. A 345  
**Snybben**, *v.* reprove. A 522; **Snybbed**, *p.p.* A  
 4401  
**Socour**, *sb.* succour. A 918  
**Sodaynliche**, *adv.* suddenly. A 1575  
**Sojour**, *sb.* sojourn. R 5151  
**Sokene**, *sb.* tolls. A 3987  
**Sokyngly**, *adv.* suckingly, gently. B 2765  
**Solace**, *sb.* solace. A 798  
**Soleyn**, *adj.* solitary. PF 607, R 3896  
**Solempne**, *adj.* solemn, famous. A 209  
**Somdel**, *adv.* somewhat. A 174  
**Some**, *num. pron.* one; **Tenthe some**, ten is  
 all, T<sup>3</sup> 1249; **Al and som**, one and all  
**Somer**, *sb.* summer. A 394  
**Somme**, *v.* summon. D 1377  
**Somonour**, *sb.* summoner of offenders to the  
 church courts. A 623  
**Sond**, **Sound**, *sb.* sand. PF 243, B 4457  
**Sonde**, *sb.* sending, message, messenger. B 140,  
 760, 388  
**Sone**, *adv.* soon  
**Sone**, *sb.* son. A 2061  
**Sonne**, *sb.* sun. A 7  
**Sonnish**, *adj.* sunny. T<sup>4</sup> 743  
**Sool**, *adj.* solitary, alone. R 2955, 3023  
**Soond**, *sb.* sand. B 4457  
**Soote**, *adj. pl.* sweet. A 1  
**Sope**, *sb.* sop. A 334  
**Soper**, *sb.* supper. A 799  
**Sophyme**, *sb.* problem, E 5; **Sophymes**, *p*  
 sophistries, F 554  
**Sort**, *sb.* lot, fate, oracle. A 844, T<sup>1</sup> 75  
**Sorwe**, *sb.* sorrow. ABC 3  
**Sorwul**, *adj.* sorrowful. *Pite* 25  
**Sory**, *adj.* sad, luckless. A 2004  
**Sothesawe**, **Sothesaugh**, *sb.* true tale. Ht  
 977, R 6139, 7588  
**Soill**, *adj.* subtle. I. 1556  
**Souldours**, *sb. pl.* soldiers. R 4234  
**Soughe**, *sb.* sow. I 156  
**Soulfre**, *sb.* sulphur. HF<sup>3</sup> 418  
**Soun**, *sb.* sound. Bl. 1165  
**Sourdes**, *pres. pl.* rise from. I 448  
**Soures**, *sb. pl.* bucks. Bl. 429  
**Sours**, *sb.* rining, accent. D 1938, Ht 36  
**Souters**, *sb.* cobbler. A 3904  
**Soutil**, *adj.* thin, subtle. A 2039, 2040  
**Sowdan**, *sb.* Sultan. B 177  
**Sowdanesse**, *sb.* Sultaness. B 358  
**Sowded**, *p.p.* attached, devoted. B 1769  
**Sowe**, *v.* new, fasten. T<sup>3</sup> 1801  
**Sowke**, *v.* suck. A 4157  
**Sowne**, *v.* sound, play. A 565  
**Sowned**, *pret.* tended to, B 3348; **Sownyng**  
*pres. part.* A 275

# GLOSSARY

**space**, *sb.* spare time, opportunity. A 35, T<sup>2</sup> 505  
**spak**, *pret.* spoke. A 304  
**span-nuwo**, *adj.* newly spun, fresh. T<sup>2</sup> 1665  
**sparand**, *part. pres.* sparing. R 5363  
**sparrode**, *pret.* locked. R 3322  
**sparth**, *sb.* halberd. A 2520, R 5978  
**spauynshinge**, *sb.* blooming. R 3633  
**spoo**, *sb.* species, kind, class. Bo. 1791, I 407  
**spoualoun**, *sb.* contemplation. Bo. 1660  
**spore**, *sb.* sphere. F 1280  
**spelle**, *sb. dat.* recital. B 2033  
**spenoe**, *sb.* buttery. D 1931  
**spere**, *p. p.* shut. R 2008  
**spere**, *sb. pl.* spheres. PF 59  
**sperehawk**, *sb.* sparrow-hawk. T<sup>2</sup> 1192, R 4013  
**spete**, *v.* spit. T<sup>2</sup> 1617  
**spille**, *v.* die, perish, destroy. B 285, A 3278,  
*Pite 46*; **Spilk**, *p. p.* killed. B 857  
**spitously**, *adv.* angrily. A 3476  
**spores**, *sb. pl.* spurs. A 473  
**sporneth**, *pres. s.* tramples, T<sup>2</sup> 797; **Sporned**,  
*pret.* stumbled. A 4280  
**Spousaille**, *sb.* marriage. F 115  
**spred**, *p. p.* spread, scattered. Bl. 873  
**Spreynd**, **Spreynd**, *p. p.* mingled. Bo. 397,  
 B 422  
**Springoldes**, *sb. pl.* stone-hurlers. R 4191  
**squames**, *sb. pl.* scales. G 759  
**squamous**, *adj.* squamish. A 3337  
**sqyre**, *sb.* measuring-square, R 7064. **Sqyres**,  
*pl.* A. i. § 12  
**Stadye**, *sb.* race-course. Bo. 1275  
**stak**, *pret.* stuck. T<sup>2</sup> 1372  
**stal**, *pret.* stole. Bl. 652, 1250  
**stamyn**, **stamens**, *sb.* lin-cy-woolsey, coarse  
 cloth. I 1052, I 2760  
**stank**, *sb.* pool. I 841  
**stant**, *pres. s.* standeth. B 1704  
**stape**, **stapen**, *p. p.* advanced. B 4011, E 1514  
**stare**, *sb.* starling. PF 348  
**stare**, *pret.* died. A 933  
**starks**, *adj. pl.* strong, stiff. B 3560  
**steere**, *sb.* steer-man. B 448  
**steerless**, *adj.* without rudder. B 439  
**steyen**, *v.* ascend. Bo. 877  
**steyre**, *sb.* stair. Mars 129, T<sup>2</sup> 1705  
**stel**, **stole**, *sb.* steel. T<sup>2</sup> 593, HF<sup>2</sup> 175  
**stole**, *sb.* handle. A 3785  
**stellifye**, *v.* turn into a star. I. 525  
**stemed**, *pret.* shone. A 202  
**stenten**, *v.* cease. A 903; **Stente**, *pret.* Bl.  
 154  
**stope**, *adj.* bright. A 201  
**stoppes**, *sb. pl.* tracks. Bo. 80  
**stors**, *sb.* steersman, guide, HF<sup>1</sup> 437, T<sup>2</sup> 1291.  
 rudder, T<sup>2</sup> 641  
**stors**, *v.* steer, guide. T<sup>2</sup> 310  
**stors**, *v. str.* HF<sup>2</sup> 59; discuss, T<sup>2</sup> 1451; **storing**,  
*pres. part.* moving, HF<sup>2</sup> 59  
**stord**, *sb.* controlled, L 935  
**storing**, *sb. pl.* sterling pennies, C 907, HF<sup>2</sup>  
 225  
**stors**, *sb. pl.* stars. A 308  
**storte**, *pres. s.* started, I. 1201; alighted, A 952  
**storte**, *pres. sub.* die. A 1144  
**stevens**, *sb.* voice, A 2562, appointment, Mars  
 47, A 1524  
**stewe**, *sb.* closet. T<sup>2</sup> 601  
**stiborne**, *adj.* stubborn. D 456  
**stye**, *v.* climb. Bo. 1550

**styre**, *sb.* rudder. Bo. 1078  
**stiked**, *pret.* pierced. B 3897  
**stillatorie**, *sb.* vessel for distilling. G 580  
**stynk**, *pres. s.* stinteth, ceases. A 2421  
**stirte**, *pret.* started. A 1579  
**styth**, *sb.* anvil. A 2026  
**styves**, *sb. pl.* stews, brothels. D 1332  
**styward**, *sb.* steward. B 914  
**stoke**, *v.* stab. A 2546  
**stokked**, *p. p.* set in the stocks. T<sup>2</sup> 380  
**stonde**, *v.* stand. A 745  
**stoon**, *sb.* stone. A 774  
**stoor**, *sb.* farm-stock. A 598  
**stoore**, *adj.* stubborn. E 2367  
**storial**, *adj.* historical. L 702  
**stot**, *sb.* coh. A 615  
**stounde**, *sb.* while, time, B 1021; **Stoundes**, *pl.*  
 Bo. 220  
**stoundemele**, *adv.* momentarily. T<sup>2</sup> 674, R 2304  
**stour**, *sb.* conflict. R 1270  
**strake**, *v.* run. Bl. 1311  
**straughte**, *pret.* stretched. A 2916  
**streeche**, *v.* stretch. An. 341, I 1818  
**stres**, *sb.* straw. A 2918, Bl. 670  
**streen**, **strene**, *sb.* race, lineage. E 157, R  
 4859  
**streit**, *adj.* narrow. A 174  
**stremes**, *sb. pl.* beams. Bl. 338  
**strene**, *sb.* lineage. R 4859  
**strenge**, *sb. pl.* strings. PF 98, T<sup>1</sup> 732  
**strike**, *sb.* hank, A 676; **strikes**, *pl.* strokes,  
 As. i. § 19  
**stroof**, *pret.* strove. A 1038  
**strouted**, *pret.* spread. A 3315  
**stubbes**, *sb. pl.* stumps. A 1978  
**studies**, *sb. pl.* desires, purposes. Bo. 659,  
 1309  
**stuwe**, *sb.* stew, fish-pond. A 350  
**submitted**, *to p. p.* sub-umed under. Bo. 1628  
**subcident**, *sb.* subordinate house in astrology.  
 As. ii. § 3  
**sugred**, *p. p.* sugared. T<sup>2</sup> 384  
**suffisaunce**, *sb.* sufficiency. Bl. 1037  
**suffraunt**, *adj.* patient. Bl. 1009  
**sugot**, *sb.* subject. R 3531  
**sukkenye**, *sb.* gaherdine. R 1232  
**surement**, *sb.* surety, pledge. F 1534  
**surquidrie**, *sb.* arrogance, over-confidence. I  
 405, 1067  
**sursumure**, *sb.* surface-healed wound. F 1113  
**sustren**, *sb. pl.* sisters. A 1019  
**suwe**, *v.* follow. T<sup>2</sup> 379  
**swa**, *adv.* so. A 4040  
**swal**, *pret.* swelled. B 1750  
**swalwe**, *sb.* swallow. T<sup>2</sup> 64  
**swappe**, **swape**, *v.* strike. E 586, G 366  
**swappe**, *sb.* stroke. HF<sup>2</sup> 35  
**swaigh**, *sb.* sway, movement. B 296  
**swalte**, *pret.* fainted. E 1776, T<sup>2</sup> 347  
**swelwe**, *pres. sub.* swallow, E 1188; **swelweth**,  
*pres. ind. s.* swallows, B 2805  
**sword**, *sb.* sword. A 2546  
**swete**, *v.* sweat. G 579  
**swovene**, *sb.* dream. B 4086  
**swioh**, *adj.* such. D 281  
**swynk**, *sb.* toil. A 188  
**swynke**, *v.* toil. A 186  
**swynkere**, *sb.* labourer. A 531  
**swire**, *sb.* throat. R 325  
**swytho**, *adv.* quickly. C 766, An. 226

# GLOSSARY

**Swyve**, *v.* have sexual intercourse with. A 4178  
**Swogh**, *sb.* swoon. *Pile* 16; groan. A 3619  
**Swolowe**, *sb.* gullet, gulf. L 1104  
**Swoot**, *sb.* sweat. G 578  
**Swough**, *sb.* southing wind. A 1979  
**T**, before a verb beginning with a vowel, to; a few instances given below  
**Taa**, *v.* take. A 4129  
**Taas**, *sb.* heap. A 1005  
**Tahard**, *sb.* short coat for a herald, A 20; for a labourer. A 541  
**Tabyda**, to abide. B 797  
**Tables**, *sb. pl.* backgammon. F 900  
**Tabouren**, *pres. pl.* drum. L 354  
**Tache**, *sb.* quality. *Balance* 20  
**Taffeta**, *sb.* fine silk. A 440  
**Taffraye**, to affray, frighten. E 455  
**Taxgathers**, *sb. pl.* tax-gatherers. R 6811  
**Taxlages**, *sb. pl.* taxes. I 567  
**Taille**, *sb.* a tally, credit. A 570  
**Takel**, *sb.* tackle. A 106  
**Tale**, *sb.* speech. Hl. 535  
**Tale**, *Talen*, *v.* talk, tell stories. T<sup>2</sup> 231, A 772  
**Talent**, *sb.* desire. B 11, 7, Bo. 260  
**Talyghte**, to alight  
**Talyngte**, *sb.* story-telling. B 1624  
**Talle**, *adj.* compliant, seemly, manly. *Mars* 38, L 1127 (emend. for 'calfe')  
**Tallege**, to allege  
**Tamen**, *v.* make trial of. R 3924  
**Tamende**, to amend  
**Tan**, *p.p.* taken. R 5894  
**Tapes**, *sb. pl.* ribanda. A 3241  
**Tapinage**, *sb.* hiding; in *tapinage*, incognito. R 7361  
**Tapyoar**, *sb.* tapestry maker. A 362  
**Tapite**, *sb.* carpet. Bl. 260  
**Tappetare**, *sb.* barmaid, tapster. A 441  
**Targe**, *sb.* shield. *ABC* 176  
**Tarraye**, to array. E 961  
**Tasaye**, to assay. E 454  
**Tasalle**, to avail  
**Tatarwagges**, *sb. pl.* tatters. R 7257  
**Tavyse**, to advise. B 1426  
**Teeches**, *sb. pl.* ill qualities. T<sup>4</sup> 935, Hl<sup>2</sup> 688, R 6517  
**Teche**, *v.* teach. A 308  
**Teene**, *sb.* sorrow. *ABC* 1  
**Teysa**, *sb.* thin plate of metal. G 1225  
**Tembrace**, to embrace. B 1891  
**Teme**, *v.* bring forth. Hl<sup>2</sup> 654  
**Temple**, *sb.* inn of court. A 567  
**Temprare**, *sb.* tempering. R 4177  
**Tempa**, *sb.* tense. G 875  
**Ten**, Ten so woods, ten times as mad. I. 733  
**Tendyte**, to endure. E 756  
**Tene**, *sb.* sorrow. T<sup>1</sup> 814  
**Tenqueren**, to enquire  
**Tentay**, *adv.* attentively. E 334  
**Teruel**, *adj.* male (of birds of prey). PF 393  
**Terecel**, *sb.* male falcon. F 504  
**Tery**, *adj.* tearful. T<sup>4</sup> 821  
**Terina**, *sb.* tarina. R 665  
**Terme**, *sb.*; in *terme*, in *termes*, precisely, C 311, A 323  
**Termyne**, *v.* determining. PF 530  
**Terved**, *p.p.* stripped. G 1171

**Tespye**, *esp.*  
**Testeres**, *sb. pl.* headpieces. A 2499  
**Testes**, *sb. pl.* vessels for testing metal  
**Testif**, *adj.* headstrong. A 4004  
**Texpounden**, to expound  
**Textueel**, *adj.* verbally accurate. I. 1  
**Th'**, before substantives beginning with *the*; a few instances are given below  
**Thakked**, *p.p.* stroked. A 3304  
**Thankes**, *sb. pl.*; *Hir* *thankes*, *Hir* willingly, A 1626, 2107  
**Thanne**, *conj.* and *adv.* then  
**Thar**, *pres. s.* it behoves. A 4320  
**That**, *conj.* when. T<sup>2</sup> 910  
**That**, introducing an optative clause.  
**Thavys**, the advice. A 3076  
**The**, *pron. acc.* thee  
**Thodam**, *sb.* prosperity; *Yvel* *thodam* B 1595  
**Thee**, *Thoon*, *r.* thrive. B 4622, C 30  
**Theoch**, *Thook*, *subj. pres.* thrive I A 3864  
**Theeffect**, the effect  
**Theigh**, *conj.* though. T<sup>4</sup> 175  
**Their**, the air. D 1939  
**Thenohe**, *v.* think. A 3253  
**Thenorese**, the increase. A 275  
**Thennos**, *adv.* thence  
**Theorik**, *sb.* theory. As. ii. pref.  
**Ther**, *adv.* there, where. A 2809, T<sup>2</sup> 6  
**Ther**, introducing an optative clause. 1015, 1437  
**Ther-geyn**, there against. R 6555  
**Therthe**, the earth  
**Thestat**, the estate, rank  
**Thewed**, *p.p.* endowed with virtues. A  
**Thowes**, *sb. pl.* good qualities. E 1542  
**Thider**, *adv.* thither  
**Thilke**, that same. A 182  
**Thyng**, *sb.*; *Make* a *thyng*, draw up ment; *Thynges*, *pl.* prayers, acts of business, A 2293, B 1281, 4289  
**Thinke**, *v.* seem. T<sup>1</sup> 405  
**Thirled**, *p.p.* pierced. A 2710  
**This**, *These*, *dem. pl.* these. Bl. 166  
**This**, this is. T<sup>2</sup> 363  
**Tho**, *adv.* then. Bl. 1053  
**Tho**, these  
**Tholed**, *p.p.* suffered. D 1546  
**Thoo**, *adv.* then. I. 787  
**Thought**, *sb.* anxiety. R 308  
**Thruste**, *pres. pl.* thrust. T<sup>2</sup> 1155  
**Threpe**, *pres. pl.* call. G 826  
**Threste**, *r.* thrust, A 2632; *Thresten*, Bo. 460  
**Thretyng**, *sb.* threatening. G 698  
**Thridde**, *num.* third  
**Thrye**, *num. adv.* thrice. T<sup>2</sup> 89  
**Thryng**, *v.* thrust. T<sup>4</sup> 66  
**Thritton**, *card. num.* thirteenth. D 2239  
**Throf**, *pres. pl.* thrived. Bo. 717  
**Thrope**, *sb.* hamlet. I 12  
**Thrope-bolle**, *sb.* wind-pipe. A 4273  
**Throws**, *sb.* short space of time. B 953, *Pile* 88  
**Throwes**, *sb. pl.* throes. T<sup>2</sup> 206, 1201  
**Thrust**, *sb.* thim. R 4722  
**Thurth**, *pres. needed.* T<sup>2</sup> 572  
**Thurgh-girt**, *p.p.* pierced. A 1010  
**Thurrok**, *sb.* hold of a ship, sink. I 369

*wyte*, *pres.* whittle, HF<sup>3</sup> 848; *Thw* [ten], *p.p.* R 932  
*wyfel*, *sb.* short knife. A 3933  
*iden*, *v.* betide. B 337  
*dyf*, *sb.* small bird; *dyfves*, *pl.* F 648  
*rel*, *adj.* frail. A 328  
*weinease*, *sb.* instability. *Truth* 3  
*to*, *to*. A 180  
*lyena*, *sb.* fl. tillers. R 4339  
*lyinge*, *sb.* tilling. Bo. 1637  
*mbres*, *sb.* fl. timbrels. R 772  
*pet*, *sb.* hood. A 233  
*ro*, *v.* feed on, Bo. 1132; *Tiren*, *pres.* *pl.* T1 187  
*z*, *pres.* *s.* betides. T1 333  
*terynge*, *sb.* hesitating. T2 1744  
*elo*, *sb.* pretext. T1 488  
*kied*, *p.p.* devoted. I 894  
*The to*, that one. Bo. 1587  
*z*, *intensive prefix*; a few instances are given below  
*z-breste*, *pres.* *pl.* break in pieces. A 2611  
*zdo*, *sb.* load. I 636  
*z-forn*, *pres.* before. T3 335  
*zft*, *sb.* tuft. A 555  
*zght*, *adj.* taut. D 267  
*z-hope*, *adv.* together, at close quarters. Bo. 1461, I. 2008  
*z-yere*, *adv.* this year. T3 241  
*zldo*, *pres.* accounted. B 3676  
*zlea*, *sb.* fl. tools. T1 632  
*zllen*, *v.* take toll. A 562  
*zllen*, *v.* allure. Bo. 531  
*zllentance*, *adj.* *pl.* of Toledo. F 1273  
*zmbesters*, *sb.* fl. female tumblers. C 477  
*z-medes*, *as* reward. T2 1201  
*on*, The ton, that one. Bo. 1066, R 5217  
*zngo*, *sb.* tongue. B 1666  
*zonne*, *sb.* tun, cask. E 215  
*zoo*, *sb.* toe, A 2726; *Toon*, *pl.* B 4052  
*zord*, *sb.* excrement. C 955  
*zope*, *sb.* crown of head. A 590  
*z-point*, *adv.* point by point, exactly. T3 497, T3 1620  
*z-pace*, *subj. pr.* tear in pieces. E 572  
*z-ronie*, *pres.* rent in pieces. C 709  
*zrney*, *sb.* tournament. T4 1669  
*z-slytered*, *p.p.* slashed. R 840  
*z-tar*, *pres.* lacerated. B 3801  
*zotlers*, *sb.* tattler. I. 353  
*zoty*, *adj.* dizzy. A 4253  
*z-tore*, *p.p.* torn. G 635  
*z-turret*, *sb.* turret. A 1904  
*z-turrettes*, *sb.* fl. round holes. A 2152  
*zoute*, *sb.* backside. A 3812  
*z-overhyde*, *to* outlive. D 1260  
*zowayls*, *sb.* towel. R 161  
*z-to-wonde*, *pres.* went to pieces. *Mars* 102  
*z-trace*, *sb.* train. L 285  
*z-trace*, *sb.* track. *Gentillesse* 7  
*z-trad*, *pres.* trod, *sens.* *sb.* B 4368  
*z-trayed*, *pres.* betrayed. HF1 300  
*z-trays*, *sb.* fl. traces. A 2139, T1 202  
*z-tratoye*, *sb.* treachery. An. 186  
*z-trammunwen*, *v.* trammute. T4 467  
*z-trappares*, *sb.* fl. trappings. A 2409  
*z-traitor*, *sb.* go-between, pimp. T3 273  
*z-tramoo*, *v.* tramp. T3 600  
*z-trave*, *sb.* frame for unruly horses. A 3282  
*z-travay*, *sb.* curtain, screen. E 1817, T3 674

*Treashour*, *sb.* traitor. R 6602  
*Tredesfowl*, *sb.* treader of fowls, *sens.* *sb.* B 3135  
*Treget*, *sb.* deceit. R 6267  
*Tregetour*, *sb.* juggler, HF<sup>3</sup> 167; *Tregetoures*, *pl.* F 1141  
*Trenden*, *v.* roll. Bo. 1043  
*Trental*, *sb.* series of masses for the dead. D 1717  
*Trepeget*, *sb.* engine for casting stones. R 6279  
*Tresoun*, *sb.* treason. L 1783  
*Tresour*, *sb.* head-dress. R 568  
*Tretable*, *adj.* tractable, communicative. L 417, Ill. 532  
*Trete*, *sb.* treaty. A 1288  
*Tretys*, *adj.* well-made. A 152  
*Tretis*, *sb.* treatise, document. T3 1697  
*Trewe*, *adj.* true. A 531  
*Trewe*, *sb.* truce. T3 1779  
*Trewe-love*, *sb.* condiment to sweeten breath. A 3692  
*Triacle*, *sb.* balm, panacea. B 479, C 314  
*Trice*, *v.* pull. B 3715  
*Trichour*, *sb.* traitor. R 6308  
*Trille*, *v.* turn, twist. F 316  
*Trype*, *sb.* morsel. D 1747  
*Trist*, *sb.* trust. T3 403, I 473  
*Triste*, *sb.* trist. T2 1534  
*Tristed*, *p.p.* trusted. R 3929  
*Trone*, *sb.* throne. A 2529  
*Trouble*, *adj.* troubled. *Comp. to his Lady* 128  
*Trowandysse*, *Truandise*, *sb.* vagrancy. R 3954, 6604  
*Trowblable*, *adj.* troublesome. Bo. 1268  
*Truandying*, *sb.* vagrancy. R 6721  
*Trubly*, *adj.* troublous. Bo. 1443  
*Trufes*, *sb.* fl. trifles. I 715  
*Trye*, *adj.* choice. B 2046  
*Tuel*, *sb.* pipe, tube. HF<sup>3</sup> 559  
*Tulle*, *v.* lure. A 4134  
*Turmentrie*, *sb.* torture. R 4740  
*Twyfold*, *adj.* folded in two. G 566  
*Twight*, *p.p.* twitched, pulled, D 1563; *Twighte*, *pres.* T4 1185  
*Twynne*, *v.* sunder, B 517; *pres. subj.* depart, A 835  
*Twiste*, *sb.* branch. E 2349  
  
*Umble*, *adj.* humble. R 6155  
*Unaraoed*, *p.p.* untorn. Bo. 1156  
*Unconning*, *adj.* stupid. T3 1130  
*Uncooth*, *adj.* strange, rare. HF<sup>3</sup> 189  
*Uncoovenable*, *adj.* unsuitable. I 431  
*Undergrowe*, *p.p.* undergrown. A 156  
*Undermeles*, *sb.* fl. morning meal-time. D 875  
*Undernome*, *p.p.* blamed, I 401; *Undernoon*, *pres.* perceived, G 243  
*Underpighte*, *pres.* stuffed. B 789  
*Undersore*, *v.* lever up. A 3465  
*Undertake*, *pres.* *s.* assert. A 289  
*Undigne*, *adj.* unworthy. E 359  
*Undirfongeth*, *pres.* *s.* undertakes. R 5709  
*Undo*, *v.* unravel. Bl. 898  
*Undren*, *sb.* morning, the time between 9 A.M. and noon. B 4412, E 260  
*Uneschuable*, *adj.* inevitable. Bo. 1643  
*Unespied*, *p.p.* undiscovered. T4 1457  
*Unfesslich*, *adj.* unfeigned, worn. F 366  
*Unghilf*, *adj.* innocent. T3 1018  
*Ungrubbed*, *p.p.* undigged. *Former Age* 14

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**Unhappy**, *sb. pl.* mishaps. T<sup>2</sup> 456  
**Unheele**, *sb.* misfortune. C 116  
**Unkynde**, *adj.* unnatural. B 88  
**Unkyndely**, *adv.* unnaturally. C 485  
**Unknowynge**, *sb.* ignorance. I 1082  
**Unkorven**, *p. p.* unpruned. *Former Age* 14  
**Unkouth**, *adj.* rare. A 2497  
**Unlefull**, *adj.* unlawful. Bo. 274, R 4850  
**Unneste**, *imper.* quit thy nest. T<sup>2</sup> 305  
**Unnethes**, *Unnethes*, *adv.* hardly. B 1050, 1675  
**Unparryal**, *adj.* unequal. Bo. 603  
**Unplitable**, *adj.* perilous. Bo. 122  
**Unplytan**, *v.* unfold. Bo. 583  
**Unresty**, *adj.* restless. T<sup>2</sup> 1355  
**Unsed**, *adj.* inconstant. E 995  
**Unselly**, *adj.* unhappy. A 4210, Bo. 361  
**Unset**, *adj.* unappointed. A 1524  
**Unsettinge**, *adj.* unbesetting. T<sup>2</sup> 307  
**Unspored**, *p. p.* unlocked. R 2656  
**Unthank**, *sb.* ingratitude, little thank. T<sup>2</sup> 699  
**Unwar**, *adj.* unawares. F 1356  
**Unweelde**, *adj.* impotent. A 3886  
**Unwemmed**, *adj.* undefiled, pure. B 924, ABC 91  
**Unwist**, *adj.* ignorant. T<sup>1</sup> 93  
**Unwit**, *sb.* folly. *Mars* 271  
**Unwrye**, *v.* uncover. T<sup>1</sup> 853  
**Unyolden**, *adj.* without yielding. A 2642  
**Up**, *prep.* upon. Bl. 921  
**Up-bounde**, *p. p.* bound up. T<sup>2</sup> 517  
**Up-frete**, *v.* eat up. T<sup>2</sup> 1470  
**Uprighte**, *adv.* full length, whether standing or lying. A 4194  
**Uprise**, *sb.* rising. A 1051  
**Up-so-down**, *adv.* topsy-turvy. Bo. 1695  
**Up-swal**, *pres.* swelled up. B 1750  
**Urchoun**, *sb. pl.* hedgehogs. R 3135  
**Utter**, *adj.* outer. R 4208  
  
**Vache**, *sb.* cow. *Truth* 22  
**Vallith**, *Valeth*, *pres.* avails. R 5765, 5762  
**Valance**, *sb.* failure. *Mars* 145 (*see note*)  
**Vane**, *sb.* weather-vane. E 996  
**Vanytee**, *sb.* folly. A 3835  
**Vassalage**, *Vassellage*, *sb.* prowess, good service. L 1667, A 3054  
**Vavasour**, *sb.* landholder. A 360  
**Vekke**, *sb.* old woman. R 4286  
**Vendable**, *adj.* saleable. R 5804  
**Venarie**, *sb.* hunting. A 160, 2308  
**Vendunnes**, *sb.* vengeance. Ho. 1375  
**Venym**, *sb.* poison. A 2751  
**Venymous**, *adj.* poisonous. ABC 149  
**Ventynage**, *sb.* cupping. A 2747  
**Vir**, *sb.* spring. T<sup>1</sup> 157  
**Verdict**, *sb.* verdict. A 787  
**Vergar**, *sb.* orchard. R 3234, 3618  
**Veyo**, *imper.* guard (!). A 3485  
**Veytrot**, *sb.* quick-trot. A 3770  
**Veymayle**, *adj.* red. R 3645  
**Vernage**, *sb.* white wine. R 1261  
**Vernycle**, *sb.* St. Veronica cloth. A 685  
**Vernymbed**, *pres.* varnished. A 4149  
**Verray**, *Verrade*, *adj.* genuine, true. I 1012, Bo. 1720  
**Verrayment**, *adv.* truly. B 1903  
**Verre**, *sb.* glass. T<sup>2</sup> 867  
**Vertuous**, *adj.* skilled. R 2311, B 2000

**Vese**, *sb.* rush of wind. A 1985  
**Viage**, *sb.* voyage, journey. A 723  
**Villies**, *sb. pl.* wakes. A 377  
**Vileynye**, *sb.* anything unbecoming a gentleman. A 70  
**Virytrate**, *sb.* hag. D 1582  
**Vitalle**, *sb.* victuals. A 248  
**Vitremyte**, *sb.* woman's cap. B 3562  
**Vold**, *sb.* sleeping cup. T<sup>2</sup> 674  
**Voyde**, *adj.* empty, penniless. Bo. 471  
**Volage**, *adj.* giddy. H 239  
**Volter**, *sb.* vulture. Bo. 1132  
**Volunte**, *sb.* will. R 5276  
**Voluper**, *sb.* cap. A 3241  
**Vounde**, *adj.* *See note*, R 7063  
  
**Waget**, *sb.* blue cloth. A 3321  
**Wayfereres**, *sb. pl.* confectioners. C 479  
**Wayke**, *adj.* weak. A 887, B 1672  
**Waymentynge**, *sb.* lamentation. A 902, 1921  
**Wayted**, *pres.* watched. A 571  
**Walsh-note**, *sb.* walnut. HF<sup>2</sup> 191  
**Walwe**, *v.* wallow. T<sup>1</sup> 699  
**Walwyng**, *pres. part.* wallowing. A 3616  
**Wan**, *pres.* won. A 442  
**Wanges**, *sb. pl.* cheek-teeth, A 4030; **Wany** tooth, B 3234  
**Wanhope**, *sb.* despair. A 1249  
**Wanye**, *v.* wane. A 2078  
**Wanten**, *pres. pl.* are lacking. *Pile* 76  
**Wantrust**, *adj.* distrustful. H 281  
**War**, *adj.* wary, aware. A 300, 896  
**Ward**, *sb.* guardianship. Bl. 248  
**Wardours**, *sb.* bodyguard. D 359  
**Warderere**, *look out behind!* A 4101  
**Wardright**, *sb.* guardianship. Bo. 492  
**Wardrobe**, *sb.* privy. B 1762  
**Ware**, *imper.* beware that. B 4146  
**Waryngles**, *sb. pl.* butcher birds. D 1408  
**Warice**, *v.* heal. C 906  
**Warlen**, **Warye**, *v.* curse. T<sup>2</sup> 1619, B 372  
**Warisoun**, *sb.* reward. R 1537  
**Warishe**, *v.* recover, B 2170; **Warishe** *p. p.* cured. F 1138, Bl. 1101  
**Warisshyng**, *sb.* healing. R 2205  
**Wary**, *adv.* warily. T<sup>2</sup> 454  
**Warne**, *v.* repulse. ABC 11  
**Warnestoure**, *sb.* garrison. B 2485  
**Wast**, *sb.* waste. H 1609  
**Wastel-breed**, *sb.* cake of fine flour. A 147  
**Waves**, *sb. pl.* waves. A 1958  
**Webbe**, *sb.* weaver. A 362  
**Wedde**, *sb. dat.* pledge. A 1218  
**Wede**, *sb.* clothing. A 1006  
**Weder**, *sb.* weather, D 2253; **Wedres**, *pl. F*  
**Weoply**, *adj.* tearful. Ho. 1120  
**Weordes**, *sb. pl.* fates. Bo. 92  
**Weox**, *pres.* waxed. B 563  
**Wegge**, *sb.* wedge. An. i. 8 14  
**Weyeth**, *pres. a.* weighs. A 1781  
**Weyked**, *p. p.* weakened. R 4737  
**Weylaway**, *interj.* alas. Bl. 718  
**Weymentynge**, *sb.* lamentation. R 510  
**Weyven**, *v.* depart from, E 1483; **We** *imper.* abandon, Bo. 257  
**Welda**, *sb.* a plant. *Former Age* 17  
**Welde**, *v.* rule. D 271  
**Weldy**, *adj.* powerful. T<sup>2</sup> 636  
**Wels**, *sb.* well-being. A 895  
**Wolk**, *pres.* walked. T<sup>2</sup> 1035

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**Walken, v.** wither. Bo. 1590  
**Walke, sb.** walkin. *Fortune* 62  
**Welmeth, pres. s.** wells. R 1561  
**Welte, pret.** ruled. H 3200  
**Wel-willy, adj.** benevolent. T<sup>3</sup> 1257  
**We** sb. spot, harm. F 121  
**Wemmeless, adj.** spotless. G 47  
**Wende, pret. subj.** thought. T<sup>4</sup> 1650  
**Wende, sb.** doubt. R 574  
**Wente, sb.** turn, passage. T<sup>3</sup> 815, T<sup>3</sup> 787  
**Wepene, Wepne, sb.** weapon. A 1591, 1601  
**Werble, sb.** song. T<sup>3</sup> 1033  
**Were, sb.** doubt, L 2686, Bl. 1294; danger, R 2827  
**Were, v.** guard. A 2550  
**Were, sb.** weir, pool. T<sup>3</sup> 35, PF 138  
**Werne, v.** turn away, refuse. L 448, T<sup>4</sup> 111, HF<sup>3</sup> 469  
**Werre, adv.** worse. Bl. 615  
**Werre, sb.** war. A 1671  
**Werre, v.** make war on. ABC 116  
**Werreye, v.** make war on, persecute, A 1484, R 6926; **Werreleth, pres. s.** battles against, I 401; **Werreld, p.p.** persecuted, R 2078  
**Wert, sb.** wart. A 555  
**Weash, pret.** washed  
**Weste, v.** turn westward. L 61  
**Weten, v.** know. L 1474  
**Wetheres, sb. pl.** weathers. A 3542  
**Wex, sb.** wax. G 1268  
**Wex, pret.** waxed, increased, A 1362; **Wexyng, pres. part.** A 2077  
**What, inter.** why. A 184  
**Whelkes, sb. pl.** pimples. A 632  
**Wher, (1)** where, A 1351; **(2)** whether, A 1101  
**Whetston, sb.** whetstone. T<sup>1</sup> 631  
**Whioke, pron.** of what kind. A 40, 2675  
**Whiel, sb.** wheel. T<sup>1</sup> 839  
**Whielen, v.** wheel. T<sup>1</sup> 139  
**Whyte, sb.** time. A 3329  
**Whippaire, the** cornel-tree. A 2923  
**Wyde-whore, adv.** widely. B 136, T<sup>3</sup> 404  
**Wierdes, Wierde, sb. pl.** fates. T<sup>3</sup> 617, L 2580  
**Wight, adj.** strong, swift, brave. A 4086, B 3457  
**Wighte, sb.** weight, A 2145, T<sup>3</sup> 1385; **A** lito  
**Wight, a** little while, A 4283  
**Wyke, sb.** week. B 1461  
**Wikke, adj. pl.** evil. B 118  
**Wilne, v.** will, desire, I 517; **Wilned, pret.** willed, Bl. 1261  
**Wiltow, wilt thou**  
**Wylugh, sb.** willow. A 2922  
**Wympul, sb.** wimple. A 151  
**Wyn ape.** H 44. See note  
**Wyndass, sb.** windlass. F 184  
**Wyndre, v.** trim. R 1020  
**Wynnyng, adj.** lively. A 3263  
**Wyn, pres. s.** windeth, turns. L 85  
**Wirdes, sb. pl.** Fates. L 2580  
**Wys, adv.** certainly, surely. A 2786, T<sup>3</sup> 887  
**Wise, sb.** fashion. A 2370  
**Wisly, adv.** surely. B 1261  
**Wisse, v.** guide, D 1415, T<sup>1</sup> 622; **imp.** ABC 155  
**Wische, pret.** washed. R 96  
**Wyn, p.p.** known. HF<sup>1</sup> 351  
**Wyte, imper.** blame, A 3140; **Wite at,** impute, G 621  
**Witen, pres. pl.** know. A 1794  
**Withholden, v.** restrain, B 1512; **Withholdeth,**

**pres.** retains, Bo. 1245; **Withholde, retained,** B 2200  
**Withouten, prep.** besides. A 461  
**Withseye, pres. subj.** contradict, abjure, G 447;  
**Withseye, A** 1140  
**Wityng, sb.** knowledge. A 1611  
**Wivere, sb.** viper. T<sup>3</sup> 1010  
**Wlatson, adj.** loathsome. B 4243  
**Wodewales, sb. pl.** orioles. R 658  
**Wol, pres. s.** will. A 723  
**Wolde, pret.** would. A 954  
**Wolle, sb.** wool. C 910  
**Woltow, wilt thou.** A 1544  
**Wombe, sb.** belly. I 769  
**Won, sb.** hope. T<sup>4</sup> 1181  
**Wonde, v.** turn aside, change. L 1187  
**Wonde, pret.** dwelt. I 2253  
**Wonder, adj.** wondrous. B 1045  
**Wondermost, adj. sup.** most wonderful. HF<sup>3</sup> 969  
**Wone, sb.** custom, wont. A 335, B 1694  
**Wone, sb.** plenty. R 1673  
**Woned, p.p.** accustomed. Bl. 150  
**Wonger, sb.** pillow. B 2102  
**Wonyng, sb.** living, dwelling. A 388, 606  
**Wonned, pret.** dwelt. B 4406  
**Wood, adj.** mad. A 184  
**Wood, sb.** blue dye. *Former Age* 17  
**Woodeth, pres. s.** is distraught, rages. G 467, Bo. 1328  
**Woody, adv.** madly. A 1301  
**Woodnesse, sb.** madness. C 496  
**Woon, sb.** place, dwelling. B 1991, HF<sup>3</sup> 76  
**Woot, pres. s.** know, A 1813; **pret.** knew, A 1525  
**Wopen, p.p.** wept. T<sup>1</sup> 941  
**Word, sb.** for Ord, beginning. T<sup>3</sup> 702  
**Wortes, sb. pl.** vegetables. B 4411  
**Worthen, v.** fare; **Lete him worthen,** let him alone, T<sup>3</sup> 320; **Worth, imperat.** Bo. 310  
**Worthy, adj.** brave. B 2107  
**Wost, knowest**  
**Wowe, v.** woo. T<sup>3</sup> 791  
**Wowke, sb.** week. A 1539  
**Wraw, adj.** indignant. H 46  
**Wrawful, adj.** perverse. I 677  
**Wre, Wren, Wrene, v.** cover. L 735, R 6359, T<sup>3</sup> 539, R 56  
**Wreche, sb.** vengeance, punishment. B 3403, T<sup>3</sup> 784  
**Wraigne, p.p.** covered, L 1201; **pret.** T<sup>3</sup> 706  
**Wreys, sub. pres.** betray. A 3507  
**Wraying, sb.** betrayal. R 5220  
**Wrekers, sb.** avenger. Bo. 1358  
**Wrenche, sb.** deceit, R 4292; **Wrenches, pl.** G 1081  
**Wreththe, sb.** wrath. T<sup>3</sup> 110  
**Wrye, p.p.** hidden. T<sup>3</sup> 620  
**Wrye, Wryen, v.** turn, twist, T<sup>3</sup> 906, H 262, Bl 626; **Wryed, p.p.** twisted, A 3283  
**Wryne, v.** cover. R 6683, 6819  
**Wryth, pres. s.** winds. T<sup>3</sup> 1231  
**Writhen, v.** turn. Bo. 1676  
**Wroken, p.p.** avenged. T<sup>1</sup> 88  
**Wroteth, pres.** digs with the snout. I 157  
  
**Y-, prefix to past participles;** a few instances are given below  
**Yaf, pret.** gave. A 227  
**Yalte, pret.** yielded; **Yalte him,** betook himself, R 4904



# GLOSSARY

- Yare, adj.** ready. L 2270  
**Y-bet, p.p.** beaten. D 1285  
**Y-bote**, stamped, illuminated. A 979  
**Y-blant, p.p.** blended. A 3808  
**Y-bleyak, p.p.** blenched, started aside. A 3753  
**Y-brent, p.p.** burnt. A 946  
**Y-clemed, p.p.** clamped. A 1991  
**Y-curve, p.p.** cut. A 2013  
**Y-crased, p.p.** broken. Bl. 324  
**Ydel, adj.** idle; In ydel, in vain  
**Ydolastre, sb.** idolater. I 749  
**Ye, adv.** yea, yes. B 1841  
**Yeeohyng, sb.** itching. R 2450  
**Yed, p.p.** eyed. T<sup>4</sup> 1459  
**Yeddynge, sb.** p. proverbial sayings. A 257  
**Yede, p.p.** went, G 1141; **Yeden, p.p.** T<sup>2</sup> 936  
**Yeipe, v.** boast. A 2238  
**Yelw, adj.** yellow. Bl. 856  
**Yerde, sb.** rod, stick. T<sup>2</sup> 154, A 140, T<sup>2</sup> 1427, A 1387  
**Yerne, adv.** readily, eagerly, quickly. C 398, D 903, PF 21, T<sup>2</sup> 376  
**Yerne, adj.** brisk. A 3257  
**Yeten, v.** get. Bo. 253  
**Yezeth, pres. s.** hiccups. A 4151  
**Y-feere, adv.** together. B 304  
**Y-frounced, p.p.** wrinkled. R 155  
**Y-go, p.p.** gone. A 286  
**Y-grave, p.p.** dug. L 204  
**Y-hede, p.p.** hid. Bl. 175  
**Y-hent, p.p.** seized. C 863  
**Y-hard, p.p.** hared. A 3737  
**Ylf, conj.** if. T<sup>2</sup> 1063  
**Y-korven, p.p.** cut. B 1801  
**Y-lad, p.p.** lead, carted. A 530  
**Y-lik, adv.** alike. A 592  
**Y-mages, sb.** p. astrological figures  
**Y-meynd, p.p.** mingled. A 2170  
**Ymel, p.p.** among. A 4172  
**Ymped, p.p.** grafted. R 5137  
**Ympes, sb.** p. grafts, shooes, saplings. R B 3146  
**Ympne, sb.** hymn. L 422  
**Ynde, sb.** indigo. R 67  
**Ynly, adv.** inwardly. Bl. 276  
**Y-nome, p.p.** taken. T<sup>1</sup> 242, L 2343  
**Yolden, p.p.** yielded. A 3052, Bo. 211  
**Yolledon, p.p.** p. yelled. B 4579  
**Youlyng, sb.** yelling. A 1278  
**Yow, you.** B 4610  
**Y-piked, p.p.** picked out. G 941  
**Y-plited, p.p.** plented. Bo. 151  
**Y-proved, p.p.** proved. A 482  
**Y-purified, p.p.** trimmed. A 193  
**Y-reke, p.p.** spread about. A 3882  
**Ya, sb.** ice. HF<sup>2</sup> 40  
**Y-shete, p.p.** shut. B 560  
**Y-shore, p.p.** shorn, shaven. T<sup>4</sup> 996  
**Y-spreynd, p.p.** sprinkled. A 2169  
**Y-stalled, p.p.** throned. HF<sup>2</sup> 274  
**Y-stikked, p.p.** stabbed. F 1476  
**Y-strawed, p.p.** strewed. Bl. 628  
**Yvels, adv.** ill. B 1897  
**Yvy leaf, sb.; Pipen in an yvy leaf,** 'gowhi A 1838  
**Yvoire, sb.** ivory. Bl. 945  
**Y-wis, adv.** certainly. A 3277  
**Y-worth, p.p.** herome. Bl. 578  
**Y-wrien, Y-wrye, p.p.** veiled, hid. Bl. 6: 2004, T<sup>4</sup> 1654  
**Y-writhen, p.p.** wrapped. R 160

THE END

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